

Your Spring 2021 Newsletter



From TORCH TRUST

“Focus On...”: New Training from Torch Trust



We've been running training on Zoom for about a year now, and it's been going really well. However, we're quite often asked questions where the answers are too nuanced or technical to address them there and then.



With this in mind, to complement our existing training, we're launching some new sessions called “Focus On ...”. These will take place once a month, last no longer than an hour, and provide lots of detail on one specific aspect of church life for a person with sight loss.

This is not a continuous series – you can come to as few or as many sessions as you like. Furthermore, if you think someone in your church other than yourself would benefit from coming to a session, we warmly encourage you to invite them.

Our first three sessions are as follows:

 **Making your Documents Accessible** – ideal for church administrators: in this session, we will introduce best practices for large print documents, as well as tips and tricks for making your documents work well with braille, audio and screen reading technology. We will also cover where to purchase published Christian literature in large print, braille and audio.

 **Before and After your Service** – ideal for welcome teams: in this session, we will cover strategies for identifying people with sight loss, introducing yourself to them, establishing what they need and making them feel at home. We will also discuss how best to include a person with sight loss during fellowship after the service.

 **Help Outside the Church** – ideal for pastoral teams: what do you do if you learn that a person with sight loss is struggling to find their way around their neighbourhood, having difficulty in the kitchen, or needs training to use a computer? In this session, we will explore Torch's role in the wider sight loss sector and introduce other local and national organisations which may be of help.

For more information or to book your place, please email sffc@torchtrust.org

Meet The CEO – Tim Jeffery

I had the privilege of growing up in a loving Christian home which has proven to be an amazing foundation for my life. I had my first pair of glasses aged 1 after they found some issues with one of my eyes and went on to have several eye operations as a child.



After some mild teenage rebellion against church, I met Jesus for myself in my mid teens and right from the beginning sensed God's call to work amongst the poor in the developing world. My education and early career were all focused on that goal with many years spent in Africa, firstly in rural water supplies and then in community development.

I met my wife Hannah whilst living in Zimbabwe as she was training to be an Anglican priest. Her call into local church ministry in the UK has anchored us here since then.

Over the years I have worked for many different Christian organisations like World Vision, Oasis Trust, Spurgeons Child Care and also had several years as a consultant in change management, leadership, strategy and so on. It seems now that God has called me out of that portfolio life, back into organisational leadership in Torch!

Spring Top Tip from Tim Jeffery

One of the most interesting things I've done since starting with Torch is to interview people who are blind or partially sighted to hear their stories and find out something about their experience of sight loss. (You can access these 'Sight Loss 101' interviews on Torch's YouTube channel.)

As part of this, I've been asking people for their Top Tip for me as a sighted person when engaging with people with a visual impairment. The overwhelming response to this question has been "talk to us, listen to us, ask us, engage with us!" And alongside that: "we are all different, each with our own unique experience of sight loss



and the ways we adjust for it – so don't treat us as one homogenous group but as individuals!"

So when we're tempted to think someone might be embarrassed to talk about their poor sight, step forward and have that conversation. Find out what it's like to live in their shoes. Be ready to be inspired!

Support Us

We would not be able to sustain our ministry without individual and corporate prayer, volunteer and financial support. Our latest Prayer Diary is enclosed – please pray alongside us for the ongoing mission of Torch.

In addition, we would really appreciate it if you would consider supporting Torch financially via a regular, occasional or one-off gift from your church. Just £90 per year will enable a client to have full access to our library of Accessible Christian Literature.

Donations can be made via www.sightlossfriendlychurch.org.uk/donate or to the bank account below:

The Torch Trust for the Blind
Sort Code: 40-52-40 (CAF Bank)
Account Number: 00017072

Finally, if you'd like to join Torch as a volunteer, please get in touch. You can call **01858 438260** or email info@torchtrust.org

Introducing Sight Loss Sunday



This autumn, to coincide with World Sight Day, we're encouraging churches to set a Sunday aside to celebrate the unique gifts and talents that are offered by the people with sight loss in their congregations. To help with this, over the next few months, we'll be creating various prayer, worship and scripture resources and making them available via our website.

There will be more information in the next newsletter but, for the time being, please put Sunday 17 October in your diary.

Dates for Your Diary

To book onto any of these events, please email slfc@torchtrust.org

Training (both at 2pm)

Wednesday 26 May

Tuesday 13 July

Focus On... (all at 12:30pm)

Making your Documents Accessible:

Tuesday 1 June

Before and After your Service:

Tuesday 6 July

Help Outside the Church:

Tuesday 3 August

Catch Ups (all at 7pm)

Thursday 6 May

Tuesday 8 June

Thursday 8 July

Sight Loss Sunday

17 October



Contact us

This newsletter as a PDF is accessible; however, if you do need it in braille, large print or audio CD, please ask. Our friendly team are here to help you with all your queries. You can call us on **01858 438260**, 9:30am-4pm on Mondays, 9am-4pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and 10am-4pm Thursdays; or email info@torchtrust.org

www.sightlossfriendlychurch.org.uk

