

# GO

Lives and  
communities  
transformed  
through  
encounter with  
Jesus Christ

Jun 2025

 Interserve

## MORE THAN MEDICINE

Serving with all  
God's gifts





# How are you gifted to serve?

A few months ago I got chatting to a university student at a friend's party. He was puzzling over how his degree might be relevant to serving in mission. It was this conversation that inspired this edition of GO Magazine.

Interserve is well known for its history of medical mission and for sending professionals to serve across Asia and the Arab world in classic missionary roles such as education and language teaching. Yet it is exciting to see how God is calling those within our fellowship to see lives and communities transformed through an increasing diversity of roles and skills. This edition of GO magazine touches on just some of these unique callings, featuring Partners passionate about serving God and his world through writing, psychology, cartography, print-making, dirt biking, IT and baking!

The Lausanne Movement, recently gathered in Seoul in 2024, exhorts "the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world." If we are to fulfil Jesus' Great Commission, we need Christians in serving every sphere of life and society, sharing the love of Jesus through the personalities, giftings and opportunities unique to each one of us. I pray that these articles will inspire you to do the same.

## Amy Durrant

Prayer & Communications Coordinator,  
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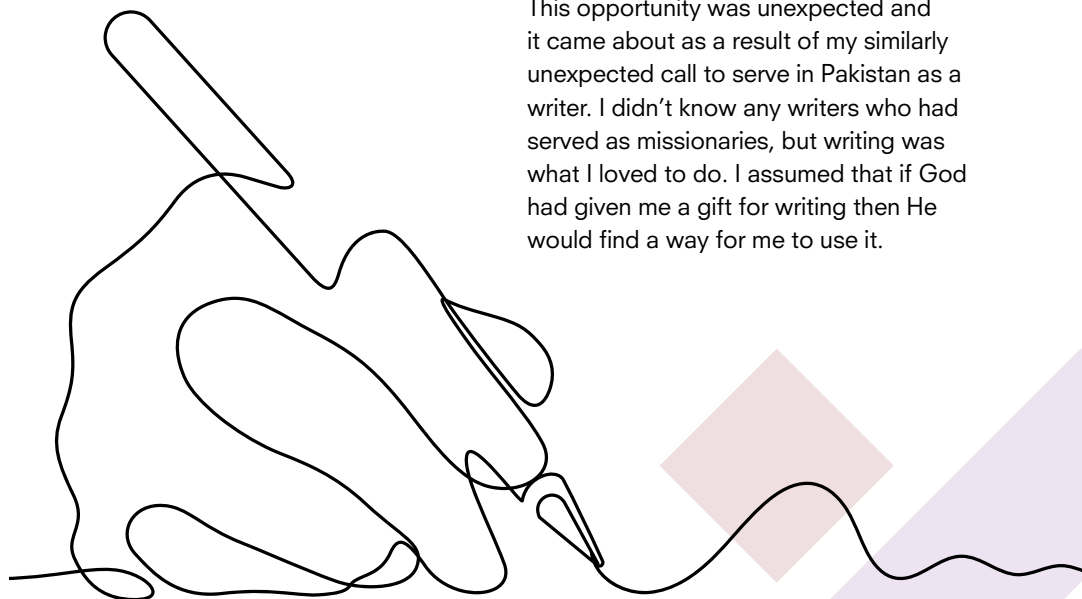
# Unscripted:

Exploring  
new ways to  
serve God

**INTERSERVE PARTNER MATT  
REFLECTS ON THE IMPORTANCE  
OF USING OUR UNIQUE GIFTS  
FOR THE GLORY OF GOD:**

**N**obody had coached me on what to say when I was interviewed on national TV in Pakistan. It's not the kind of thing that mission courses prepare you for, so I had to think on my feet. It ended up going well: I had the chance to speak positively about Pakistan, to show my appreciation for the country, and even to quote from the Bible.

This opportunity was unexpected and it came about as a result of my similarly unexpected call to serve in Pakistan as a writer. I didn't know any writers who had served as missionaries, but writing was what I loved to do. I assumed that if God had given me a gift for writing then He would find a way for me to use it.





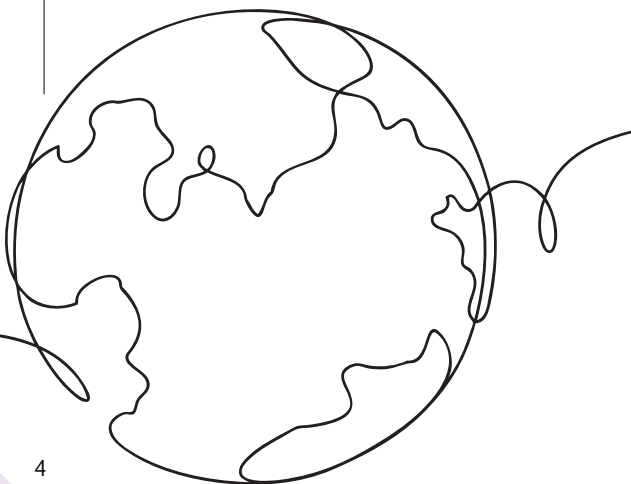
He did, too. There's definitely a need for writers: project proposals, funding applications and annual reports all require words to be put together and some people are better than others at this particular task, just as some people are better than others at removing an appendix or teaching a child to read. I wrote scripts, funding applications, newsletters for donors, even a policy manual for a seminary. Some of it was interesting, some was tedious, all of it was important. Most exciting of all was the opportunity to write two books about Pakistan to shed light on the positive side of life in that wonderful country, leading to speaking engagements at Pakistan Army HQ, the Lahore Literature Festival, the US Embassy in Islamabad and eventually on national TV.

Why should this be a surprise? Are we so fixated on 19th century mission paradigms that we assume that a missionary calling requires a medical degree or a teaching certificate? We forget that in the 19th century the concept of a missionary doctor was a radical and controversial one: the existing paradigm was for missionaries to be ordained clergy who spent their time preaching. The idea of a missionary surgeon or teacher or, in the case of William Carey, a cobbler, was unheard of. I know a guy who worked as a missionary clown in the Middle East. I wonder what Carey's critics would have made of that.

Jesus paid precious little attention to the career choices of His disciples. Tax collectors, fishermen, a formerly demon-possessed woman, the wife of Herod's household manager – all of them played their part in the early church. A church consisting of people with identical gifts would not be a church at all: as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians, "God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be?"

### ◆ Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God

Our part in God's mission depends far less on our practical skills than it does on our hearts. God has given each of us unique gifts and if we choose to dedicate them to His service He will find ways to bless that little offering. If you're a dentist, go and sort someone's teeth out. If you're a teacher, go and open the wonders of the world to a young mind. If you're a writer, go and put words down on paper in an effective way. Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God. ◆







# Yong: the dirt-biking IT geek

**YONG BEGAN LIFE AS A REFUGEE, UPROOTED FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA TO SETTLE IN THE USA. BUT GOD'S CALLING HAS BROUGHT HIM BACK TO HIS HOMELAND TO SERVE AS ONLY HE CAN:**

I was a child during the Cambodian genocide of 1970-1979. Over 3 million people were killed. The survivors from our family ended up in refugee camps in Southeast Asia before moving to the USA when I was 12. We were sponsored by a family in Atlanta, but our plane tickets were mixed up. My mum and us four children arrived in a small town in Florida! We didn't know anyone, didn't know what to do. The airport staff called someone who worked locally with refugees, and he found us somewhere to stay that night.



Then a local church family invited us to live with them. They got us into school and helped us assimilate into life in America. We stayed, and in time, all of us accepted Christ. To this day, as far as I know, our 'official' sponsor family in Georgia are not Christians. So, make of that what you will!

◆ Picture this - I'm an IT geek, happily sitting at my computer, and the next thing I know I'm riding a bike through the countryside trying to avoid hitting the cows.

I went on to study computer science in the States, and years later my sponsor father invited me on a short-term mission trip to Cambodia. I had never been back as an adult so was nervous. But as soon as I arrived, I could feel that this was my land. As I walked around the city, I saw so many children begging, I could almost see my younger siblings in their faces. Knowing that it could be us, if it weren't for God's grace. I returned to the US, but my heart stayed in Cambodia. A few years later I moved back here to serve, initially teaching English before connecting with a missionary friend who was starting a new organisation here.

This friend was into motorcycles and dirt biking, so when I decided to move here permanently, he helped set me up with a bike. It's the best way to get around the country, especially in the rainy season. The first time I rode the

eight-hour trip to the northern part of the country, my companion said, "Brother, your style of riding scares me!" I replied, "I don't have a style, I just hang on for dear life!" But I do enjoy riding. You crash a lot, but after a while it becomes part of you, and there's joy in riding long distances.

The friend that introduced me to dirt biking felt inspired by God to start a prayer circle around Cambodia. He invites whoever wants to join, to ride around the border of the country, meeting up with Christians living in remote areas, sharing a meal with them, encouraging and praying for them, and then riding on again. We normally do around four trips a year. We prepare and plan the trip before we go, but almost every trip we go on the plans change – we end up meeting someone on the road that God leads us to, and then we cancel our plans and just follow His. Seeing God's hand in it all, and His love and His care for us, the riders, even though we go with the aim to pray for and serve other people, I find it very rewarding. I've found so much joy in every ride.

Picture this - I'm an IT geek, happily sitting at my computer, and the next thing I know I'm riding a bike through the countryside trying to avoid hitting the cows. Sometimes I just need to



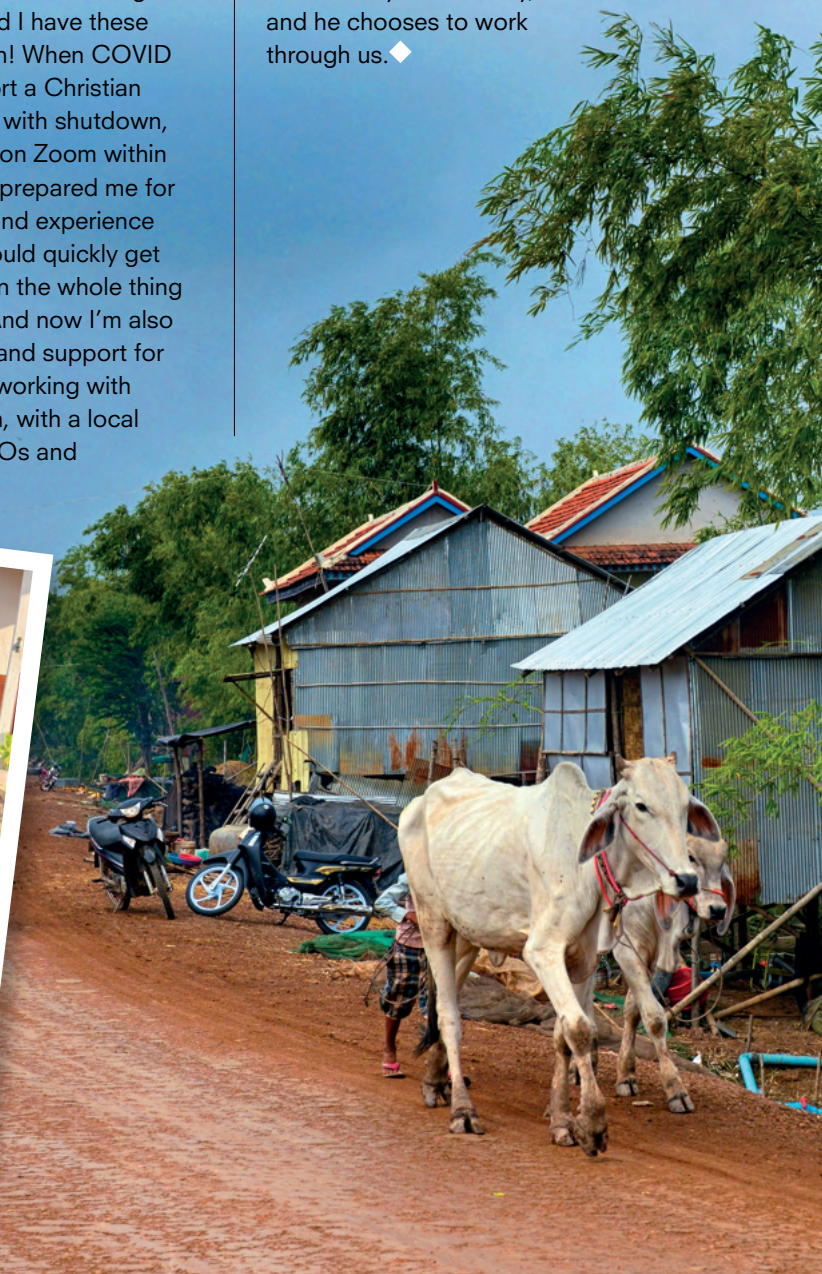


laugh – it's too funny! I wasn't sure if God gave me the biker DNA. But I guess he did in some way! Since I've been here, the city's internet system has become a lot more reliable, which has allowed me to do more IT work. I really enjoy it when my ministry work and IT skills get mixed together. I'm glad I have these skills and it's a lot of fun! When COVID hit. I was able to support a Christian language school faced with shutdown, and get them teaching on Zoom within a few weeks. God had prepared me for this, building my skills and experience beforehand so that I could quickly get students online and turn the whole thing into an online school. And now I'm also involved with IT admin and support for other Christian NGOs working with vulnerable local women, with a local hospital, and other NGOs and churches here.

I'm very thankful to be doing what I'm doing here, that God has put me on this path. Back in the US, I could never have imagined the life that I am living now. Even now, sometimes I wonder what I'm doing! But I can't take too much credit. This is really God's story, and he chooses to work through us. ♦



Yong and his wife  
Wendy on a prayer  
circle ride earlier  
this year





# Filipe: from *theology* to *therapy*

**AFTER A SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIP TO A COUNTRY DEVASTATED BY EARTHQUAKES, FILIPE WAS DETERMINED TO FIND MEANINGFUL WAYS TO CARE FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY TRAUMA. HIS JOURNEY HAS LED HIM FROM BIBLE SCHOOL IN BRAZIL TO SERVING REFUGEES IN THE SOUTHEAST OF ENGLAND.**

I felt God calling me to work full time in mission when I was a teenager growing up in Brazil. So I went to study theology at Bible school and in the holidays I went on short-term mission trips. The first country I went to was Haiti, about 10 months after the earthquake in 2010. Everything was destroyed, and horrible things were happening. I couldn't even imagine what people were feeling. When I went home to Brazil, I realised how privileged I was. I enjoyed studying theology, but I wanted to have another profession to serve people in these environments.





I wondered about being a teacher or nurse, but then someone asked me, what about psychology? Many people need emotional support. I started to pray about it, and God opened the doors. After completing my theology degree, I got a scholarship to study psychology at university in Sao Paulo, with internships in local hospitals, schools and clinics. I also volunteered with refugees, and I could really see the value of emotional care for them. One day a teacher asked me, "Could you imagine doing play therapy with refugees one day?" The question stuck in my mind for months.

◆ When I was younger, people told me I should be a doctor, but I didn't want that

After finishing university I joined Interserve, wanting to use my counselling skills to support and care for others. I felt that God was calling me, in an unexpected but very natural way, to serve refugees. Eventually I moved to West Asia to serve at a refugee community centre. I wanted to run a play therapy project for children, but I initially experienced resistance from other Christians unsure about the place of psychology in ministry. It was hard, especially working to translate everything into Arabic, but all the time I was praying for the Holy Spirit to guide me. We explored emotional regulation and shared tools to help kids reframe their experiences. It was very powerful to see how those children changed. Not just because of play therapy, but because we were providing wholistic care for them. We see in the Bible that it is important to

care for people wholistically, including our emotions – psychology can help us to do this well.

I met my wife in West Asia and we joined the country team here in Great Britain and Ireland in 2023. My Brazilian counselling training has been recognised so that I can work as a professional counsellor here in the UK. Coming from another country has given me strong points of connection with migrants and refugees here. I run emotional support groups for men alongside drop-in meetings, Bible studies and a regular global café. The men in the current emotional support group are very open, sincere and committed, and I feel that they trust me. Now I can see the bigger picture, that something I dreamed about is really happening, so I'm excited to keep going. I would love to see a trauma healing centre and be more intentional in that way. But I feel that God is at work and I'm so glad to be part of it.

When I was younger, people told me I should be a doctor, but I didn't want that. I think you have to stick with what God is calling you to do, to trust Him - even when things are not yet clear, and other voices might say different things. He can use us, no matter who and where we are. ◆

**How is God calling you to serve?** On Track Discovery trips are designed for those aged 18-30 who want to explore their calling and experience global mission with Interserve

Find out more at [interserve.org.uk/on-track-discovery](https://interserve.org.uk/on-track-discovery)







# David: *making maps* to tackle trafficking

**WHEN DAVID MOVED TO SOUTHEAST ASIA AS AN INTERSERVE PARTNER, HE INITIALLY SERVED AS AN ENGLISH TEACHER, AND ASSUMED HE WOULD GIVE UP HIS PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AS A CARTOGRAPHER. BUT GOD HAD OTHER IDEAS...**

**T**hroughout our working lives we are often asked, 'What do you do'? My reply has never been clear cut. I usually mention that I was a surveyor, a cartographer, a map maker or (the real truth!) I worked in GIS. I'm not sure people really understand my answers. Usually they immediately respond by talking about the weather, or commenting, "Isn't it lovely here?"!

When God invited Louise and I to 'come and be where He was,' we gladly



David with his  
wife Louise



and surprisingly responded. The time must have been right, judging by His enthusiastic clarity. I assumed that my job was probably irrelevant going into mission, but that was fine by me. When He spoke to us at that moment, we knew that we could trust him with our path and our adventure in Southeast Asia in the coming years. This has proved absolutely true – these have probably been the best years of my life.

We moved to Southeast Asia in 2013, studied the language, and got involved in English language clubs in the capital and other cities. This has been my main way of serving, as a native English speaker. Admittedly with a strong Lancashire accent - but they seem to like it here!

I didn't think I would use my professional skills, but I was wrong. A few years ago, visa legislation tightened and I was no longer able to teach English here. So we began to pray about new ways to serve. I had previously been involved teaching English with a national NGO that tackles

human trafficking. Louise suggested that I approach them about my GIS skills. GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems and involves making and analysing digital rather than paper maps. Immediately their research & planning team responded. The idea of converting data about both victims and traffickers into presentable maps was something they had not done before. This information, when overlaid with social, economic and other statistical data from the region, helps the team to analyse why human trafficking happens, and where they can target certain provinces with education, training, rescue, guidance and hope.

I have always been incredibly impressed by the NGO, putting their words into action by rescuing people from danger. They help bring victims home, offering protection, justice, medical and psychological support, housing, education, and ultimately a hope and a future... Sounds Christ-like, doesn't it?

It has been incredibly humbling and satisfying to be a tiny part of this work. You can imagine how I thank God that my dormant skills from my previous career been used here! I never came here expecting to use my professional skills - I had totally laid that aside. Yet somehow God knows that I loved that career and I love maps, and He has used this to serve Him and people here who are vulnerable and in danger.

I firmly believe that anyone can serve God anywhere. Don't write yourself off because your skills seem less 'useful' or typical for mission. Make yourself available. You are God's child and He loves you. He knows the desires of your heart and wants to give you an abundant life. I can totally testify to that! ♦





# Alexandra: *an artist* called for His glory

**ALEXANDRA AND HER FAMILY LIVE AND WORK IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WHERE SHE WAS INVOLVED IN ANTI-TRAFFICKING WORK FOR NEARLY TEN YEARS. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, SHE HAS STEPPED INTO A NEW CALLING AS A FULL TIME ARTIST.**

I've been a full-time artist for two years now. It's been a big shift - it came as a complete surprise to me! It's not something I was planning or dreaming about. God really had to shake me out of my comfort zone for that to happen" shares Alexandra.

Four years ago, Alexandra went through a very dark time in her life, and her faith





Artwork based on local foliage (above) and leaf printing workshop with Alexandra (left)

crumbled. Somehow, she still knew that God was taking her through this time, and Christian friends reassured her that this could be a time of growing maturity. She rediscovered art equipment that a friend had left with her, and began to explore local tools, techniques and materials to create prints that resonate with the local culture: "I couldn't pray. I wasn't ready to read the Bible. But when I was making art, it was just a moment where I felt God's presence and His joy. This became something very special and started to take more and more space in my life," she says.

Gradually, she began to reengage in a new relationship with God, and alongside this, a fresh definition of what it means to serve Him. She has found it very difficult to let go of what she describes as her old 'utilitarian' understanding of how she might use her gifts. "My artwork is for God's glory and for His sake, and doesn't need to be for anything else," she states. "This season has brought a different understanding of my relationship with God, of how beauty and holiness are themselves life-giving, and fundamental for our lives."

And yet, Alexandra has had many opportunities to share deeply with people as she talks about her artwork. God opened doors for her in the art world, affirming His call on her life. She is now involved in the art community in the city, and supports the manager of a local art gallery by running exhibitions, organising workshops, overseeing volunteers and engaging with the expat community. Well-established artists have approached her to work together, and many people that she encounters have never met a Christian before. Praying for her colleagues has led to interesting conversations, and she has recently seen several of them visit a local church for the first time. One lady, about to leave the country, was particularly touched by one of her pieces, and Alexandra felt prompted to gift this to her and speak of God's love. Every time she sees it hanging on her wall, Alexandra hopes that she will be reminded of His love for her.

One of the challenges is the loneliness of her new role. Alexandra explains, "I left a huge national team of a dozen missionaries and about 30 local believers to just be by myself. But the team gave that green light and encouragement - it was very affirming. Initially, I didn't know what I was doing. I just knew I was an artist. God really impacted that on me - that this is a new season in how He wants to use me." Alexandra remains excited, scared and most of all surprised by her new role. "The beauty of this is that I can never say that it was my plan and that my project worked - because it wasn't mine. I see this as a gift, as something given to me. For His joy, and for mine by the way (which is very nice too!), and for the blessing of other people." ♦



# Sally: serving *tea for transformation*

WHEN INTERSERVE PARTNER SALLY CROSSED PATHS WITH SAMUNDRA\* IN NEPAL SEVERAL YEARS AGO, A SEED OF AN IDEA WAS PLANTED.

THE IDEA ROSE LIKE SOURDOUGH THROUGH THE PANDEMIC AND NOW FIVE YEARS LATER, SALLY IS ON THE BRINK OF AN EXCITING NEW VENTURE.





A few years ago, we received news of Samundra,\* a fourteen year old girl from the Nepali village where our NGO works. She had been befriended by a young man who convinced her to run away with him. In the weeks that followed they travelled west towards the border where women and girls are trafficked daily. Miraculously, she was spotted and taken in by a local organisation helping people at risk of trafficking. They contacted us, and Samundra was rescued and returned to her family within a few days.

This was the first time I had been directly exposed to the dangers that people face that put them at risk for human trafficking and exploitation. I knew that this situation was one that our NGO, Bridges Nepal, needed to look look at. I truly believe that we must work to prevent this, whatever the cost.

At home during the Covid-19 years, I started making sourdough, and recreating other British flavours I was missing. My love for baking grew. I felt such joy in being able to create something from scratch. I would gift loaves of bread to friends, and invited others over for special tea times when I could. I began to dream of starting 'Sally's Tea Room'. As I shared this with other members of Bridges Nepal, we prayed for vision and purpose for this venture. It became clear that we were to use this business as a platform for trafficking prevention.

Imagine a quintessential British tearoom in the heart of Kathmandu, offering not only vintage teacups and freshly baked treats for visitors, but also providing hope and a future for vulnerable employees. Our hope is that through Sally's Tea Room, we can provide a safe working environment, skills training, income and discipleship

for young girls who are desperate to continue their education and develop independence. We want to shape the community around the business, share the love of Jesus and raise the standard of local business practice.

Starting a business focused on things of the Kingdom brings both challenges and spiritual opposition. After a difficult six month search we have recently found the perfect location for our Tea Room! The Lord faithfully provided start-up funding in record time, and we are so excited to start this new venture.

It's such a privilege to serve the Lord using the natural skills He has given us. For me that's baking, music and a love of people. He has placed different gifts in each of us for a reason, and these are what help the Kingdom of God to flourish, and what draws people to seek and find Him.

The Lord has instructed us to walk in joy, and to wait patiently for Him, so that's what we did. He has provided the finances and brought along the right place at the right time, and hopefully we will be up and running soon!

**Follow our journey on Instagram:**  
**[sallysbritishtearoom.np](https://www.instagram.com/sallysbritishtearoom.np)**



Could you walk with Sally on this journey? Join or host a local **Tea for Transformation** this autumn.

Find out more here: **[interserve.org.uk/tea-for-transformation](https://www.interserve.org.uk/tea-for-transformation)**

\* Name changed for security purposes



# Tea 4 TRANSFORMATION

Gather Together. Drink Tea. Change the World



Could you host a tea in your church or community this autumn, to raise awareness and funds for Interserve?

Our friendly team can offer resources and ideas to support you every step of the way, from invites to recipes to posters, for an afternoon of enjoyment.

Find out more: [www.interserve.org.uk/tea-for-transformation](http://www.interserve.org.uk/tea-for-transformation)

Find out  
more here 