

# 4 CORNERS



MAGAZINE OF UFM WORLDWIDE | SUMMER 2014

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NEW LIFE**  
Days of unprecedented  
opportunity in the  
Arab world



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# #UFMdirector

'O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water' – Psalm 63:1.


## STUNNING RELEVANCE...

Duncan Campbell was a Scottish preacher who is best known for being the leader in the Lewis Awakening or the Hebridean Revival (1949-1953). After the Awakening he wrote a book called, *'The Price and Power of Revival'* in which he says, *'These are days of much activity in the field of church and mission, but we need to remember that no amount of activity in the King's service will make up for the neglect of the King himself. I do not believe that the devil is greatly concerned about getting between us and work: his great concern is getting between us and God. Many a Christian worker has buried his spirituality in the grave of his work.'* When I came across these words recently they resonated with my heart and seemed to me to have a stunning sense of relevance.

## BURYING SPIRITUALITY...

There is a danger that ministry life and busyness, rather than being an ongoing expression of God and his grace in the Gospel, and my relationship to him in that, can become unhinged from it. The immediate sense of my identity in 'sin and grace' (my sinfulness and God's grace in Jesus) and of my dependence on God and delighting in him, that gives Gospel definition to how I see others, how I see the 'work' and how I see myself can morph into something completely different, something quite distorted, quite sad, even sinful. It is possible to come to a point where we see others, treat others, the ministry and ourselves in unhealthy ways. Our work can end up becoming a grave in which our spirituality can get buried.





*Our work can end up becoming a grave in which our spirituality can get buried.*

## THRIVING AT WORK...

The relationship between work and identity is profound. When God adopts us into his family we are given a totally new identity as children of God. And although there is nothing that can alter the fundamental nature of our new identity in Jesus, our new identity is something that we are meant to grasp more and more deeply and that should influence us more and more deeply. Our work/ministry is one of the key places that God has given for us to be able to experience and give expression to our new identity and for us to be able to grow in our experience and expression of this new identity. When this relationship between who we are in Christ and what we do works well, our spirituality, rather than getting buried in the grave of our work, thrives and flourishes.

## IT CAN GO WRONG...

But, as we were saying earlier, the gospel relationship between who we are and what we do can become twisted. At those times our sense of

identity is drawn more from what we do, from our role/position, from how well we are doing or otherwise, from what people think about us. This can have all sorts of unhelpful consequences for the Gospel, for others and for me. There seem to me to be times when we ourselves change the 'grace order' and put work at the centre of our lives. But there are times too, when, because of the influence of our work; the amount of it, the complexity of it, the painfulness or difficulty of it, and of those we work with, the 'grace order' changes – undergoes a subtle but deep shift – and we get lost or are broken, etc. Again, at times like this the consequences are usually damaging.

## SEEKING, THIRSTING, LONGING...

In Psalm 63 David is in the desert of Judah. The dryness and weariness of the desert landscape mirrors the tough place in which David finds himself as his faith, identity, work, family, etc. intersect painfully. This desolate set of circumstances does not lead to a burial of spirituality but to David's heart being

set in motion to seek God, as Kidner says, *'with the eagerness of a friend, almost of a lover, to be in touch with the one he holds dear. The simplicity and boldness of the "You are my God" is the secret of all that follows'.*

Or, as it was put in a sermon I listened to not so long ago, *'We must take arms against the insidious idea that anything we have (do) or are is somehow more valid than what we have been given (and do) and are in Jesus'.*

In some ways I have hesitated to write along these lines because discussing 'spirituality' in this way can seem like quite an easy target. But, because the things I have written about are things I struggle with myself, and through which I find God inviting me to know that his 'loving kindness is better than life', I felt I wanted to talk about it with you... in the hope, with the prayer that the Lord will continually help us to 'seek him earnestly' and that we will be able to behold more of his power and his glory in every sphere of our lives, including our work/ministries.

**JOHN-MARK**

# NEW MEDIA, NEW LIFE



One evening, before all the recent troubles began in Syria, Naeem\* was walking along the golden sands of a beach near his home town Homs, his head bowed down in despair. He felt that he couldn't live another day in a home where there was constant conflict. With the sanction of his religious leaders, his father had married two women, and the atmosphere in the family had become unbearable. As Naeem slowly raised his head, he saw a man walking towards him with a card in his hand. The card contained an unusual symbol, and Naeem

decided to ask the stranger what it was. The man explained the meaning of the tract and invited Naeem to attend his church. Sometime later, while at home, Naeem began watching a Christian satellite channel that announced to him in clear terms what it means to be a Christian. Naeem became convinced that Jesus is the Messiah and committed his life to the God of the Bible. Perceiving a dramatic change in Naeem's life, his younger brother decided he would like to watch the Christian channel with him, and in a short time he also came to faith. It was not long before

the eldest brother approached Naeem and asked him for a Bible. All three brothers are now following Christ and praying that their parents will believe in Jesus.





This good news, like so many life-changing accounts that constantly emerge from places of turmoil and desolation, reminds us of the urgent need for Christian media ministry. For the past twelve years, we have been involved in media ministry to the Arab region, home to some of the most unreached people groups in the world. We have had some amazing opportunities to proclaim the Gospel. A typical Christian satellite television programme in the Middle East can draw as many as 8 million viewers. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people have contacted us over the years in response to our media.

## arab focus media

Good News for the Arab World

In January 2013, we formed a new media group, Arab Focus Media, and launched an Arabic web portal [www.shabibah.org](http://www.shabibah.org) (shabibah means *youth* in Arabic) providing an Internet and mobile platform for our audio, text and audio-visual productions. What a joy it was last week to read a message on the shabibah website from Walid\* in Tunisia and another from Karim\* in Algeria in North Africa, both stating clearly that they wanted to become a Christian! What a privilege to be sending Bible verses via mobile phone to people in such closed countries as Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Producing radio and television programmes to which Arabic listeners can readily relate is a constant challenge. Our most



recent television production, 'A Rainbow of Promises', comprised a vibrant series of videos exploring some well-known Bible promises in North African Arabic. The series was filmed on location in Provence, France. The crew comprised 22 people from many different backgrounds, including Syrian, Algerian, Tunisian, Egyptian, European and Jewish. The series is already available for viewing on our Shabibah website, and is being broadcast by a satellite television partner group, Channel North Africa. God willing, one of our next television projects will be based on a radio series about 'The Names of God' and will consider aspects of God's

character and how they can influence our daily lives and decisions.

With so many turning to Christ, the area of training and discipleship is a key to the progress of the Gospel. As well as producing and distributing discipleship materials, we travel into the Arab world to teach and encourage church members there. Recent history has shown that these are days of unprecedented opportunity to the Arab world. May we see abundant fruit in the months and years to come, as a result of your prayers and the work of the Holy Spirit in this region. To God be the glory!

### M & J

\*Names have been changed

# TEN YEARS AT GRACE CHURCH

## IN DOUALA

It is exactly 10 years since I returned to Cameroon after two decades in Eastern and Western Europe. This period can be divided into two parts.

### 2004-2009 PLANTING AND GROWING

The first weeks and months were spent acclimatizing both culturally and spiritually. I had left the country as a Roman Catholic and returned as a Reformed pastor. After months of visiting churches from main denominations as well as independent, my conclusion was that although people flock in thousands to Sunday services that last three to four hours, less than half an hour is devoted to preaching, and this is void of content. The only benefit people receive from being in

First two elders of Grace church

church is the joy of singing songs and meeting with one another and so fulfilling their "duty towards God." This led us to decide firmly to plant a church on the premises of Barnabas Cameroon.

While working on establishing Grace Church we did not forget that in the traditional, and some

Recent Baptism of a church member

independent churches, there are some genuine people who love the Lord and his Word. They are conscious of the lifeless situation within their church fellowship, but are remaining there in order to do the work of evangelism and to try to witness to the unconverted who fill the pews every Sunday. They are also involved in Christian movement organizations like GBU (*Groupe Biblique Universitaire*), and VNPT/ NLFA (*Vie Nouvelle pour Tous*/ New life for All in Christ).

The GBU, which is the equivalent of UCCF in the UK, is very active in working amongst secondary school, university and post-graduate students. Their motto is "to know Christ and to make him known." The VNPT

(NLFA) is a local movement with the same ambition to share the gospel of Christ. The main concern of NLFA is reaching working class people at all levels.

Our association with these organizations consisted in leading Bible studies for groups, speaking at their camps and conferences and providing teaching program over NLFA radio station and Bible school.

Through these years, with the Lord's help, the Grace church grew as a truly evangelical church. Evangelism was, and still is, a key element in the activities of the church. With this programme we were a growing church. By 2009 the fellowship numbered about 80, a good size for a strongly Bible-based congregation. The future looked bright and very promising. We were also planning to extend our services to the youth with outdoor games on school free days, lunches for youth and adult camps over the holiday.

## 2010 AND BEYOND

This dynamic was broken when, in September 2010, the church, that was considered by many as a model of sound preaching and God-centered ministry, witnessed a terrible split. The main reasons were leadership conflicts, irreconcilable differences, doctrinal issues and sin, which is very regrettable.

The effects of this split, regardless of the causes, were devastating. Mature believers were distressed and dismayed and new believers were disillusioned. There was havoc in the lives of leaders and their families, and above all the reproach brought upon the name of Christ. This situation, which has frustrated us, is not totally behind us, but there are signs of step by step restoration.

Some left us and started another work. We are committed as a fellowship to praying that these brothers may prosper in their ministry and glorify the Lord through faithful preaching of the Gospel. There are still obstacles on the road to full reconciliation, but there are signs of improvement. We continue to work and pray in the hope that there will be healing and restoration.

We have started an outreach at St Michel, a poor and rough area east of Douala, and are witnessing God's blessing on this work. We have seen some conversions and people becoming

committed to the church. We are looking to the Lord for his guidance and provision in deciding when to start regular services in the area.

These signs of encouragement are taking place against the background of subtle persecution. Under the pretense of cracking down on churches offering health and wealth teaching, the government has closed down the Barnabas Centre building for the past 3 months, making it very difficult for us to conduct our normal church activities, as well as the ministry of Barnabas Cameroon. This situation, along with Islamic threats from Nigeria, present our most urgent requests for your prayers.

**ANATOLE LORDON**

*Evangelism was, and still is, a key element in the activities of the church. With this programme we were a growing church.*





# PARADISE – LOST?

**B**ordeaux is one of the most agreeable towns in the world to live in. You should be very happy to live here. You are in Paradise.” Such was the rather effusive praise that designer Philippe Starck gave to the city when he visited recently.

Paradise? Bordeaux is certainly a very beautiful city. It is also clean, safe and easy to get around, thanks to its modern public transport system. And the food! Well beyond any doubt, Bordeaux has the best food in the world.

But Paradise? Really? As the city’s mayor replied, “We have our problems.” The cost of living is high, especially accommodation. Jobs are hard to find and easy to lose. While the city is generally safe, there are still dangers. Last year 6 students died after stumbling from nightclubs into the river.

Homelessness, drugs, broken homes; we have all the huge issues of any modern city.

Then there are the problems you can’t see so easily. Streets full of people with no reason to live, no sense of purpose, no hope, no thought for their eternal destiny. Here, too, “Unnumbered souls are dying and pass into the night.”

Bordeaux is one of the least evangelised cities of France. Large suburbs have no evangelical witness whatsoever. The heart of the city has largely been abandoned by the churches, seeking better sites in the suburbs, places where families can park their cars. Pastors and evangelists work hard, but the task is enormous, the fields are vast and the labourers are few. For example, Bordeaux has approximately 100,000 students, and the GBU (Christian Union groups) number about 20 members in total.

At different times over the past 8 years, our ministry has been divided between outreach to students, supporting a French church plant, encouraging a small historic French church 30 miles north of Bordeaux, ministering to a group of international English-speakers in our home and supporting a Chinese Christian group. After a spell of burnout we took time to reflect, to survey the Bordeaux scene, to walk, to talk and to pray in the city. How do you respond to needs so great? What can you do?

In the future our ministry will focus on two areas of service. Firstly the English-speakers. Our English Service is becoming Bordeaux Church International. Our services are now broadly bilingual and have moved to a charming little Franco-Chinese restaurant right in the middle of the St Pierre restaurant district of Bordeaux. The congregation come from countries as varied





as Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Germany, India, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden, Taiwan, the UK, the USA and, of course, France. Our calling is to reach anyone and everyone with the gospel, and by God's grace, to establish a Bible-focused congregation in the heart of the city of Bordeaux. The restaurant can accommodate more people than our home could, thankfully, but if we grow beyond about 40 people we'll need to move again. A city-centre church has offered the use of their building, so there's scope.

The second focus of our work will be with the Chinese. If French is hard then Mandarin is something else! But notwithstanding the language, our ministry to the Chinese will be to preach and teach via interpretation, to give pastoral care, but mainly to encourage and train future leaders, using materials available in French and English (and also in Mandarin where possible). We will also continue our involvement with the Christian bookshop, just yards from the cathedral.

In the meantime, the French church plant is advancing with a newly appointed Interim Pastor and the future of the student outreach is being discussed.



Bordeaux Church Card

*Our calling is to reach anyone and everyone with the gospel, and by God's grace, to establish a Bible-focused congregation in the heart of the city of Bordeaux*

Our response is inadequate. All we can do is inadequate. Oh for twenty lives to spend reaching the people of Bordeaux! But time and again God shows us in his Word that, despite our sense of inadequacy, he delights to use us to achieve his great purposes and glorify his Son.

ALAN DAVEY



# GOSPEL MINISTRY AMONGST STUDENTS IN ATHENS



**M**uch has changed since Paul was in Athens. The agora that distressed him with its idolatry is almost entirely in ruins, and Greek religiosity is very different – but it's still there.

There's nationalistic loyalty to the Orthodox Church. They say 96% of Greeks are baptised into the Church, but on a typical Sunday less than 5% will attend. I was told recently that some bishops estimate that only 3-5% of the Orthodox population have real faith. This is probably a generous estimate. What is clear is that there is great confusion over the person and work of Jesus, the relationship between faith and works, the impact of the gospel of grace on a life of godliness, and the place of the Bible corporately and personally.

There's an increasingly deep-rooted faith in secular progress and the rule of science. It is common to speak with students who say they are 'atheist Orthodox'! The reason is almost always the same: scientific dogma rules out the possibility of a Creator and secular humanism rules out the need for a Redeemer.

A big advantage for the Gospel is that, in this context where we seek to gather, train and send university students to be the missionary arm of the church in the student world, Greek young people love to sit around and talk, perhaps not unlike in Paul's day!

'To make disciples of Jesus Christ among students' – it's not complicated, but it's not easy or quick. There is resistance to the Gospel

among Greeks, but more significant challenges stem from within evangelical culture. Many have been raised to keep as far from 'the world' as possible, filling their time deliberately with church activities so as not to be 'polluted' by the world. This is understandable, but creates obvious difficulties when trying to reach peers with the Gospel! It reflects a truncated understanding of the purpose God has for the Church in the world.

***Our desire is that this consistent, persistent, opening of the Bible with students will lead to transformed lives and a brighter witness, and a growing confidence.***



When it comes to biblical literacy, Greek evangelicals compare favourably with peers in other countries. What we have noticed, however, is a lack of confidence in the written Word of God as sufficient for every good work – in discipleship and in evangelism. There is a reluctance to simply open the scriptures and study or teach it on its own merits, rather than ‘finding a message’ from the Bible. For example, we’ve begun a small group series in James. Even after one chapter, students are noticing the difference that systematic, expository study makes. James 1 is not a random collection of pithy sayings to extract, but is a letter with a point to make, which is really only fully grasped when it’s read as

one piece of writing. We hear God’s voice in the text, rather than coming away with a random series of ‘must do better’ points.

Our desire is that this consistent, persistent, opening of the Bible with students will lead to transformed lives and a brighter witness, and a growing confidence in the task of opening that same Bible with unbelieving friends and peers. It’s beginning to happen, and we pray for long term fruit for the blessing of the whole Church in all of Greece.

Another challenge is the physical and social environment we work in. Athens is a chaotic city at the best of times, and these are not the best of times. Strikes, closures, economic hardship (sometimes students can’t afford their bus tickets), disillusionment with the system, and a growing apathy, all contribute to student ministry being slow and patchy.

However, we are encouraged by some outstanding young people. We have a small group of leaders and potential leaders with heart

and dedication. We’re hoping to start a new intern scheme (similar to UCCF Relay in the UK) in the autumn. We have a national team of part-time staff. One of these was a student when we first arrived in 2007, and says that it was in the IFES movement in Athens that he learned the Gospel, gained confidence in Scripture and developed a love for and commitment to Gospel ministry. He’s a joy to work with. There are plenty of opportunities that need to be grasped and there are significant challenges along the way, but the Lord is sovereign, and the Gospel is powerful.

**JONATHAN CLARK**





# BULGARIA—A COUNTRY AT A

**T**he 'economic crisis', the war in Syria, the situation in the Ukraine; how are, and how should, believers in Europe be responding? It is right and good that believers should care about what happens in their country. It can be a good thing when Christians get involved in politics and work towards change. We look back and respect the labours of people like William Wilberforce to free Britain from involvement in slavery. How will we look back on our response to the crises of this season in Europe?

At least one of the post-communist countries in the Balkans is now dealing with a serious dilemma. In Bulgaria the destabilization of Ukraine is causing its leadership and citizens to be pulled in two directions. On one side, because of the country's dependency on Russian gas and trade, there is fear of losing these economic advantages. Where Bulgaria stands in relationship to other European countries can be seen.<sup>1</sup>

On the other side, there are those, including Bulgaria's President, who have publicly encouraged commitment to the European Union. NATO has suggested Bulgaria modernises its army<sup>2</sup> and the President responded by calling for a higher defence budget.<sup>3</sup> So, on the one hand Bulgarians protested successfully in February 2013 for their moderate right wing government to resign over the issue of high utility bills. On the other hand in autumn 2013, what appeared to be a quite different group of people, protested unsuccessfully for more than 100 days over unacceptable actions by the replacement, socialist-led, coalition government. There is little consensus about exactly what the people want.

So how has the current situation in Europe affected the Protestant Church in Bulgaria? Are believers waiting passively for things to change? Are they indifferent to politics? In smaller towns and villages the issue of the Ukraine seems as far away as Africa and people are disinterested. In

larger cities, however, the situation is quite different because people are aware of possible repercussions. In some churches there has been a quickening of prayer for the government, heightened concern for the plight of the Ukrainians ('it could soon be us') and a dogged sense of endurance on the part of the more mature believers, few of whom seem to be among the steady stream of young people leaving the country.

One Christian-led NGO has taken the small, but significant, initiative to encourage Protestant churches (known in many 'post-communist' countries as 'evangelicals', regardless of denomination or convictions) to engage in public debate with candidates for the European Parliament regarding their willingness to support Christian ethics.

Is it wise for believers to become focused on political issues? Does it help or hinder the churches? And what is the main job of churches, if not this? These are the kind of questions that some believers are raising. But there



# CROSSROADS

*It is right and good that believers should care about what happens in their country.*


are 3 distinct generations of Christians in Bulgaria. The oldest consists of those who were involved in churches prior to the political changes in Eastern/Central Europe in 1989. Unfortunately some of those who have held positions of leadership are compromised because it is suspected that they may have co-operated with communist authorities in the past. The fact that very few have publically confessed and repented means they remain suspect even though some are still pastors and leaders of traditional churches and denominations. On their part, these leaders feel that they should not be judged by younger people who did not live during the communist era.

The second generation consists of those who became believers in the heady initial years of freedom, immediately post 1989. They constitute a large part of the many newly-formed churches around the country. Few of them have been trained as pastors, some, especially in the big cities are well educated. Most have distaste for the kind of leadership they see in the older churches, which



tends to be hierarchical, authoritarian and disconnected from real life.

The third generation is those who are now moving into adulthood. They should be busy, growing disciples, actively helping out in the churches, aspiring to Christian ministry and open to the pastoral call. However, this group is almost non-existent in the churches. The rate of conversions tapered off sharply towards the end of 1990's and has never recovered. After this missing generation there are the children of the second group. This, yet to be tested generation, is the hope of the Protestant Church, provided they stay around to take an interest in it when they grow up.



There is a desperate need for a balance between influencing society, preserving Christian ethics and values, working for the good of society and of being light to the world, calling all people to repentance and faith in Christ. Please pray for believers in this country to keep focused on the main thing – seeking to glorify God through making disciples, teaching them to obey all that Jesus has commanded and trusting that our times are in his hands (Ps 31:15).

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/Article/Page/en/LIVE?id=19876&page=FlashAnalysis#>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=160287](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=160287)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=160287](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=160287)

# 'PRAISE GOD FOR HEALING ME!'

**T**his was the exclamation of an HIV-positive patient on the final day of her hospital stay at Kiwoko Hospital. She'd been an inpatient for many weeks, suffering from a serious brain infection as a result of her advanced HIV disease. During her time at Kiwoko, she'd received endless tablets, injections, IV fluids and tubes in all sorts of places. But more than the medical treatment and procedures, she

recognized that it was the true God who really healed her.

Kiwoko Hospital is a 250-bed mission hospital in Luweero, central Uganda. It serves a wide area of the rural poor living in this region of lush, green, and beautiful Uganda. Sadly, good quality medical care, without having to pay a bribe or wait for days on end, is very hard to access for the average Ugandan. Kiwoko Hospital serves to bring a high level of medical care to those

*Our biggest prayer need as a hospital is for us to truly live up to our motto – to really display in action and word that 'We treat' but that 'Jesus heals'.*



who need it. It is a Church of Uganda hospital, whose motto is 'We treat, Jesus heals', meaning that we aim to give medical care to the best of our ability but show that Jesus is the ultimate spiritual healer.

I have been at Kiwoko for the past two years, and have mainly been working on the Paediatrics and Female Wards. We see a wide range of medical conditions – with lots of cases of malaria, tuberculosis, heart failure and complications of HIV. There are many challenges of working here – patients are often not able to afford the investigations and treatment they need, despite the hospital subsidising patients' bills. Sometimes we're unable to give adequate treatment due to lack of resources. However,





Kiwoko Hospital

it is amazing how much can be done with seemingly few resources – I’ve seen many children’s lives being saved simply with appropriate rehydration fluids, when they’ve arrived unconscious due to severe diarrhoea.

One of the great joys of working at Kiwoko, is that we are free to speak to patients about Jesus, and to pray with them. Although Uganda claims to be a Christian country, there is a lot of nominalism and prosperity gospel teaching, and a large population of Muslims. So there is still such great spiritual need for proclamation of the *true* Gospel. When a patient is severely sick, we can pray with them and encourage them to seek comfort in God’s love. The hospital Chaplain also comes to the wards to speak to patients, pray for them and hand out gospel tracts. There is also an evangelistic hospital radio that is played on the wards each evening.

However, there are also many spiritual battles here at Kiwoko. Witchcraft and traditional spirit worship is rife amongst the locals, and there is a lot of fear about a family member becoming ‘bewitched’, and, therefore, putting a curse on the whole family. Also, not all the staff



Kiwoko ward

working at Kiwoko are followers of Jesus themselves, and so, there is equally a mission field amongst the unbelieving hospital staff. Sadly these staff members do not share Kiwoko’s vision to bring the Gospel into day-to-day work.

Our biggest prayer need as a hospital is for us to truly live up to our motto – to really display in action and word that ‘We treat’ but that ‘Jesus heals’. Many obstacles stand in the way of this – busyness of the medical workload,

preventing time for spiritual discussions with patients, apathy from nominal Christian and non-believing hospital staff, and of course some patients don’t want to hear the saving message of Jesus. Please pray for opportunities to witness for Christ to colleagues and patients alike, and for boldness and courage for Christian staff working at Kiwoko to point sick patients to the One who can truly heal them for all eternity.

**NATASHA KNIBBS**



# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CHURCHES IN PNG

**P**apua New Guinea (PNG) culture is animistic – believing that spirits rule the world. Spirits are in control of sickness and death. The spirits of dead relatives can do them good or bad. They live in fear.

Christians who trust in Jesus sometimes still go back to magic and sorcery

ways when things get hard or do not go the way they want. It's so easy to revert to beliefs they grew up with. This happened during Independence celebrations in September last year, when traditional ways were celebrated. Remembering about Wiwe, the traditional Aekyom god, caused some to question the reality of the true Creator God.

## DEVELOPMENT

PNG is in transition. Culture is changing as development floods into the country – copper, gold, gas, oil, timber – often to the detriment of the nationals and the environment. Village people are at logger heads over land. Sadly some Christians involved in land disputes may resort to sorcery to get their desired end.

Mobile phones are everywhere. Phone friends break up marriages. Random numbers are called until they find someone willing to talk. Anything from the internet must be true with some kind of magical quality. Some think it is information from the spirit world. Pornography is already taking hold.

### **BREAK DOWN OF VILLAGE DISCIPLINE/ RESPECT OF ELDERS**

Many young people now attend school to grade 10 or 12 – living in school dormitories away from their parents. In the towns it is easy to access discos, marijuana, sex, and beer. Many get into trouble of one sort or another. Many school girls, even grade 6, 7, get pregnant and then try to get rid of their unwanted baby, afraid of how their parents will react.

When young people graduate it is hard to find a job. What will they do? Some go off for expensive training in other towns in business studies. Some hang around the village, no longer willing to help in the house and garden, or fish or hunt. Nothing to do except listen to loud music, gamble with cards, hang around with friends, drink beer, chew betel nut and smoke marijuana. There is little respect for the village elders, who used to control behaviour in the village.

### **FALSE TEACHING**

There are many different church groups, including Mormons, Muslims, Bahais,

Jehovah Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Catholic and Revival churches! Some offer free school fees, some offer health and wealth, some offer power. How confusing for believers who only had the Good News of Jesus for about 60 years! How can they know what to follow when it sounds so attractive and so right to their animistic mind set? What is true and what is false? Many do not know much of the Bible. The preaching is mostly about repent and believe. There is little teaching about growth.

### **WHAT IS NEEDED?**

What is needed is vibrant Christians, living whole heartedly and passionately for Christ who are not afraid to be different, not afraid to

be real and honest. Papua New Guinea needs radical disciples – light and salt in a dark and difficult world. Christians who show, by their lives, that Jesus is everything to them. It is so easy to imbibe the world's values and not be much different from those around.

As we think of the pressures on the church in PNG please pray and so help our brothers and sisters in Christ to stand firm and grow stronger.

Please pray for all believers' lives to reflect Jesus, and be always consistent with the Word of God. Pray that the Lord will help believers to show how God's Word is relevant to every moment of every day.

**ROSIE CROWTER**



*Remembering about Wiwe, the traditional Aekyom god, caused some to question the reality of the true Creator God.*





# DIVINE 'COINCIDENCES'

Looking back over my first year back here in South Africa, it's wonderful to see God's hand in the big and small details. Thinking further back to how many of the children first came to MusaweNkosi's orphanage and projects; we see situations and circumstances divinely orchestrated by God, who was at work behind the scenes, bringing them to our attention and care.

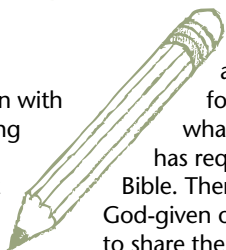
*God has brought me here to South Africa, and he has entrusted us with these specific children and families. He has given me a great team to work with here.*

This year, my main responsibility has been with MusaweNkosi's feeding scheme in Nseleni. Each afternoon about 30 orphans and vulnerable children come to the Baptist church for a cooked meal. Each day we teach them something from God's Word. Recently we have been studying the attributes of God, which has given them a better understanding of who God is. I've been encouraged as I've prepared, and taken time to consider how great our God is!

Each week, lots of my time is spent preparing Bible lessons – for the feeding scheme, monthly Sunday school teacher' training seminars, and school. I spend two mornings at a local school, teaching English, but

always looking for a link between what the teacher has requested, and the Bible. There have been God-given opportunities to share the Gospel in the classes.

Building and nurturing relationships, with the children, guardians, workers, teachers, learners, and church are vital to the work. But they require the investment of time and energy, especially with the language barrier. It can be frustrating to only catch half of conversations (if that!) and being unable to express myself properly in Zulu. But God has provided teachers who can explain some of the whys; guardians who will patiently let me try to speak their language; and children who will laugh and make me laugh as I practice.



As we visit the homes of the children, there are often opportunities to share Scripture and pray with their guardians. We see God's hand taking us to the right homes at the right time. Food parcels and blankets have been donated when there is a serious need. Often we just 'happen' to visit a home when someone is sick, or when they are just about to call us! What could seem like coincidences are far from that, as we see God directing us to the particular homes we should visit each week. A few months ago, we visited one home the morning after a massive fire. Last week we found one extra food parcel, which we were able to give to a desperate granny God brought into our path.

Situations like these are amazing, but it doesn't always happen like this. There are times when we see such poverty and hopelessness; when children are in desperate and vulnerable situations; when we spend several mornings searching for one elusive child or guardian; when things take a ridiculous amount of time; when I feel lonely; when there hasn't been enough time to prepare; and when the task seems impossible and just a drop in the ocean in the context of such need. My inadequacies drive me closer to God, and time and again he shows me the sufficiency of his grace, and his surpassing power and strength in my weakness (2 Cor 12:9).



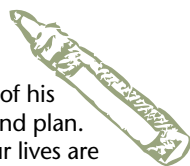
Often things don't work out exactly as I plan, and God has been teaching me to be more patient and adaptable. During the Easter holidays, we planned a 'movie afternoon' for the children, which was cancelled because there was no electricity, and, then, because the cable for the speakers was broken! We finally watched "Facing the Giants" last week, and were reminded that with God nothing is impossible. The message was clear and his timing was perfect, as afterwards one helper explained the current difficulties in her family and how encouraged she was.

People may say, "That's a lot of coincidences", but they were all part of God's plan. Wherever we are the details of our lives; where we live, work,

shop, watch or play sport and relax are all part of his divine purpose and plan. The people in our lives are not there by accident, but by his appointment. His purpose for us is to make Jesus known to them, through our words and actions.

God has brought me here to South Africa, and he has entrusted us with these specific children and families. He has given me a great team to work with here, and a wonderful team back in the UK who pray, support and encourage. Later this year we are looking forward to the second UFM summer team and short-termers joining us in the work, and to more 'coincidences' that God has planned for them, for us and for those in our care.

**SUSANNA CLARKE**



# 2 YEARS OF STUDENT MINISTRY IN BORDEAUX

*I learnt more about the power of prayer, and discovered more about our amazing God through precious times of prayer.*

Last night I celebrated the end of another wonderful year working as a short term missionary amongst students in Bordeaux. A flat full of students, oodles of burgers and kebabs, and lots of laughing; it was the perfect way to say goodbye to all the students whom God has brought into the work here. Anyone who knows a student will understand the importance of free food, and 'meal-time evangelism' (sharing our home, love, resources and the Gospel) has been a dominating theme of the student work here. Evenings like last night with many students, smaller gatherings with a handful of friends, or lunch with just one person; all have been great means of engaging with students, and enabling them to see God's love at work in our lives.

My first experience of life in France was part of my degree. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and even picked up a bit of French on the way. So when the opportunity arose to join with Fiona in the work amongst students in Bordeaux, it made perfect sense to me. I was a free agent, keen to continue learning French, and loved France. Also, coming from a church that had already invested in serving the vast needs of the French church, I was well aware of the widespread spiritual darkness that characterises France, and of the need for more 'jars of clay' to carry the Gospel treasure there.

These past two years have been incredibly exciting and challenging in equal measures. Our regular activities have been English lessons, Bible studies for curious non-Christians, 'Café Philo' philosophy discussion nights, evangelism on campus, and social events (e.g. games and pancakes night). Through these, as well as the



Finnish party



Café Philo



meal-time evangelism, I have experienced, daily, the thrill of seeing God work through me, equipping me for all that was ahead. This was particularly seen during our weekly time of evangelism on campus. Going on campus, engaging with students, listening to their beliefs, and asking their opinion on the life and work of Christ, this was by far the most daunting of our activities. During these times my own weakness was more obvious, and I saw more clearly my dependence on God. And it was just so exciting! Especially when we got to see a student a second time, either at an activity or individually, as a result of the conversations we'd had.

One of my favourite examples of this is Charles. We met him this year whilst handing out tracts on campus. Daunting, exhausting, and very hard, engaging with students whilst handing out tracts was always my least favourite of the evangelism tools! But Charles was intrigued by the flyer we gave him, based on Pascal's 'wager'. He decided to come along to Café Philo, and hasn't missed one since. We have had many exciting opportunities to share the Gospel with him, and to talk about the joy and peace of knowing God. He's even been to a Bible study! Seeing God use our activities to work in the hearts of students, like Charles, is so encouraging.

The most difficult aspect of these two years is the other side of that coin. Knowing the thrill of sharing the Gospel with someone, then seeing them continue in their struggle to find joy and peace in a

life without God is very hard. For example, let's look at Charlotte. She was introduced to the team on the occasion of a questionnaire on campus. She was interested in the English lessons, and came along regularly. Through the lessons and other social events, we became firm friends. We have had several significant opportunities to share the Gospel, and she's been to a few Bible studies. As we've come to know each other better and better, obstacles have been removed that previously distanced her from trusting God. Yet, she does not believe. Especially as I now move on from Bordeaux, leaving behind many who have heard but few who believe. It has been hard to trust that God knows what he's doing!

I think the most important thing I have learnt during these past two years, is the importance of prayer. With the help of God's Word, the influence of Fiona, and the encouragement of many Christians praying back home, every day, week, and activity began and ended with prayer. It's staggering to consider how many prayers were answered. I learnt more about the power of prayer, and discovered more about our amazing

God through precious times of prayer. As I now come to the end of my time in Bordeaux, please pray that I would continue to learn how great God is, both in his Word and in prayer.

The plan now is to head home, become a more-present family and church member, invest more time with my friends back home, and look for work there. Having seen how hard and slow the progress has sometimes been to reach a point with the students where they are ready to listen to the Gospel, I am now more aware of the responsibility and privilege that comes with the real love and trust I already know with friends back home. Please continue to pray for the students in Bordeaux, that they will seek the Lord while he may be found.

**GRACE POOLEY**



# MISSION FINANCE 2013-2014

We are very thankful to all the churches and Christians who support the work of UFM financially. Your faithful financial and prayerful support is vital to the ministries of our missionaries and to the work of UFM as a whole. Our latest accounts are for the year ended 31 March 2014. The charts set out below summarise the income and expenditure of the Mission for both this year and last year.



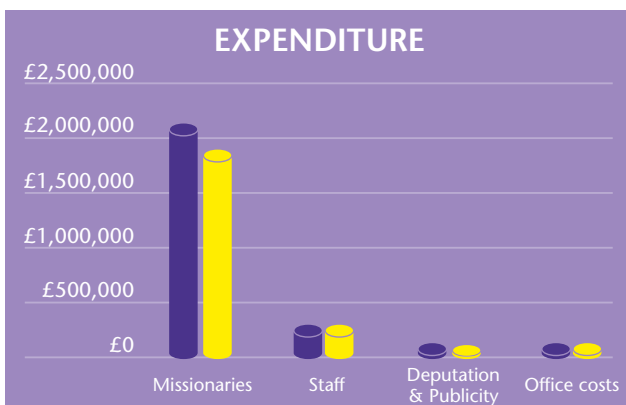
Donations to Missionary Support this year totalled £2,311,988. This represents a 10% increase on the previous year, and is a reflection of the increasing number of missionaries now serving with UFM.

Income to our General Fund, which is used to pay the costs of supporting our missionaries, was £442,841. This compares with £562,731 received in the previous year. After 2 years of significant legacy income, there was a fall in the level of legacies received this year. Donations and other income were at comparable levels to last year.

Expenditure in support of our missionaries was £2,124,022 compared to £1,929,226 in the previous year. Over the last year there has been an increase in funds earmarked for missionary support of £191,211.

Expenditure on the costs of supporting our missionaries this year was £467,861. (2013: £433,806).

Expenditure from Unrestricted Funds exceeded income by £11,601 (2013: £148,422 excess income) before adjusting for movements in the value of the Mission's investments. After adjusting for the increase in the market



value of investment assets the deficit on Unrestricted Funds was reduced to £7,585 (2013: £192,321 excess). Finally, there was a transfer of £10,000 from the Bethany Hall Trust Fund within Unrestricted Funds to the Missionary Support Fund to cover the costs of the Operation Centurion ministry.

The balance on General Fund at 31 March 2014 was £596,166. (2013: £604,522)

Once again the Council gratefully acknowledges the goodness of God in the provision of financial resources to continue the work of UFM Worldwide.

**BRIAN MITCHENER**  
Mission Treasurer



## WHAT'S ON

**Family Conference**

28 July - 2 August at  
Hothorpe Hall, near  
Market Harborough

Bible Ministry:  
David Magowan,  
Carey Baptist Reading.

This conference is open to  
all interested in knowing  
more about UFM.

For more information  
contact Debbie Fitch.

Email: [debbie@ufm.org.uk](mailto:debbie@ufm.org.uk)

**Annual General Meeting**

31 July Hothorpe Hall at  
5pm (Family Conference)

**Belfast Autumn Conference**

9 October

Iron Hall Assembly (TBC)

For more information  
contact Mrs Gillian Carson.

Email: [gillian@ufm.org.uk](mailto:gillian@ufm.org.uk)

**Glasgow Rally**

4 October at 7.30pm

Trinity Possil & Henry  
Drummond Church,  
2 Crowhill Street,  
Glasgow, G22 6SR

For more information  
contact Iain Cameron.

Email: [iain@ufm.org.uk](mailto:iain@ufm.org.uk)

## SUMMER TEAMS

This year 5 Summer Teams will be going to 3 continents.  
Please pray for safety in travel and for spiritual blessing  
for the teams and for those to whom they minister.

21-27 June	France
26 June - 17 July	South Africa
5-12 July	Hungary
8-23 July	Greece (IFES)
15-29 August	Moldova
21 July - 15 August	Brazil

## OPERATION CENTURION TEAMS

3 Operation Centurion Teams  
will be going to Moldova:

31 May - 14 June  
21 June - 5 July  
12-26 July



## COMINGS AND GOINGS

### COMING

**June**

Sue Trenier to UK  
Merv & Kim to UK  
Jason & Andie Murfitt to UK  
Jerry & Joy to UK  
Simon & Victoria to UK  
Johnny and Ann McClean to UK  
Hongki to UK  
Natasha Knibbs to UK

**July**

Andrew & Ann to UK  
Jayne Smith to UK  
Joel Wilmer to UK  
Becca Jones to UK

### GOING

**June**

Jo McMillen to Brazil

**July**

Sue Trenier to Papua

**August**

Johnny & Ann McClean to  
Thailand  
Lynne McLeavy to Brazil  
Hongki to Middle East  
Simon & Victoria to Asia  
Jerry and Joy to West Asia  
Ben and Liz Griffin to Burkina Faso  
Joel Wilmer to Sierra Leone  
Jayne Smyth to Sierra Leone

**September**

Rosie Crowter to PNG  
Andrew & Ann to E. Africa  
Merv & Kim to India  
Becca Jones to Uganda

## SYMPATHY

In recent months families in UFM have been bereaved. We express our sympathy to Irene Rowley, and Nigel and Joanne, in the loss of Joe, and to David Webb, and Lindsay and Jonathan, in the loss of Christine. We also remember Regina Kalem in Papua in the loss of her husband, Otto Kobak, who was a leader of the GIDI churches and translator of the Yali Bible.



# PRAY FOR CHRISTIANS IN UKRAINE!



**M**any have been praying as Ukraine went to the polls recently in their Presidential election.

Powerful forces are at play in this region, which have political and strategic implications far wider than just Ukraine. The chaos and unrest that, sadly, has become commonplace in this needy eastern edge of Europe could easily erupt into something much more sinister for Ukraine and for their neighbouring countries.

How can we specifically pray for Christians in Ukraine at this time of need?

## 1. PRAY THAT THEIR EYES WOULD REMAIN ON JESUS

It is so tempting when we are under pressure and threats, to focus our attention on protecting ourselves. Ukrainian believers, especially those in the East and South, are under huge pressures that affect many parts of their daily lives. Pray that God would reassure them of his presence and that they would keep looking to him, rather than just the storms around them.

## 2. PRAY THAT THEIR NEEDS WOULD BE MET

In many eastern regions people are now without work because of this crisis. Without income, families are struggling. In 2 regions all the schools are closed, there is little food in the shops, and it isn't safe for children to leave their homes. Pray that God would be both their Protector and Provider.

## 3. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD NOT DIVIDE FROM ONE ANOTHER

When this crisis first erupted, there was an amazing unity among believers, as they prayed fervently for God to intervene. Yet, as almost everyone from differing opinions on the spectrum becomes radicalised, this is now spreading into many churches. This has huge potential to ravage believers, young and old, so pray for their bond of unity to be preserved.

## 4. PRAY THAT THEY WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IN EVANGELISM

Many in Ukraine are now disillusioned with what the world had brought them. They are thirsty for something better, something that brings a real peace. Huge opportunities exist, even in this crisis, to bring good news to those who are lost. Yet believers must be WISE in evangelism at this time in order to be EFFECTIVE. Pray that God would equip his people to be effective salt and light in these dark times, and use them to reach hurting people.

## 5. PRAY FOR GOD TO DO SOMETHING SURPRISING

Humanly and politically speaking, this is a very grave crisis. The newly elected President carries good support, but the issues and conflicts that have now been uncovered could last generations. Believers in Ukraine need God to act in a powerful way, to show his might and fulfil his purposes. Pray that he will do abundantly more than we can ask or even think.



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