

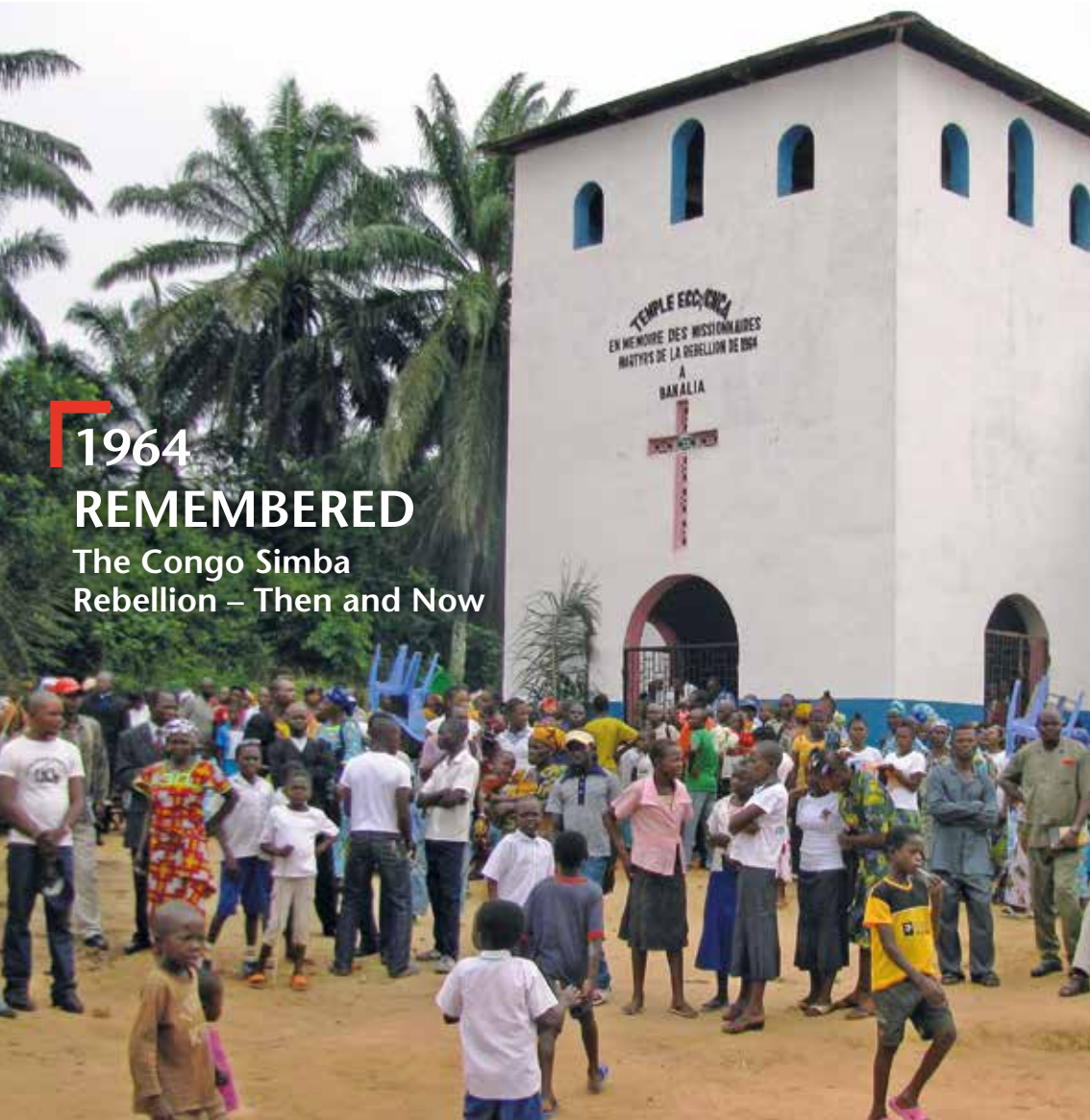
4 CORNERS



MAGAZINE OF UFM WORLDWIDE | AUTUMN 2014

1964 REMEMBERED

The Congo Simba
Rebellion – Then and Now



AN OPEN DOOR IN TURKEY

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REMEMBRANCE

Remembrance Day, 11th November, is a memorial day observed in Commonwealth countries since the end of World War I in 1918. Hostilities formally ended "at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month". It is also a day on which we remember all the other members of the armed forces who, since then, have died in the line of duty.

November is also a very poignant month for us as a mission. In 1960 Belgian Congo gained independence. The early days of independence were marked by civil war and turmoil. In 1964 leftist Simba rebels rose up against the government. As the rebel movement spread so did violence and terror, particularly in the Eastern provinces, leaving thousands dead and thousands of others scarred for the rest of their lives. It was in the midst of this horrific struggle, that, in November 1964, a number of missionaries

were killed, 19 of them were UFM missionaries. 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of these events.

In this edition of '4 Corners' we want express our gratitude to the Lord for all those who laid down their lives, including the UFM missionaries; John, Elizabeth and Heather **Arton**, Mary **Baker** (USA), Chester **Burk** (Canada), Robina **Gray**, Laurel **McCallum** (Australia), Hector **McMillan** (Canada), Dennis, Nora, Andrew and Grace **Parry**, William **Scholten** (USA), Ian, Audrey, Julian, Alison and Andrew **Sharpe** and Jean **Sweet**. *"Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."* (John 15:13) We want to rejoice in the faithfulness of the Congolese brethren and missionaries, who although they experienced great trauma, survived. (If you'd like to read an account by a UFM missionary I thoroughly recommend *'Missing, Believed Killed'* by Margaret Hayes - Day One Publications.) We want to pray too, for all those who continue to bear the deep and painful scars of those days. And we want to give thanks that God,



Earlier this year, William Brown and I visited the Memorial to those who were killed near the river in Bafwasende, DR Congo.

in his amazing grace, has been building his Church in Congo – before the Simba rebellion, through it and since – and for the whole host of UFM missionaries, UK churches and supporters, who, from the early 20th century up until today, have faithfully and sacrificially been involved with our Congolese brothers and sisters in the cause of the Gospel.

REFLECTION

Those who, in 1964, gave their lives, and those who risked their lives, are part of the **'great cloud of witnesses'** who were "... tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawn in two; they were put to death by the sword... These were all commended for their faith..." (Hebrews 11:35-39)

'Open Doors' reminds us that now, in the 21st century, "Every day millions of Christians are persecuted

because of their faith." On their World Watch List they give us a snapshot of the 50 countries in the world where persecution is most extreme (www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution). We need to pray urgently for our brothers and sisters in these persecuted countries and support them in any way that we can.

But there is a challenge here, too, for us personally and for our churches, as Jesus explains to the disciples, "And he said, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.' Then he said to them all: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.'" (Luke 9:22-24)

Having said that, the words of Elisabeth Elliot, in 'The Shadow of the Almighty – The Life and Testimony of Jim Elliot', help us to see the challenge with more nuance, but also

more strikingly. She says, "Is the distinction between living for Christ and dying for Him, after all, so great? Is not the second the logical conclusion of the first? Furthermore, to live for God is to die, daily, as the apostle Paul put it. It is to lose everything that we may gain Christ. It is in thus laying down our lives that we find them... Those who want to know Him must walk the same path with Him. **These** are the 'martyrs' in the Scriptural sense of the word, which means simply, 'witnesses'. In life, as well as in death, we are called to be 'witnesses' – to 'bear the stamp of Christ'."

And so, "We bear the torch that, flaming, fell from the hands of those who gave their lives, proclaiming that Jesus died and rose. Ours is the same commission, the same glad message ours, fired by the same ambition, to Thee we yield our powers." (Frank Houghton – 'Facing a Task Unfinished'.)

JOHN-MARK

CONGO REMEMBERED - an anniversary meeting is being planned in the London area on Saturday 22 November to remember the events of 1964. If you would like to receive details please contact Debbie Fitch. Email: debbie@ufm.org.uk





Boyulu Church, 1964

1964

REMEMBERED

Fifty years on, stories of the Congo Simba Rebellion are largely lodged in books. Many of the affected individuals have passed away, including eye-witness Congolese. It's a privilege for me, as a missionary kid (MK) of that era, to evaluate what it was like to survive that particular DR Congo war and to discover how God in his sovereignty has used the blood of Congo martyrs to grow his peace-loving Church in that violence-prone land!

I was 17 years old, the eldest of Hector and Ione McMillan's 6 sons, when Congo's Simba rebels took 72 UFM missionaries hostage in

August of 1964. "Simba" was what they called themselves, and means "lion" in Swahili.

I first encountered them while walking along the main road at UFM's oldest station, Boyulu, collecting stones for my homemade slingshot (catapult). A truck-load of Simbas suddenly came over the hill and swung their guns and spears in my direction yelling "Mateka" (their language for "butter," which ultimately they desired all white people to melt into). I froze. Miraculously, they let me live, unharmed, and rode on to Bafwasende. The next day they came back to Boyulu to tell the 14 missionaries on the station

that we need not fear their new government, but neither would they liberate us.

It was like this for most of the other encounters our large missionary group had with the Simba soldiers. Fear was their main weapon, aided by machetes, spears and witchdoctor potions. I won't go into the politics of the whole invasion; the books deal with that. Eventually, 14 MKs and 11 adults were held under house arrest at Kilometer 8, near Stanleyville (now called Kisangani). Three of five fathers had been imprisoned in town.

The actual day of rescue for many of us came on Tuesday

24 November. Our McMillan family of 8 was having morning devotions at 6am when planes began circling over Stanleyville. Distant booms of warfare excited 4 Simbas guarding our two houses. In drunken anger they threatened us all with death and promptly fired 7 shots, killing my father, Hector, and wounding me in the hip. The soldiers, including one named Wassa, ran on down the road, leaving us to be rescued and carried to the now-liberated Stanleyville airport by a mercenary contingent of Cuban-Americans.

We had to leave my Dad's body behind on a bed, but not before my 10-year old brother, Tim, had quoted to the group, while I was still lying on a mat on the floor and before we were delivered, a psalm he had memorized: "If the LORD had not been on our side when men attacked us ... they would have swallowed us alive ... Praise be to the LORD." (Psalm 124) We had all memorized Bible verses and songs as part of the curriculum of our make-shift school.

As other towns were liberated, the death toll for UFM grew to 19 missionaries, including 6 children. At Banalia, two Parry children were killed with their parents, leaving the two older, Hazel and Stephen, in an English boarding school. Our only mission doctor, Ian Sharpe, his wife and 3 little children were also killed at the Banalia ferry landing. Having been successfully treated for life-threatening infection by

him a year earlier, I felt Dr Sharpe's loss acutely. And had I remained at Boyulu, I would no doubt have died with the 6 who were killed by Simbas on a nearby river bank. One of the 6 was my age – Heather Arton – a 16-year old on holiday from England with her parents.

Beginning around 1980, after experiencing God's personal healing, 6 of 20 surviving UFM MKs returned to DR Congo to help in the healing and development of its traumatized people. At the national Church's request, we shared with them a variety of skills: aviation, electrician-mechanic, theological education, agriculture, medicine and construction. Two of us actually met our wives out there!

Also at the invitation of Congolese believers, several relatives and MKs of UFM's Congo martyrs have over the last few years participated in dedications of new church buildings where missionaries died—at Kilometer 8, Banalia and Boyulu. We now see thousands of new members including young people, and hear Christ-centred music, including apologies (for the atrocities) offered by Congolese at each site. And we rejoice that Wassa,

*"If the LORD
had not been on
our side when
men attacked us...
they would have
swallowed us alive...
Praise be to
the LORD."*

the elderly Simba soldier from Boyulu's majority Bali tribe, accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour before his death near Kilometer 8 in 2013!

God is growing his Church all over war-torn Congo. As one of the 1964 survivors, I'm convinced that the personal sacrifice of UFM missionaries and their children in the greater Kisangani area has not been in vain. Jesus said it best in John 12:24: *"I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."*

KEN MCMILLAN



Thomas, Jane, Ginny and Ken McMillan

Boyulu Church, 2014



MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU

(2 CORINTHIANS 12:9)

Was it really 50 years ago that Congo erupted into newly found independence from Colonial rule? To me it seems like yesterday!

The corner of Congo in which the mission worked was in the North-East and it was there the eruption escalated into a very bloody and dangerous rebellion. With many of my colleagues we were caught up in it, scattered over a large area.



Simba rebels

I lived in Bopepe, a jungle village, with Mary Baker from America. Just the two of us among loving and faithful Congolese Christians. Over a period of weeks we heard of arrests and brutal killings in the big city, and we watched as our local plantation owners fled the country leaving everything they possessed. With Pastor Bo Martin and the villagers we would pray together several times a day, then one day Pastor Bo told us we couldn't pray with them anymore as we were suspects because Mary was an American. So we prayed together as frequently as possible.

On 3 November 1964 we were arrested at 11.30pm. The house was searched. When morning came, we read together the 4 November reading in "Daily Light", and we read in 1 Peter, Chapter 4,

verses 12 and 13. God was telling us what to expect. We recommitted ourselves to His will, firmly believing He was in control.

We were marched the 25kms to the prison, with Pastor Bo Martin and the Christians marching with us, many denouncing the action of the rebels as we went. In prison we eventually met up with Dennis and Nora Parry and their two children, and Ian and Audrey Sharpe and their three children and also Ruby Gray all from one mission, plus 3 nuns and one priest who came a week later. So we were eleven adults and five children in total.

Pastor Bo Martin was put in prison because he defended us. Dennis Parry led devotions each day, when possible, and we, of course, prayed together during quiet moments. Christians



Mutulua - Wassa Family

*"My grace is
sufficient for you"
His grace was given
daily as needed and
always on time.*

from the local village of Banalia brought us food each day, though sometimes the rebels turned them away, and we were left hungry.

After three weeks we were told all British people would be released, but Mary, the nuns and priest would stay put. On 23 November I was taken on my own to Boepepe on a large truck full of rebels. Dennis had carried my case to the truck for me and we parted with a short prayer and "We'll meet again in Glory."

On 24 November the war drums were beating and as a village all women and children had to go into the forest to a clearing. On 25 November the drums were chaotic and a great tension fell over us all into an abnormal silence. The women could "read" the drums but I couldn't. Even as we prayed the tension intensified.

Very early on 26 November Paul Ponea, our local headmaster, came to me and told me to follow him immediately. 15 minutes later Bo Martin appeared and tearfully told me that all the white folk in Banalia had been killed, even the children, and the bodies thrown into the river.

How does one pray when receiving such shattering news? At first I was in shock, of course, and could only ask, "Why Lord? Why? Why? Why?" There was no time for more as Bo and I had to move immediately from the vicinity of the village. As we went I could only thank God for taking them Home to Himself and still believing God was in control, I could only pray, "But why not me?" I asked for grace to face whatever was before me.

Bo Martin and I moved around the jungle area for 4 weeks, eating only what we could forage from the local people's allotments. Finally on 24 December – yes, Christmas Eve! – I felt God telling me to give myself up to the rebels, and a man came and took me to them. After several hours of threats and how I would be killed, the so-called Major came on the scene. He told me I would not be killed but I had to work for them. Then I was given food and later met the wife of the village elder and was able to get her released.

Until mid February 1965 I wandered and did medial work with the rebels and was then taken to a Roman Catholic convent where there were 15 nuns and a young mother and her two children. I stayed with them there until the end of May when we were rearrested, together with 31 priests and lay brothers from their convent.

Two days later the men were taken out and killed and their bodies thrown into the river.

We could hear the shots. It was 31 May 1965.

We were all very distressed. The nuns had worked with the men over many years. Once again, how does one pray in such a situation?

On 1 June we women and the two children were taken deep into the jungle where a small clearing had been made. We were there for three prayerful, but tension filled, weeks, guarded by armed men who smoked cannabis continuously. We each prayed silently on our own, when possible. Some villagers were made to bring us food, mainly bananas and hot corn-cobs.

On 26 June we heard sounds and the sisters said they were vehicles. The morning went on, tension was very high. We had no food. Suddenly at 2.30pm the silence was broken by gun fire and screams, then a sudden quiet. Two men – a mercenary and a Catholic chaplain – told us we were free!! It was 2.35pm. Our captors were dead.

It was a God-controlled situation and later that day we all filed into the wee chapel and had a service of thanksgiving to give God all the praise and honour. For God alone, not the saints, nor the soldiers - but to God alone.

Within 3 days we were flown home. I quoted "My grace is sufficient for you" at the beginning of this synopsis. His grace was given daily as needed and always on time. Praise His Name!

MARGARET HAYES

REMEMBER RETURN

REMEMBER

It was 4 August 1964 and suddenly our mission station at Boyulu was invaded by Simba rebels, wild men, stripped almost naked, covered with leaves and vines and heavily armed with automatic guns, spears and machetes. So began four months of house arrest under constant guard. Fortunately it was the school holidays and so all our students were home in their villages.

We were able to hold Sunday worship in the church. The rest of the time we met several times a day for prayer and Bible study. One verse that was a constant reassurance to me was, "My grace is sufficient for you." The weeks passed with daily harassment and bullying threats from the Simbas. Food shortages soon

became apparent and our Congolese Christian friends quietly left rice and plantains by the door. Whenever the situation became too tense our Church leaders came and stood with us, at great risk to themselves. What comfort that brought us!

I had managed to keep my transistor radio in the linen basket so that we had some news of the outside world. On 24 November I tuned in to hear that at dawn Belgian paras had dropped on Stanleyville, today's Kisangani, to rescue the white hostages. There had been a massacre and the Simbas were fleeing northwards and eastwards out of the city. They arrived at Boyulu, some 150 miles away, at noon and we were all pushed into trucks and taken to Bafwasende, our

local government post. Our group consisted of John and Betty Arton and their daughter Heather, Chester and Dolena Burk from Canada, Laurel McCullam from Australia and Louis Rimmer, Jean Sweet and myself from England.

We were locked into a small room where already all the Catholic missionaries, seven priests and eleven nuns, were being held. There followed three days of reviling and humiliation. On the third day Simbas fleeing from Stanleyville brought the order that we were all to be killed. We were taken out in groups and marched towards the river along a road lined with Simbas baying for our death. I was overwhelmed by a feeling of peace, knowing that whatever we faced His grace would be sufficient. Inexplicably half way to the river Louis, Dolena and I were turned back. Presently the eleven nuns



REJOICE REFLECT

returned. We heard gunfire in the distance and were told that all the others had been killed. We could only silently commit them to the Lord. Those of us remaining were marched to a mud hut in the forest. There we were held for a further three weeks until a group of mercenaries rescued us and flew us by helicopter to safety and eventually to home.

RETURN

Some four years later, in 1968, I was able to return to Congo. It soon became apparent that, because of the suffering we had shared with our brothers and sisters in Christ, the bond between us was stronger than ever. One memory comes back when in a forest village an old woman clasped my arm and said, "Now I really know that God is - you came back!"



Boyulu Church

Our area was a scene of destruction with many buildings destroyed. The people were poverty stricken and short of food and clothing. Some had to resort to wearing bark cloth as their forefathers had done. But the welcome was overwhelming. I spent the next four years travelling our area, staying in African homes, helping to re-establish schools with materials and advice. By the mid 1970s everything was handed over to the National Church. A few missionaries remained in an advisory and supportive role.

REJOICE

Since then, in spite of further wars and an economy that has hit rock bottom,

- the church has grown phenomenally
- the training of pastors and church leaders continues. The Theological Seminary started at Banjwadi in 1957 is now the Shalom University, based in Bunia, with 800 students
- in spite of shortages there are hundreds of children in our schools
- a Christian radio station broadcasts the Gospel daily across Kisangani
- new church buildings have been erected in all the locations where missionaries and their children were killed

- Ken McMillan, whose father was killed by the Simbas, visits the area regularly to bring medical supplies and advice and encouragement.

REFLECT

As I reflect on the past 50 years I feel humbled that God called me to Congo and gave me both the joy and the sorrow of fellowship with the Church of Christ in that land, together with the privilege of playing some small part in its life and continued growth.

At my valedictory service in 1958 I was given the verse, "They who sow in tears shall reap in joy." Psalm 126, verse 5. How amazingly that has been fulfilled over these years.

OLIVE MCCARTEN

Olive served in Congo from 1959-1964 working with the church in schools and education. She returned to Congo from 1968-1972 to assist in re-establishing the schools.

One memory comes back when in a forest village an old woman clasped my arm and said, "Now I really know that God is - you came back!"



RISE UP AND BUILD

Banalia church built in honour of the 1964 martyrs

The churches founded by UFM in the Democratic Republic of Congo have grown amazingly throughout the country since the dark days of the Simba rebellion 50 years ago. There are now literally thousands of congregations and hundreds of thousands of believers now following Christ. In fact, it is a challenge just to keep track of the ministry in the midst of a country like Congo which is the least developed country in the world, has one of the highest rates of corruption and rape and where people speak over 200 languages. The poverty, health challenges (like malaria and sanitation, let alone Ebola), poor infrastructure (a paved road is rare) and continued insecurity (50 rebel groups are operational) only add to the difficulty. What is ministry like in such a place?



CHURCHES

For the churches, it means trying to keep a roof over the heads of the congregation and benches available for them to sit on. During the last 10 years, UFM has been able to assist in the building of two large churches that were desperately needed by the people. The church at Banalia was built in memory of the martyrs of 1964. Dedicated in 2010, it can hold about 2000 people. Other churches that are built of sticks and mud with a roof of leaves have to be rebuilt about every few years. Wooden benches can be lost to termites or be destroyed by a rebel group that goes through the area. It takes tremendous dedication to continue to advance in such an environment and this does not even begin

to address the spiritual challenges. African traditional religion is having a resurgence in the younger generation and many people turn to the witch doctors for solutions to their problems. Spiritual problems are common, even in the leadership of the churches and this creates power struggles and leaves the congregations without a clear vision of the preeminence of Christ. Continue to pray for the churches in Congo as they struggle to make Christ first in everything.





SCHOOLS

In Congo, where over half the population is under 18 years of age, the UFM related churches manage 154 primary and secondary schools with over 20,000 students in just one of the 11 provinces of Congo where they have schools. It is a tremendous opportunity to disciple young people and prepare them for Christian service, but there are many challenges. Like church buildings, school buildings are difficult to keep in good condition and appropriate textbooks are almost impossible to find. Writing, printing and distributing course material is often beyond the financial ability of the schools. One friend of the mission recently gave £600 to help print reading and maths books for the primary schools. This kind of assistance can go a long way towards making a major difference between the church run schools and the other schools which do not have any teaching materials at all. This brings in more students so the chaplaincy program is able to share the gospel with these young people and disciple the believers to follow Christ. But many of the schools do not even have Bibles for the students to use, a great limitation when we want them to grow in faith.



RADIO

Radio is another tool that God has blessed in taking the Gospel to the many in Congo who do not yet believe. The UFM related churches now have two radio stations which are highly prized by the churches. They have good programmes that meet the needs of people, but they lack the technical experts needed to keep the stations running effectively. Often there is no electricity making it necessary to purchase fuel so the stations can stay on the air. At other times the city electricity is of very poor quality and destroys the radio equipment. Repair is difficult and replacement is often beyond the ability of the local radio team, so they look to their international friends to help with continued capital investment.



BIBLE SCHOOLS

In the face of the growth of Islam in Congo and other sub-Saharan countries, the foundations of the Word of God remain the essential basis of strong churches. The UFM related churches have been developing a new Bible school in Bumba. Last year, for the first time, a pygmy enrolled in the school on a scholarship provided by the local churches. Many other students would like to enroll, but the tuition and living expenses of £200 a year are beyond their means. Half of the churches do not have anyone trained in the Bible to lead the congregation. The elders do the best they can, but it is often without much insight into the Scriptures to give light and life. More widespread biblical training would be a tremendous help for the health of the Church.

Over the last 50 years, God has done a tremendous work in Congo, but the needs are still great. Special assistance would be welcome to help the churches develop further. More missionaries are also needed to work with the churches and also to provide liaison with the mission in knowing the best way to partner with and encourage these brothers and sisters in Christ.

TED WITMER

Church school with children



OTTO KOBAK: MAN WITH A MISSION

On Tuesday May 27, 2014, Otto Kobak passed away following a prolonged of treatment for TB with complications. He had just turned 50.

Otto is survived by his father Dongla and his wife Regina Kalem plus their four children Jenni, Graham, Maikel and Inna Elizabeth; and 8 grandchildren¹. He is now sorely missed by his greater Yali family, and throughout the membership of the national church (GIDI)².

In all of this, the godly character of Otto Kobak has touched the lives of so many of us.



AUSPICIOUS BEGINNINGS

Otto was born at Ninia in February 1964. No records of his birth confirm that, because it was still a few years after the arrival of Stan Dale.

Otto was son of Dongla and grandson of Andeng – two of the greatest leaders in remembered time for the Yali people.

Andeng was an “ap hwalon” (a cult priest) and a “big man” with far-reaching influence among in Yali society. According to tradition Dongla was to succeed him, but he was one of the first to turn to Christ, his heart having already been prepared by the Spirit of God before the arrival of Stan Dale. He was like the gatekeeper who opened the door to the gospel.

CONVERSION AND CALLING

Otto also stood in that hereditary line of priestly leadership, and like his forebears, he later displayed great leadership characteristics, which those of us close to him recognized as he grew to maturity.

By his own testimony³, he grew up in a “Christian family”, because his parents had come to faith, and he

thought that therefore he was a Christian. During his high school years in Sentani, though heavily involved in the youth program of a church there, he began to realize that did not make him a Christian either. At a Christian youth retreat in December 1983, he trusted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour.

Later, reading Romans 10:1-17, he became challenged by the words and felt called to serve the Lord, “because those verses say that there are other people who have not heard the Gospel, and while they want to listen, there is no one to communicate it.” Immediately, he decided to enter STAKIN Bible School at Sentani. Graduating in 1988, he returned to minister in Ninia, working with GIDI (Evangelical Church in Indonesia) in the Heluk district, where his primary assignment was youth ministry.

BIBLE TRANSLATION

That same year, John Wilson at Luliap’s suggestion⁴, invited Otto to attend a Bible Translation Workshop [organized by the Indonesian Bible Society and United Bible Societies] and to join the New Testament translation team. Otto showed his remarkable aptitude and was a key player in bringing the manuscript to publication in 1990.

As New Testament neared its conclusion, the translation team talked about the need of the Old Testament, some portions of which had already been roughly translated. Dr Daud Soeslio suggested make an abridged Old Testament consisting of passages selected by the Bible Society. However the team opted to attempt the entire Old Testament, which with Otto's amazing ability, and determination was completed and the full Bible published in the year 2000⁵.

WHAT MORE CAN I SAY? FOR TIME WILL FAIL ME...

In remembering Otto, we are reminded of so many of his accomplishments – possible because, as he took up the Cross to follow Christ and with the words of Romans 10 echoing in his heart, Otto devoted himself to bringing the gospel of the Kingdom in all its fullness to those who did not know Christ.

He helped found an indigenous NGO called Yasumat⁶ which is a church-based ministry to underdeveloped communities; he played a strategic part in developing the church's intra-tribal region of YAHUKIMO⁷; and he started a mission prayer team in Wamena which initially promoted outreach to the Tokuni with an intercultural team of expat and Yali missionaries.



This was probably the first vital step in what became Otto's prime passion and ministry: the Missions and Evangelism Department of GIDI, which Otto led from its beginnings until now. Through it, missionaries from Papua, and later from other parts of Indonesia have planted churches among Muslim and animistic communities across Indonesia's long archipelago.

He also believed that the Papuan church shared the responsibility to take the gospel anywhere it was needed, even back to the places where the Church began. This vision led him into working agreements with churches in Papua New Guinea, Australia, Jerusalem, Greece and the Polynesian nation of Palau.

If you look at the long-term vision of GIDI (the Evangelical Church of Papua) you can see Otto's mission-minded thumbprints all over it. He has placed the gospel and the mission of God in the heart of the church.

CHARACTER AND COMMITMENT

In all of this, the godly character of Otto Kobak has touched the lives of so many of us. He could have gone far socially and educationally, but he made deliberate choices not to do so; instead he faithfully pursued the calling he had from God 30 years ago.

Now he is counted among that multitude of heroes of faith, who desired "a better country, that is, a heavenly one" and now he is witness to the rest of us: to "lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2; ESV).

Tribute by **JOHN D WILSON**

¹ Regina served in Soba as a missionary for about 7 years, initially with her first husband Gad Yokhu, and following that as a widow with 3 young children. She joined in the medical work at that time and was trained by Sue Trenier as a village health worker eventually becoming a government employee.

² Gereja Inliti di Indonesia is the Evangelical Church of Indonesia (founded in Papua, it has spread right across Indonesia).

³ This section is based on Otto's written testimony given to me in 1996.

⁴ Luliap Bahabol, one of the first Yali believers, worked with the author on translating the New Testament into Yali.

⁵ See the video, "The Yali Story" for a documentary account of the Yali Bible translation project.

⁶ Yayasan Sosial Untuk Masyarakat Terpencil.

⁷ This encompassed and unified the Yali, Hupla, Kimyal and Momina tribal churches.



GOD IS FAITHFUL

Reflections on 25 years in Spain

On the 26 September 2014 I celebrated being in Spain for 25 years. In some way the years have gone by so fast and, on reflection, I realise that so much has happened during those years. When I arrived in Spain there had been democracy for just 14 years after 40 years of Franco's dictatorship. At that time 14 years seemed a long time but now, as I reflect, I realise Spain was really in the early days of a new way of life politically and socially. Recently the King of Spain abdicated in favour of his son and that event also gave the opportunity to reflect on how Spain has changed and developed during these years.

One of the major developments for the Evangelical church was the religious freedom it brought and an agreement with the government along with Jews and Muslims. The practicalities

of that relationship are still being worked through even today. Evangelicals were misunderstood and misrepresented in the press and considered a sect by many. Churches were few and usually hidden in 'locales' (shop fronts) as these were the only premises they could find. The Catholic Church was the dominant religious force in the country and everyone claimed to be 'Catholic' even when they never practised their religion. In fact to be Spanish was to be Catholic. They were so intertwined, religiously, socially and practically. For example all the holidays were 'Catholic religious holidays'. The Catholic Church made it difficult for the evangelicals and opposed them as much as they could. I remember in Palencia a local priest tried to chase the children from the children's programme in the street and told the parents we were a sect. In another town

Children's work in Palencia 1990's

the priest had encouraged the local people to chase us and throw things at us so we would leave and that included 2 litre coke bottles filled with sand!

Times have changed! There has been a big change in the population and now almost 20% of Spaniards claim to be non-religious and 8% of the 20% claim to be atheist. The younger generations have little or no interest in the Catholic Church. But Evangelical churches have grown from 300 congregations thirty years ago to around 4000 churches today. Many of these churches began during the boom years of immigration from Latin America and other parts of Europe. There are many independent churches that have formed alongside the mainstream denominations. Many have also been formed through splits in existing churches!

Sharing the gospel has always been a challenge for the Spanish believers and for many years they struggled to just survive as a group of believers in the midst of a society that thought they were 'weird'. This meant the believers didn't really live out their faith or speak openly about it. In addition many believed that 'people won't accept Christ', or that 'Spain is hard towards the gospel', so sharing the gospel was slowed down. At times special evangelist outreaches seemed to be the only form of sharing the gospel.

Times are changing! There is now a movement of God stirring people to live out

their faith where they are in work, home and in their neighbourhood. There is interest in planting new churches and people seem to be more open to the gospel. Probably the economic crisis has helped in all of this. Spain got rich very fast and people had money and could have a good life. Now all that has been shaken. Society is different!

It is exciting to see the growing vision and passion to see Spain and Spaniards reached with the gospel and to see more churches planted. There are many challenges such as a lack of financial resources to support pastors and those who want to train for service. There are the challenges of getting people to read the Bible and encouraging Christians to work together to further the gospel and many more. But the balance is on optimism, interest and desire to see God move and work in Spain even in the midst of political and economic tensions.

I guess it is only as I reflect on the past 25 years that I can see how all these changes and developments in society and also in the churches have taken place. Looking back is good as it helps to see how far things have changed. This is one of the benefits of serving long-term in a country. My commitment from the beginning was to be a 'career' missionary' and there are many benefits. Relationships are stronger and mutual trust has developed after years of service and commitment.

Although I am always learning about culture, language, history and politics etc., there is a built in foundation from the experiences of the past 25 years that is invaluable at this stage in my ministry. I have witnessed the developments in technology. Landline telephones and posted letters were the ways to keep in touch in 1989. There was no email, no satellite navigation, no mobile phones, no Skype calls, no FaceTime or Facebook. All these developments are now helpful in ministry and in maintaining contact with my many faithful prayer supporters.

It has been difficult to see missionaries come and go over the years, especially colleagues and special friends. Long-term service teaches you many lessons about people, culture, ministry, and leadership, but above all about God. He has been the 'constant' during the past 25 years. People, missionaries, leaders, even churches can come and go but God has been faithful and thankfully He always will be. He has been the One who has sustained me. He is the One who continues to teach me, to renew and refresh me and

lead and guide me. He draws me closer to Him and into new and different spheres of ministry, even after 25 years. He keeps me dependent on Him.

I am so thankful that He has been my 'Faithful One' and I only hope and pray I will continue to be faithful in His service in the years to come.

"Know, therefore, that the Lord your God; He is the Faithful God...." (Deut 7:9)

LAURA SANLON

There is a built in foundation from the experiences of the past 25 years that is invaluable at this stage in my ministry.



Last retreat with Youth Board as National Youth Coordinator



Highlight moment - meeting Lord Mayor of Palencia

ENCOURAGING STUDENTS IN GOSPEL MINISTRY IN SLOVAKIA

PRIORITY



It is now 3 years since I came to Slovakia. It's hard to summarise that time into an article. But here are a few of the people I've worked with over the last 3 years. I hope it gives you a glimpse of the encouragements as well as the challenges of being involved in what God is doing here in the lives of students.

VBH (Vysokoškolské Biblické Hnutie) works mainly through skupinky, or student groups. The main group I've been working with has been in Prešov, a small university city around half an hour away. 3 years ago this group was on the verge of ceasing to exist. But God has worked and it's been one of the

most active and encouraging groups in VBH over the last couple of years.

What has encouraged me most is the evangelistic courage of the two leaders Baška and Betty. They've consistently prayed and invited non-believers to come and read the Bible, and they've come. Most of the students who've come are Catholics and it has been a joy to see them discovering who God really is, that he is not what we imagine him to be. He is a God who is gracious and doesn't treat us as we deserve. If there is one thing I would ask you to pray for students in Slovakia, it would be that they come to understand grace. So many

of them grow up in Catholic churches and in families and communities that teach them more about shame than about grace. The only one who can change their thinking is the Holy Spirit working through the Word. That is happening, but sometimes frustratingly slowly. Please pray for students to see that the true God is a God of grace and that he is so much better than they have ever imagined.

Another group of people I've been working with over the last 3 years are student leaders. Naturally Slovaks are shy and slow to take on responsibility. Students are happy to go along to a group if someone else takes the lead. But VBH is about students



Summer camp

Please pray for their development and growth and for Slovak Christians to get behind them and support them financially and in prayer.

taking the initiative. So we've tried to work hard at helping students see and be excited by their calling to take the gospel to their fellow students. We've done that through regularly discipling students, through starting an annual leaders training weekend and through giving them the opportunity to be part of our summer camp team. I've loved seeing how much students have grown through these things.

One student leader I've been particularly encouraged by recently is Iryna, an international student from the Crimea. With the help of my co-worker, she's started a Bible study group in her dormitory. For obvious reasons this last year has been hard for her and she's had lots of reasons to be anxious about her own situation back home. Yet she's trusted God with that and has got on with loving and serving the students around her, many of them from countries where they have little or no opportunity to hear about Jesus. There has been little visible response so far, but Iryna has had so many opportunities to share what it means for her to know and trust Jesus and she's been faithful in taking them. Please would you pray



for more Christians to come and join her this coming year and pray for international students to put their trust in Jesus.

The final group I'd like to tell you about is the team I've been working with. As a team we've grown and experienced much of God's grace in our working together. It's a real blessing to be part of an international team (Slovak, Polish, English, Welsh and, soon to be, Northern Irish) and live out the Gospel together. But we need more national workers and our dream really is to build a stable, Slovak team where workers are developed and supported.

One real encouragement and answer to prayer is that we have 2 student leaders who are now starting as volunteers in some capacity. This is really exciting. Please pray for their development and growth and for Slovak Christians to get behind them and support them financially and in prayer. Please also will you pray that God raises up more Slovak workers for his harvest, pray that we would be faithful in nurturing and developing them and pray that ultimately more students get to hear and believe in our wonderful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

HELEDD JOB

AN OPEN DOOR



It is every believer's dream to have legal status to preach the Gospel in a predominantly Muslim country. This is what the Bible Correspondence Course (BCC) has despite some opposition. The BCC is a nationwide pioneering evangelistic network which seeks to find Turks interested in the Gospel, send them material so they can discover more about the Gospel, and put them in contact with believers who live near them for follow-up and discipleship.

The BCC has years of experience doing this, but it started in 1961 as a covert operation, and is now one of the longest established

ministries in Turkey. In the 1980s there was a new level of openness and fruitfulness as a result of local magazines and newspapers accepting adverts for the BCC. The adverts were simply, "Have you ever read the Incil (New Testament)?" This resulted in massive growth in interest. In 1991, church planting teams and tiny local fellowships were brought on board for follow-up and course grading, so that the BCC became the key tool in church planting around the country. The growth and development of the internet and digital technology has resulted in the highest response of students ever.

In the last 15 years 200,000 have contacted the BCC to receive Christian literature and, according to statistics, over 50% of those who have come to faith did so through the BCC.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

Did you know that about 46% of the population in this country use the internet and Facebook? We are taking advantage of this by using several websites, advertising through Google, using Facebook and online chat as a net to fish for those looking for answers. With developments in digital technology and a creative team we are trying to use whatever means we

can to reach people. In the past the BCC has focused more on printed materials but increasingly the challenge is to make everything accessible on-line and/or downloadable on to mobile phones and tablet computers. The percentage of people who have an Android smart phone or iPhone is around 25% and increasing. So the challenge for us is to continue to produce material for the fast developing technologies. We have also produced some short films recently, hoping that this will also yield fruit.

One of our online chat operators commented recently that he had had around 200 conversations with people over the past 2 years, and one was with a woman who maybe close to salvation. Through using this technology she has been able to speak to someone in secret and without fear. Also we have seen fruit recently from outreach opportunities - healings and people becoming believers. It's such a joy to see how God is doing this.

DIRECT OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

The BCC is far more than a centre or an online/internet ministry. We are also actively involved in street outreach serving alongside other believers, including locals.

TACO, a youth outreach group, are using music, concerts, drama and have also published some literature. Our regular big outreach on one of the



islands takes place on the 23 April when 70,000 people do their annual pilgrimage to the top, only to meet us, around 300 believers, waiting to share with them through prayer, music, drama, literature, and preaching. We also have our weekly outreach team lead by David, which has attracted lots of attention from the authorities recently, because of the evangelism we are doing. His court case is still pending and his residency uncertain but we have a hope he will win the case. Outreach will always be a challenge, and a risk, but something we are compelled to do for the Kingdom.

In the past few years we have initiated a new project called 1881. The vision is for doing outreach in all of Turkey's 81 provinces over 18 months using short-term teams or anyone who is willing to go to a province and reach out to people. It is in its second term and we are aiming to reach out to students. If you want to find out more about this, or want to bring a team

The growth and development of the internet and digital technology has resulted in the highest response of students ever.

with you, then please contact us via www.the1881project.org or become friends with us on Facebook.

We presently have 4 full-time locals working with us and other volunteers. There are also approximately 75 people in the country doing follow-up. However, we need others to join our creative team with the right skills. We are losing 2 key people in our team. Please contact us if you have web design skills, are a computer technician or if you would like to come out on a short term trip by yourself or as part of a team. If you cannot come over and help us please pray for us. You can receive regular updates from us. Just check out our English website at www.bccturkey.org

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SUMMER TEAMS 2014

This year we ran 5 summer teams on 3 continents. Here are some comments from those who took part.



South Africa

SUMMER TEAM LEADERS AND THE MISSIONARIES WHO RECEIVED THE TEAMS SAID:

GREECE

"Big team (29) = more opportunities. It was a joy. Team members worked hard, we laid on 3 magnificent BBQs (for a total of just over 200 people!) and of course enjoyed being on the island again."

BRAZIL

"It was a real joy and encouragement to have them with us. Not only were they a blessing and encouragement to our ministry, but also here in our home and personal lives. We know God has used them and give him thanks for all that has been accomplished including that which we have yet to see. 87 children came to our Holiday Club which was a great encouragement."

MOLDOVA

"Despite a plague of mice in the field where we camped, and a terrific storm one evening, our camp was truly blessed. We thank God, especially, for the Word preached during each morning service and for all those who came to listen."

SOUTH AFRICA

"We have had a great summer team in South Africa. We are thankful for our wonderful hosts and the great insights we had into the ministries that go on there."



SUMMER TEAM MEMBERS SAID:

"Thank you for the opportunity to go on the summer team. I found it such an amazing experience and really have felt God use it to open my eyes to the need in other countries as well as in the UK."



Greece



Brazil

"I think seeing God's work in other places from what I am used to is a huge encouragement, that God can and does work everywhere."

"Thank you for an amazing experience."

"Thank you for praying - amidst the occasional chaos! The kids are having a great time and are really listening and engaging with the Bible teaching. We walked up the road to a sports field this afternoon, singing songs about Jesus and loving life. God is not limited by our limitations and our perceptions of whether things have run to plan or not; he can and does work by his Spirit in the lives of people, young and old, across the world."

"Go with open minds and hearts ready to use every circumstance as an opportunity to learn the lessons God is teaching you"



Moldova



South Africa



South Africa

SUMMER TEAMS 2015

Destination	Date
South Africa	June/July
France	July
Greece (with IFES)	July
Ivory Coast	July
Brazil	July/August
Hungary	July/August
Moldova	August
Southern Ireland	August
Thailand	August

We are also partnering with United Beach Missions on the following teams:

France	
5 teams to different locations	
Italy	July
Portugal	July
Spain	July
Switzerland	July

If you are interested in going on a Summer Team in 2015 contact Debbie Fitch.
Email: debbie@ufm.org.uk



UFM Worldwide is recognised by Global Connections as operating under the Code of Best Practice in Short-Term Mission 2015

OPERATION CENTURION

A new house for Casa Mea in Capriana, Moldova

I have been leading Operation Centurion Teams which have been building a new house for Casa Mea in Capriana, Moldova. To build a 4 bedroomed house in a foreign country, miles from home, with 6 volunteers from the UK and 3 months hard work, is a challenging project!

AUTUMN 2013

A team of friends of Casa Mea clear the site and the foundations are poured just before the winter sets in.

SUMMER 2014

It's all systems go sourcing bricks, cement and scaffolding along with truck loads of sand and ballast. Back in UK teams are preparing to fly out to spend 2 weeks building the house in the beautiful village of Capriana.

Team 1 arrives on a chilly Moldova day and, after clearing the foundations of the accumulated mud, the first blocks are laid to a great deal of excitement. By the time Team 1 leaves, the external walls are up to height and a start has been made on the internal walls.

Team 2 arrives to warm sunshine and cloudless skies. Floors are laid and ring beams are poured. It's heavy work in high temperatures. Jonny Sanlon joins us to video the work.

Team 3 is seriously depleted by illness so we are joined by a tremendous team of Moldovans who are keen to see the work progress. The ladies from Casa Mea provide fantastic meals and the neighbours from the village kindly give us sweets and fruit. The work progresses each day as local Christians visit and many in Moldova and the UK pray.

Team 4 continues building the internal walls and pouring

the remaining beams and columns. It is hot tiring work but after 2 weeks the building is ready to have the concrete floor in the loft poured and the roof built, this has been completed by a team of Moldovan men.

WHAT NEXT?

There is still a lot to do to finish the house, plastering, plumbing, heating, electrics and decorating all need to be completed before the house can open its doors to residents.

Operation Centurion will be sending teams out in Spring 2015 to complete this work. We would value your prayers for men to come forward to complete these tasks. Why not come and join us?

PETE NYE

"With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Matthew 19:26

WHATS ON

Called to Serve Weekend

13 – 15 March 2015

Hebron Hall, Cardiff

For more information
contact Debbie Fitch.

Email: debbie@ufm.org.uk

Irish Conference

27 – 29 March 2015

Lodge Hotel, Coleraine

For more information
contact Gillian Carson.

Email: gillian@ufm.org.uk

Scottish Conference

10 – 12 April 2015 (TBC)

Pitlochry Centre

For more information
contact Janice Brown.

Email: janice@ufm.org.uk

Family Conference

27 – 31 July 2015

Hothorpe Hall,

Market Harborough

For more information
contact Debbie Fitch.

Email: debbie@ufm.org.uk

NEW BOOKS

In recent months 2 books have been written by ladies serving with UFM.

ARAB WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

Joan Drotta £6, including postage.



In this book, which includes both English and Arabic versions of the text, Joan introduces Arab women whose stories are found in the Bible. Joan shows how these Arab women experienced God's wonderful love and kindness. The book can be read personally or used for a series of Bible studies. It is also a book to give away to any Arab ladies you may know.

WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

His Power at work in Moldova

Maureen Wise, £9.50, including postage.



In this book Maureen tells the story of the Casa Mea ministry in Moldova. It is a moving and challenging account of how God has so wonderfully blessed this ministry and brought men and women whose lives have been tragically broken into new life in Jesus. God gave Maureen, and her Moldovan colleagues Lillian and Anea, a vision to bring the love on Jesus to people living in the closed institutions and he has wonderfully provided for them.

Both books may be obtained from any of the UFM offices. Maureen's book may also be obtained from your local Christian bookshop.

GOSPEL CARDS AND CHRISTIAN GIFTS

We encourage you to look at the excellent cards, calendars and books produced by Gospel Cards. Every year they distribute part of their profits to Christian missions, including UFM. Over the years more than £300,000 has been distributed.

You can find full details of the cards, etc. on their website, www.GospelCardsEtc.com or you can ask them for a catalogue. Telephone 01656 647551, or write to Gospel Cards, 15 Brackla Street Centre, Bridgend, CF31 1DD.



SAD NEWS

Joe McCartney, who has served with his wife Evelyn in Brazil since 1977, went to be with the Lord on 13 October after a short illness. Please remember Evelyn and the family in your prayers.

COMINGS

October

Marcelo & Holly Vieira
to USA

December

Rogério & Shirley Teixeira to UK

GOINGS

October

Rosie Crowter to Papua
New Guinea

November

Daniel Caballero to Peru

December

Richard & Terece Dilworth to France

January

Jason & Andrea Murfitt to Brazil
Marcelo & Holly Vieira to Brazil



A DIRE NEED IN KURDISTAN

There are 1 million refugees in the Kurdistan Region. The population has increased in some areas by at least 50%.

I keep thinking of Paul's prayer for the Philippians. He wanted them to grow in love but in depth of insight too. This is imperative. We must not just be people with a fuzzy sense of compassion, but must be people who use our minds to think through how we care for these refugees.

They are lacking mattresses, shoes and food. Disease is also likely to set in because of malnutrition and poor facilities for keeping the human waste safely 'outside the camp', as - lest we forget - the Law of Moses clearly taught that it should be.

I am not a big fan of short-term teams. I know they do good, but all too often I see how they are limited in usefulness because they don't know the language and culture. But in this situation, I'm a card-carrying "short-term" advocate because the need is so dire. I look at how limited I am as a teacher and business owner with a young family to get out in a pick-up truck and distribute food. Bring on the Short-Termers is my heart cry! Save

the Children and UNICEF are there. Christians should also be volunteering in large numbers.

And what about education? The Kurdistan region is trying to clear the Yezidis out of the schools so their own sons and daughters can get back to school. But what of these multitudes who will then be living in campsites?

I want us to dwell on this issue for a moment. It takes a long time for school portacabins to be set up and children to be enrolled. Meanwhile, children sit in tents doing nothing. These Yezidis speak Kurmanji, much the same as the Kurds of Turkey speak. What an opportunity to say to the parents, "Don't wait for schools to open. Take the opportunity to teach your children to read their mother tongue ... and for you to learn too."

My last 4 Corners article focussed on a little international church, and our longing to prioritise preaching so that the whole congregation will be motivated to minister to the poor. This prayer has been abundantly answered. We spent a year preaching through Luke - now on to Acts - and the congregation is earnestly caring for refugees. Watch this space ... and please keep praying.



Director
John-Mark Teeuwen

Assistant Director
William Brown

Chairman of Council
Richard Myerscough

Magazine Editor
Peter Milsom

145 Faringdon Road
Swindon, Wiltshire
SN1 5DL

☎ 01793 610515

✉ admin@ufm.org.uk

🌐 www.ufm.org.uk

*Regional Director
based in Northern Ireland*
David Morrow

Room 105
City East Business Centre
68-72 Newtownards Road
Belfast BT4 1GW
☎ 028 9094 1621

*Regional Director
based in Scotland*
Iain Cameron

11 Newton Place
(Sauchiehall Street)
Charing Cross
Glasgow G3 7PR
☎ 0141 353 0666

UFM Worldwide (USA)
Suite 305,
400 Office Park Drive
Mountain Brook
AL 35223, USA
☎ 205 802 5911

✉ admin@ufmworldwide.org
🌐 www.ufmworldwide.com

Design and Production
Adept Design
01263 734198
www.adeptdesign.co.uk

