TORCH

Welcome to Torch!



TORCH

Whether you are exploring the possibility of joining Torch, are newly joining us as a staff member, volunteer or trustee, or have already been part of the journey for some time, we are delighted to welcome you to the Torch community.

Torch exists to enable people with sight loss to encounter Jesus, grow in their Christian faith, and thrive in Christian community. Everything we do flows from that purpose, from producing accessible Christian resources, to supporting churches, to building relationships with people affected by sight loss across the UK and beyond.

Every person connected with Torch plays an important part in that mission. Together, we seek to create a culture that is Christ-centred, people-focused, open, and creative in all we do.

This document is intended to introduce you to the heart of Torch: our story, our values, our culture, and the way we seek to serve God together. For those considering joining us, we hope it gives a sense of who we are and what matters to us. For those already serving within Torch, we hope it encourages and reminds us all of the shared calling and vision that unite us.

Our Story

Torch began in 1959 when Ron and Stella Heath met Wendy, a blind girl who had recently become a Christian. As they searched for accessible Christian literature for her, they discovered how little was available for people with sight loss. The Lord seemed to be saying to them “You give them something to eat” (Matthew 14:16). What began as a response to one person’s need grew into an international Christian ministry providing accessible resources and support for people with sight loss.



Over the years, Torch has developed accessible Christian literature in braille, audio, giant print, and digital formats, alongside fellowship groups, holidays, church support, pastoral encouragement, and international partnerships.





Torch also has a ministry in Malawi that began in 1988 after Stella Heath sensed a clear call from God through the words, “Here I am, wholly available... I will serve the Lord.” Following visits to Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi in 1989, local Christians repeatedly asked for the Bible in braille in their own languages. In response, Torch began supporting the production and distribution of accessible Christian literature for blind and partially sighted people across the region. Today, that work continues through Torch Malawi, helping people with sight loss access God's Word, grow in their faith and participate more fully in the life of their churches and communities.



Today, Torch continues to support people across the UK and internationally through accessible resources, community, and Christian fellowship. While much has changed since 1959, the heart of Torch remains the same: helping people with sight loss know they are valued, included, and loved by God.

> **"Torch providing an accessible Bible has given me my life back."**
> **Torch client**

In 2022, Compass Braille, a global Braille Bible charity, moved into Torch House, enabling us to work more closely together to expand the provision of accessible Christian resources, share expertise and equipment, and better serve blind and partially sighted people in both the UK and internationally. Compass Braille remains a separate charity, but its trusteeship is provided by the Torch Trust Board, helping to ensure close alignment between the two organisations and a shared commitment to making Christian resources accessible to people with sight loss.



Our Mission

Torch exists to enable people with sight loss to encounter Jesus, grow in their Christian faith, and thrive in Christian community.

We believe that people with sight loss have an equal and valuable part to play in church and society, and we are passionate about helping churches become places of belonging, inclusion, and hope.



Our Values

We are Christ-centred

We seek to make Jesus Lord over every aspect of Torch Trust's work responding to the call he continues to give to us. Jesus is the example that we try to follow so we seek to be centred on Christ in all that we do, working to principles we find in the Bible. Torch is God's and we seek to give reality to the prayer "Your kingdom come, your will be done" in our work for him.

This means that individually and corporately we seek to remain (or abide) in Christ, listening for his voice within and through our colleagues. It means we seek to be Christ-like in our thinking, attitudes and activity, aiming to speak as he would speak and to do as he would do in every situation. We are committed to pray and stimulate prayer — faithfully and creatively.

We are People-focused

As Christians, we worship a Trinitarian God and see beautiful interdependent relationship perfectly displayed in the very nature of God. At the heart our faith, therefore, is relationship - with God and with each other and so nurturing and prioritising relationships are core in all we do.

Being Christ-like means we will always seek to be caring and compassionate, respecting each other, always seeking the good of the other and offering grace. We seek, therefore, to prioritise the protection and enhancing of relationships and to find ways of expressing our interdependence. We will continuously strive to understand and appreciate the lives and needs of blind and partially sighted people and adapt our work to better serve their spiritual needs.

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We are Open

As Christians, we follow a Trinitarian God who demonstrates in His own being what it means to be utterly open and surrendered. In Jesus, we have a pattern for human life lived in complete openness and honesty to everyone he encountered.

As Christ's followers, we seek always to operate with integrity in an open, honest and accessible way that creates understanding and trust. We are open about our Christian faith as the motivation and inspiration for our work; we offer our services to people of all faiths and none; we are non-denominational, seeking to work in harmony with other Christians, embracing the diversity of Christian understanding, experience and tradition.

We are Creative

We worship and seek to follow a God who is both Creator and Sustainer of all things. Creativity is part of the very nature of God and as people made in his image, we believe that all people have the potential for creativity expressed in a myriad of ways.

Therefore, listening to our clients we respond with creative solutions, embracing innovation, technology, partnerships and the gifts of others. We always seek to learn, develop and adapt to our current environment.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Because Torch exists to serve people with sight loss, accessibility is not an optional extra for us. It is part of who we are.

We seek to remove barriers wherever possible and create environments where people can participate fully, contribute confidently, and feel genuinely included. We recognise that we are continually learning from people with lived experience of sight loss, and we seek to listen carefully and serve with humility.

We are committed to treating every person fairly, with dignity and respect, and to creating a culture where people feel welcomed, valued, and able to flourish.

Our Christian Ethos

Torch is a Christian organisation, and our faith shapes the life and culture of the charity. Prayer and worship are woven into the life of Torch, and opportunities for prayer and conversations about faith are a natural part of our ministry.

We seek to create a culture marked by grace, humility, encouragement, and mutual support.

We recognise that people come to Torch from different church traditions and backgrounds, and we aim to work together with unity and respect.

Some roles within Torch carry an Occupational Requirement for the postholder to be a committed Christian. Where this applies, it will be clearly stated during the recruitment process and within the role description. All staff and volunteers are expected to respect the Christian ethos, values, and agree to the Basis of Faith of Torch while representing the organisation. Our Basis of Faith can be found at the end of this document.

Life at Torch

We want Torch to be a place where people can flourish as they serve together.

We aim to foster a culture that is:

- welcoming and supportive
- collaborative and trusting
- professional and accountable
- prayerful and compassionate
- flexible and creative

We value healthy working relationships and recognise the importance of encouragement, listening, and mutual support. We also recognise that no organisation or community is perfect. We aim to approach challenges with honesty, humility, grace, and a willingness to learn together.

As an organisation serving people with sight loss, accessibility and inclusion are central to who we are. Safeguarding is also an important part of our culture. We are committed to creating environments that are safe, respectful, and inclusive for everyone we serve and everyone who serves alongside us.



Working Together

Torch is made up of staff, volunteers, trustees, supporters, churches, and ministry partners, all playing different roles within the life of the organisation.

Whether someone is volunteering a few hours a week, supporting a fellowship group, producing accessible resources, welcoming guests on a holiday, leading a team, or praying faithfully behind the scenes, every contribution matters.

We believe that God works through people serving together, and we are grateful for everyone who joins us on that journey.

Looking Ahead

Torch has grown and changed significantly since 1959, but our calling remains the same: to share the hope of Jesus with people with sight loss and help create Christian communities where everyone can feel that they belong and flourish.

Whether you are exploring Torch for the first time or are already part of the organisation, we hope this gives you a sense of the heart behind what we do and the culture we seek to build together.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Torch. We look forward to serving alongside you.



Basis of Faith

Torch adopts the Evangelical Alliance Basis of Faith, which outlines the core Christian beliefs that underpin our work. It provides a shared foundation for our mission and helps shape who we are, what we do, and how we serve others.

- The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ – born of the virgin Mary; truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.
- The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.
- The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of our resurrection; his ascension to the Father, and his reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.
- The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
- The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
- The church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers — given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.
- The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

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