

A Personal Message from Graham Pountain

On Wednesday, 21 October 2026, I resigned from the Board of Trustees of the Bethany Project (Tanzania) UK.

This has not been an easy decision, as the Bethany Project has been such an important part of my life for so many years. I have served as a Trustee since before 1991 and became Chairman and Coordinator in 1995. Looking back over more than three decades, I feel immensely grateful for the privilege of being involved in the Project and for the many people who have shared this journey with me.

When I think back to how Bethany began, with virtually nothing, I am truly amazed and humbled by how far it has come. Today, the work includes a **Children's Home** providing a home for over 140 children, a **Pre- and Primary School** educating more than 450 children, and a **Girls' Secondary School** serving 160 students. To see how much has grown from such humble beginnings is deeply moving. These are not simply numbers or buildings; they represent thousands of opportunities for children to receive care, education, encouragement and hope for a better future. It has been a tremendous privilege to have played a part in this journey, and I am deeply thankful to everyone who has helped make it possible.

I know that none of this could have been achieved by one person alone. The growth and development of Bethany have depended on the generosity, dedication, hard work and faithfulness of so many people, both here in the UK and in Tanzania. Each person who has contributed, whether through financial support, practical work, prayer, encouragement or personal commitment, has helped to make a difference in the lives of these children.

I would particularly like to express my heartfelt thanks to **Mr David Borland, our faithful Treasurer**. David, your commitment and dependable service over the years have been invaluable to the Project. I have greatly appreciated your faithfulness and the important part you have played in helping Bethany to develop and continue its work. I am personally very grateful for all that you have given to the Project. I also want to include my fellow trustees who will now need to seek a new way forward.

I also want to offer my sincere thanks to everyone who has taken the time and made the personal sacrifice to visit Bethany in Tanzania over the years. Almost all of you have paid your own travel expenses and given up your valuable time to come alongside the team and children. Some have undertaken practical activities, while others have generously shared their knowledge and skills, particularly in supporting the teaching of English.

Your willingness to travel such distances, give freely of your time and become personally involved has meant a great deal. You have done far more than simply visit Bethany; you have shared in its life and work, encouraged those serving there and helped provide opportunities for the children. I hope you know how much your contributions have been valued and how grateful I am to each of you.

To my fellow Trustees, both past and present, thank you for your support, wisdom, encouragement and friendship. We have shared the responsibility of seeking to guide the Project through many years of change and development, and I have greatly valued working alongside you.

To the team in Tanzania, especially **Jesca Paulo** (Tanzanian Coordinator) and **Emmakulatha Bujiku** (Headteacher) I want to express my deep appreciation for your continuing dedication to the children and young people in your care. It is your daily commitment, patience and hard work that bring the vision of Bethany to life. I have the greatest respect for all that you do, often in challenging circumstances, and I am thankful for your part in making Bethany what it is today.

I am equally grateful to the churches, donors, supporters and friends who have stood behind the Project over the years. Some of you have supported Bethany for decades, while others have joined us more recently. Every gift, every act of kindness, every prayer and every word of encouragement has helped sustain the work. Please accept my sincere thanks for remaining alongside us and believing in what Bethany is seeking to achieve.

Beyond the work itself, one of the greatest blessings of my years with Bethany has been the friendships that have developed along the way. I shall always treasure the people I have met, the experiences we have shared and the memories we have made together. These relationships have enriched my life, and I feel truly privileged to have been part of such a committed and caring community.

The reason for my resignation is my age (now 77yrs) and the aggressive progression of Prostate Cancer

which I have had for 16yrs but is now reaching its final stage. As many of you will know, my dear wife, Sheila, has been living with Alzheimer's disease for the past six years. This has been a difficult and emotional journey for us both, bringing changes and challenges to our lives that we could never have fully anticipated.

At this stage of my life, I recognise that I am unable to give the attention Bethany requires. This has not been an easy decision, particularly because Bethany has been such a significant part of my life for so long. However, I know that it is the right decision for me at this time.

Although I am stepping down from the Board of Trustees and my responsibilities as Chairman and Coordinator, I am pleased that I shall continue to support Bethany as a team member, as far as my health allows. My heart remains very much with the Project, and I shall continue to follow its work with great interest and to pray for the children, the staff in Tanzania and everyone who contributes to its future.

As I look back over these many years, I feel a deep sense of thankfulness. I am thankful for the opportunity to have served, for the remarkable growth of Bethany from its humble beginnings, for the lives that have been touched, and, above all, for the many people who have made this journey so worthwhile.

I would be grateful if you would continue to remember Sheila and me in your prayers as we face the challenges ahead. Your kindness, understanding, friendship and prayers mean more to us than I can easily express. We are particularly thankful for those who have stood beside us during difficult times, and we value your continued support.

Stepping down from my role brings an important chapter of my life to a close, but it does not bring my connection with Bethany to an end. I remain deeply committed to its vision and hopeful for its future. I pray that the Project will continue to grow and flourish, providing care, education and opportunity for many more children and young people in Tanzania in the years to come.

Finally, I want to say a very sincere thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey. Thank you for your trust, your generosity, your hard work, your prayers and, above all, your friendship. It has been a real privilege to serve alongside you, and I shall always look back on my years with Bethany with gratitude and affection. Above all, I thank God for His provision throughout these years

With heartfelt thanks and every blessing,

Graham Pountain