

*"We seek to be catalysts for peacemaking, especially where minorities are persecuted, where justice is denied, human rights are suppressed or reconciliation is needed."*

Many charities do superb work ameliorating the consequences of war and conflict, for example, in caring for refugees, the wounded, the bereaved and orphaned. **Peacemakers** seeks to address the causes.

Our vision is of a world reconciled to God and where its people are at peace with one another. If you identify with our vision and purposes, we invite you to join the team. Check out the blog for the latest news on our current projects.

**THE BLESSINGS OF ISOLATION**

As you may know, my wife Joanna, was

diagnosed with late stage lung cancer three years ago shortly after we launched Peacemakers and moved to Southampton. We have therefore had to take the guidance on shielding for the extremely vulnerable very seriously these past few months. Despite the relaxation of restrictions from August, we will need to remain vigilant, which will inevitably impact future projects and travel plans. While initially, perhaps like you, I found the lockdown extremely frustrating, as time has gone on I have come to appreciate some of the blessings of isolation. Here are my top five:

**Thankfulness:** I am thankful for the rare occasions I've been able to see my children and grandchildren, for walks in the New Forest, and for the awesome heroes serving us in the NHS.



HAVING TO PUT ON HOLD PROJECTS WE HAD PLANNED WITH PARTNERS IN IRELAND, EAST AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, AS WELL AS LOCALLY IN SOUTHAMPTON SUPPORTING ASYLUM SEEKERS, HAS BEEN VERY FRUSTRATING. MORE SO, SINCE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS EXACERBATED ALREADY UNBEARABLE LEVELS OF SUFFERING AND INJUSTICES IN MANY OF THE WORLD'S TROUBLE SPOTS.

**Mindfulness:** I removed my watch during the first week of the lockdown as a conscious change of lifestyle, initially imposed, but progressively embraced willingly. I now measure time in hours not minutes. I'm doing less driving and more walking and as a consequence, am more observant and aware of my surroundings. As a friend used to say, "take time to smell the flowers".

**Creativity:** We have all had to adapt and learn new skills, like how to use Zoom to connect with friends and colleagues. I am also learning new skills in developing websites to promote mission partners.

**Simplicity:** Initially, when all non-essential shops were closed and many items were in short supply, I rediscovered how to live with less and be more content with what I have.

**Empathy:** Social distancing has meant we are more aware of the people we encounter on walks or in queues. Despite being an introvert, I now greet strangers as we pass. We also set up a WhatsApp group in our street to support one another.

Stephen Sizer  
Director

**Peacemaker Trust** is a faith ministry. By the grace of God, we are entirely dependent on your prayers, advocacy and financial support. Please consider making a one-off gift or regular monthly donation. If you wish to give regularly, you may download a standing order form and return to your bank. You may also donate by making a cash, cheque deposit or transfer directly into our Peacemaker Trust **Metro Bank** account using our bank account number **19949718** and sort code **23-05-80**.

For international donations our IBAN number is **GB60MYMB23058019949718**. You may also give online via Stewardship [www.give.net/peacemakers](http://www.give.net/peacemakers) or through PayPal.

*Dr Stephen Sizer was vicar of Christ Church, Virginia Water until 2017. He took early retirement to focus on teaching, training and mediation in some of the world's trouble spots, most notably in the Middle East and Africa.*