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GOSPEL AMBITION

If the gospel is to be preached where Christ is not known, we need to see some gospel ambition.

Two thousand years after Jesus looked out on the crowds and saw people lost like sheep without a shepherd, we look around the world today and see that the harvest is *still* plentiful and the workers are *still* few.

In the Republic of Ireland, the least-reached English-speaking nation in the world, there are 50 towns with no evangelical church. In Northern Yemen, where the population is 8 million, there are perhaps only 20 or 30 believers. And down the road from many of our churches, there are countless communities who are still waiting for the opportunity to hear the good news about Jesus.

With these sobering realities in mind, it's helpful to come back to Paul's words in Romans 15:20 where he writes, "It has always been my

ambition to preach the gospel where Christ is not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation."

Of course, this pioneering work is not the only valid ministry to be involved in. Elsewhere Paul makes it clear that there's a vital place to continue the work of those who started it (see 1 Corinthians 3:5-15). Taking the gospel where it's never been before, proclaiming the good news where there is no church, is not, to use the words of Christopher Ash, compulsory for everyone. But it is necessary for some. And Paul is saying that if the gospel is to be preached where Christ is not known, we need to see some gospel ambition.

This isn't the ambition caricatured by programmes like The Apprentice and personified by so many of our lives – a raw, self-centred drive to succeed



that, too often, turns into selfish ambition. No, the ambition Paul speaks of and lives out is about something else, it's about someone else. It's an ambition to see churches planted where they've never been planted before, to see Christ's name honoured where it's never been honoured before.

When I first saw ambition like this I didn't even notice. I was about 10 years old and we went to visit some missionaries in a small town in France. It felt like we were in the middle of nowhere. It was a market day and in the midst of that beautiful French scene, with its cheeses and wines, its breads and pastries, the missionaries had set up their van. They did it every week. The side of the van opened up to reveal a mini Christian bookshop and they spent the next few hours trying to speak to passers-by about the gospel. It didn't seem to be screaming ambition to me.

So, what drove these missionaries to do something that to many would have looked so weak? What lay behind Paul's own ambition to take the gospel where Christ had never been named? Well it wasn't so that he could plant his flag before anyone else. He wasn't trying to corner the market. No, it was something else that drove him. The same thing that no doubt got those missionaries in France back in their van every week.

And Paul tells us what it was in Romans 15:21. Here is the motivation behind the ambition. Here is the dream, the goal, the great desire: "Rather, those who were not told about him will see and those who have not heard will understand." Isn't that incredible?

The latest fast car, or riverside Penthouse apartment in the back of the weekend papers, will always seem more appealing than

taking the van to the market in France. Unless...

Unless we see the motivation for gospel ambition. Unless we grasp the joy of seeing people saved. "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

Friends, isn't this an ambition that's worth living for? Isn't this something worth devoting ourselves to, giving ourselves to? That dead people might come to life; that lost people might be found; that sinners might be set free. That those who have never seen and never understood might call on the name of the Lord and be saved.

MICHAEL



A PASSION AND A VISION FOR THE ARAB WORLD



What do a gifted artist living in North Africa, a theologian from the early church and the founder of an orphanage in Egypt have in common? They all lived out their Christian faith with a passion and commitment that left a lasting legacy for future generations. Ten such characters were chosen to form a panoply of “heroes and heroines” of the Christian faith, the subject of Arab Focus Media’s latest television production. The aim of this documentary series is to show that change must begin with personal transformation through a dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. The story of each character portrays the gospel in action across boundaries of culture, status and nationality. The new series will be broadcast on our Arabic website and on satellite television, in partnership with SAT-7, one of the largest Christian television broadcasters in the Middle East.

“YOU ARE MY CHURCH!”

You may wonder why Arab Focus Media places such an emphasis on communicating the Good News through radio, television and the internet? A primary reason is that media can reach people and places that would otherwise be untouched by a gospel witness. Amina* is a young woman living in a remote area of Jordan, who first wrote to our Arabic website www.shabibah.org a few months ago (*shabibah* means youth in Arabic). She began by affirming her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and asking questions about baptism. She maintained a steady exchange of emails with us and responded to articles and programmes on the Shabibah website. When she was asked to consider joining a church, she replied that there were no Christians at all in her area as far as she knew and said, “You are my church!” Of course, we will do our utmost to put Amina

in touch with believers in her country, but her longing to know Christ and grow in her commitment to him is a recurring theme in the many email responses we receive on the Shabibah website from across the world.

AN OPEN DOOR THROUGH MEDIA

“My story with Christ goes like this: while I was reading the Qur’an, I discovered that Christ is great, greater even than all. He is the Spirit of God. He performed amazing miracles and He is the One who will come at the end of time. I want you to tell me of the steps I need to take to believe in Him with all my might.”
Abdulrahman* Saudi Arabia

We launched the Shabibah website in January 2013 in partnership with UFM. The web portal is accessed by people in all 21 countries of the Arabic-speaking world, which are located in the 10/40 window, home to some of the largest unreached people groups in the world.

To give an idea of the potential reach of this media, over the past year, there have been over 100,000 unique visits to the website, 35,671 downloads of the entire Bible or a portion of Scripture and 521 people who responded directly via the site to express their desire to become a Christian. We have also received hundreds of email responses from those who wish to grow in their walk with God as well as some who ask searching questions or seek spiritual counsel and help. Visitors to the site can also listen to audio broadcasts and watch our television productions.

GENERATION Z

Our most recent television series is called *The Rock* and was developed in response to the pressing need for Christian discipleship in the churches in North Africa. The programme covers key foundations of biblical truth in a discussion format. Themes relate to the early stages of Christian growth, including assurance of eternal life, the importance of studying God's Word and of prayer, the need to experience forgiveness and the relevance of a good testimony. We filmed in several beautiful locations in the Mediterranean, including among Roman ruins, in the mountains and beside the cliffs on the seashore. The film crew, who were mainly volunteers, had a high level of expertise and some had travelled a long distance to contribute their gifts to this ministry. According to believers in Algeria, this is the first teaching series of this genre and people were

excited to see so much hard work coming to fruition.

"I don't want to follow my father's religion just because I inherited it from him. I want to know the truth – the true path to worship the Almighty God, whatever that path may be! Could you help me?" Ashraf Egypt*

NEW MEDIA CENTRE

Organising and facilitating a film shoot for a production team of around 20 people has significant resourcing implications. In 2016, we approached our church and the UFM leadership with a proposal to establish a local media centre that can serve as a hub for media ministry as well as a centre for equipping others. The centre will include offices, an audio recording studio, an on-site editing suite and sufficient space to store equipment. The centre could also host training seminars for discipling local believers and training ministry leaders. Our long-term aim is to use the Arab Focus Media Centre

as a base to raise up the next generation of leaders to reach the communities they serve with the gospel of grace.

We have already experienced God's wonderful provision and have now reached 84% of the deposit required to launch the project. Please pray with us that the Lord will direct us to the right location and property for future media ministry. The centre will also provide opportunities for people to come to assist us in all sorts of areas.

Lilias Trotter, the pioneering missionary to Algeria, wrote of a heart which is "bursting with a passion for the impossible." May we be inspired by the longing for life in Christ expressed by so many people in the Arab world and infused with a vision to reach them through the open door of media! For more about the ministry of AFM, please contact us at info@afmedia.org

M AND J

*Names have been changed



THE 1881 PROJECT

In recent days, and especially over the past two years, Turkey has been in the world news due to the changing political climate and its implications. This country is still in a state of emergency commencing after a coup d'état attempt on 15 July 2016. This resulted in a huge political change, a presidential system, and the subsequent purge of those considered to be part of the Gulen movement, which was accused of being responsible for the coup d'état.

The effects following this have been immense, including decline in tourism and growing unemployment. However, despite these things, this is still a place of amazing gospel opportunity. Is it challenging here? Yes it is, but we believe our God sent us to proclaim the good news and that is what we are committed to doing. The Bible Correspondence Course, for example, has seen people become more interested and more are now coming to faith. On

average, we have 200 new enquiries each week and, recently, we have pushed for more outreaches to take place in addition to our regular activities.

Let me tell you some of the stories of this year alone. An atheist recently professed faith who'd read 2000 books then had a dream and believed. He called the BCC and requested another 5 New Testaments. Apparently, he had gathered about 40 of his atheist friends and shared

the gospel with them, and several of them also now want to read the New Testament. Praise God!

Another guy who believed said he could reach all the students in his area. Others from Universities and libraries have requested books for their students because they are studying Christianity. Some church leaders reported recently that our BCC office staff had put them in touch with seekers and these have now come to faith and are attending their churches regularly. Praise God! We have every reason to be encouraged about what our God is doing here!

The 1881 Project started approximately 5 years ago with a vision to undertake outreach to all 81 provinces in an 18-month period. Initially it was a project to commemorate 50 years of the Bible Correspondence Course but the project has continued. The focus of the second phase was on reaching students, then we had a prayer year, and this

past year the goal was to reach out to 18 provinces in 12 months. We have seen our Father work throughout the 5 years. People have been called to plant churches in new areas; we have seen people come to work long-term here; New Testaments and other literature has been distributed all over the country and people have heard the good news and believed.

In 2018 the project itself will conclude with an outreach that has never been attempted before – **all 81 provinces in 2 weeks!** We are praying and believing for around 150 people to join us both from inside the country and outside. Are you interested in joining? Please consider coming over the help us!

We are searching for people to join 24 teams. Each team will have an experienced leader and will provide orientation, training and support. Each team will do evangelism in 3-4 provinces, and, depending on the gifts of the team and the

leader, will prayerfully decide how they are going to do it. We already have several teams planned from different nations; Korea, Germany and Albania. We long to see and urgently need more. Please check out the website for more information or email us at info@the1881project.org

The dates are:

Arrival: 14 July
Orientation: 15-16 July
Outreach: 17-26 July
Debrief: 27 July
Departure: 28 July

If you cannot come please pray that the Lord will bless this project and all those who will be involved in it.

D



CARING FOR WIDOWS AND ORPHANS

*Religion that God our Father
accepts as pure and faultless
is this: to look after widows
and orphans in their distress.*

James 1:27

Who are the widows and orphans in our communities and cultures? Who are those who are vulnerable, lacking security and in need of care and protection? Refugees? The homeless? Those with disabilities? The list could go on.

James tells us to care of such people.

Kiwoko hospital, in rural Uganda, is a mission hospital that was set up to do this by providing holistic care in an area ravaged by civil war. The population are mainly peasant farmers, living hand to mouth, with no other means of accessing good

quality health care. Kiwoko is a beacon of hope and has a reputation for care and compassion.



Most of my work is in the hospital's neonatal unit. The unit admitted over 1200 babies last year. That's twice the number of annual admissions to the regional referral unit in the University

Hospital of Wales in Cardiff! With 30 nurses and 1 doctor we are very busy! There can be up to 50 babies on the unit at times so the ward round alone can take over 4 hours, then with new admissions, sick babies to review, and procedures to complete there is rarely a dull moment!

The commonest reason for admission is prematurity. Our smallest babies weigh less than a bag of sugar (1kg, 2.2 ounces), have skin that is almost transparent, forget to breathe, and are very susceptible to infection. There is no doubt these tiny babies are vulnerable and totally dependent.

Yet they are also precious souls, made in God's image and melt my heart! Each has their own personality and from that very early age can make their wants known – usually to be fed. They, and their families, face many challenges during their NICU stay. As staff, we have the privilege and sometimes heartbreak of walking that journey with them. We rejoice when they don't need the CPAP to help them breathe any longer, celebrate every extra ml of milk they manage, congratulate them when they reach 1kg, or are big enough to move from an incubator to a cot and praise God when discharge day arrives.

We also feel anxious when they are struggling to breathe, hope with every feed that they will stop vomiting, share the disappointment when their weight has decreased and dread seeing an infection overwhelm them. It's during these times that I most often feel prompted to pray with the parents. What a privilege to be able to commit these tiny lives into the hands of our good and compassionate God. One mother reminded me as she was discharged that we had prayed together for her baby, and was full of praise to God. Others have named their babies Kisakya (Grace), or similarly significant names, glorifying God for the lives of their babies.

Sometimes the ending is not so happy. The death rate on NICU is low and we



praise God for significant improvements in the outcomes for the very small babies, but we lack many of the resources available in wealthier countries. At times this contributes to the death of a baby who would likely have survived elsewhere. After working in well-resourced settings in the UK, I find this particularly hard, however, the hospital motto is a great reminder, "We treat, Jesus heals". He is all-powerful and is not limited by our lack of resources. Each of the NICU nurses has amazing/unlikely survival stories to tell, from 800g premature babies, to fitting babies, to those with deadly infections such as

tetanus, all surviving despite the challenges they faced. Nothing is impossible with our God!

As we seek to offer the best care we can, we also commit each baby into the care of a loving heavenly Father who does all things well. We ask him to comfort those whose babies don't survive and give him the praise and glory for each baby who goes home well. Our prayer is that the families and friends of these babies will see something of God's love through us and that they, too, will experience his love in Jesus and come to know him as their loving heavenly Father.

DR BECCA JONES

GREAT GOSPEL OPPORTUNITIES IN KURDISTAN



We've been in Kurdistan for nearly 8 years now and are grateful to God for blessing our private language consultancy where we are transparently doing useful work and have a lot of freedom. For example, this year another family with UFM have been able to come on board and devote themselves full-time

to language learning. Pray for their endurance and joy in this great and necessary marathon.

It is difficult to explain to Westerners quite what Anna spends much of her week doing, although those who follow her blog can picture it quite well! Yes, we call it 'visiting families', but you have to remember

that many women do not have much of a life outside the home and so a visit filled with Bible stories, arts & crafts and sincere, compassionate friendship – with the ever-handy blood pressure reader – is an holistic Christian outreach of great importance. It feels unimpressive because it's done home-by-home not in a grand building.

(Sometimes, sadly, Christian 'centres' expect locals to meet us *on our terms*) I'm grateful to God that a flexible schedule allows me to help with the never-ending home tasks and, so, free Anna up for the rigours of home-schooling four children. Please pray for us, "a family trying to witness to other families for Christ, longing to see whole families come to Christ."

Spiritually, our city is still a wilderness. The New Testament in the local dialect has still not been published, although we make good use of an app which puts the drafts at our disposal on family visits, in taxis and in shops. In the last couple of years we have seen a Kurdish-speaking fellowship emerge and it has been a great joy to help one or two believers start to teach the Bible for themselves. However, the work feels very weak, not least because none of those who attend the fellowship are actually from this province; they are Kurds who have been displaced from Syria or the Mosul region to the south.

We thank God that a regional economic collapse forced our language consultancy to move from teaching English to focusing more on the mother tongue. We have gained a lot of positive media coverage for our development of the wonderful online Kurdish dictionary and we make a priority of inputting Bible vocabulary. We call this "Bible-Driven Language

Development." You can read a report and listen to a podcast about this. We're hoping the approach may work in other countries too.



*Please pray for us,
"a family trying to
witness to other
families for Christ,
longing to see
whole families
come to Christ."*



A recent trial we've faced is due to modern missionary funding methods. In Victorian times, if a pioneer needed to commission a dictionary, he could write to the home committee and they would raise the funds for him, since it would be seen as a "mission-wide project." For example, in 1891 the American Mission Board funded Sir James Redhouse's classic Turkish-English dictionary; his work endures today and is available through Amazon. Today's practice of leaving fundraising

in the hands of individuals and churches can work okay, but it gets stuck in the mud somewhat when an individual ventures into a project that requires greater funding.

Of course, we are grateful for the individuals and churches that support us but, now that we are employing local editors, I have found myself drawn away from great opportunities to teach the Bible in order to do fundraising. Please pray that God provides the funds so that this dictionary (up & running on ku.wiktionary.org) will be developed and will continue to aid Bible translation and preaching.

Distraction is a time-honoured strategy our Enemy uses against the church! Just read Acts 6. We now have so many opportunities to spread the Good News and to train believers and potential church planters. Pray that fundraising does not crowd out Word ministry.

These are very uncertain days for the Kurdistan Region in Iraq. We do not know how the central government will deal with this Region that, like Catalonia, tried to gain independence. We hope that anyone in power will see we are doing good for families, for education and for language development. And above all, whether we are praised or persecuted, we ask God to continue to build his church here.

For more information, please email robwarnerzeph39@gmail.com

*For a great door
and effectual is
opened unto me,
and there are
many adversaries.*

I Corinthians 6:9

AN OPEN DOOR AND MANY ADVERSARIES

Since the start of OneHundredFold we have experienced what the apostle Paul was talking about when he said that he was seeing great opportunity and many adversaries at the same time. This year has been like that. In 2016, we had found ways to safely distribute digital Bibles to people in closed countries and were able to do that for more than 200,000 people. Also in December of 2016 Joseph successfully completed 3 years for treatment for leukaemia.

So, going into 2017 we were excited to see what might be possible in our family and in the ministry. But then the adversaries arrived. In the Spring, we were having major technical problems and the same method that

worked so well for digital Bible delivery in 2016 was broken and we could not figure out how to repair it. Our family was preparing a time of gratitude to share what the Lord had done for us during Joseph's treatment. We invited many people who were not believers to come but then we had a venue change at the last minute and lost our planned programme. Then Jerry Jones, our Chief Operations Officer, began to see his health decline rapidly. Soon he was placed on a dialysis list and was having congestive heart failure.

THEN WE PRAYED

Joseph's event looked hopeless but, then, the Lord provided an amazing choir, the Belfast Community

Gospel Choir, to come and share. In the end, the event was better than anything we had planned. Thanks to Jonny Sanlon, we have a video of the whole event and would invite you to see it and rejoice with us at prayforjoseph.org

After the time of gratitude, we took a family holiday for the first time in 4 years, looking forward to a time of rest and recovery after Joseph's long treatment. But the adversaries arrived and Ezra, our 3-year-old, acquired a very aggressive fungal infection of his scalp. Weeks of seeking medical treatment were not helping and Ezra was having horrible symptoms and pain. On the team, we still could not figure out how to solve our technical problems and Jerry appeared to be near death.

THEN WE PRAYED

Ezra was admitted to the hospital with one of the most advanced cases of fungal scalp infection seen at the Children's Hospital. That week we launched our first attempt to overcome our technical problems in delivering digital scriptures. During the time Ezra was in the hospital we would see more than 10,000 Scriptures go out to hard places. Then on the team, Jerry made an amazing recovery and to the shock of his doctors actually saw his kidney function improve and so that he was removed from the dialysis list.

But the adversaries were not done with us yet. Just after our holiday Kate's foot was injured and it was baffling all the doctors as to what exactly was wrong. She was in great pain and on crutches all summer. While Ezra was being cared for in the hospital a deeply embedded hematoma worked its way out of Kate's foot and burst open the top of her foot. So, the day I brought Ezra home from the hospital, I took Kate to the A&E with a nasty looking open wound on her foot. And on the team Jerry did not get to enjoy his improved health for long as he was diagnosed with colon cancer and was scheduled for surgery that he was only given a 50/50 chance of surviving.

THEN WE PRAYED

While progress was slow, Kate's foot began to improve and now she is walking normally and her foot is fully healed. Though told that the damage to Ezra's scalp was

so severe that it might be a year before we would find out if his hair would grow back, we are seeing a slow, but steady, recovery and tiny hairs everywhere. And Jerry survived his surgery but, not just survived, because he has now been told he is cancer free! During all of this we launched a second major digital Scripture campaign and have seen more than 130,000 digital Bibles delivered.

After a summer of visitation from the adversaries we have had an autumn of harvest. The graphic shows some of the ministry outcomes

for OneHundredFold in 2017 and we see even more opportunities before us in 2018. We expect the adversaries will show up again, so we would ask you to pray with and for us. One way you can do that is sign up for Prayer Flare – a text message service that we use to share prayer needs and answers to prayer delivered right to your phone. You can sign up to Prayer Flare by sending a text to 075 20 63 11. Please join with us.

ED



MINISTRY IN 2017



91,000+
Mustard Seed



200,000+
Digital Scripture



5,650+
Gospel Presented



950+
Spiritual Conversations



220+
Profession of Faith



8,000+
Theological Training



400+
Helping House Churches



500,000+
People Served



30+
Ministry Partners



30+
Staff Members

I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU

Isn't it interesting how God works out his plans; we expect one thing and he is doing something else. We didn't plan to become missionaries in Bulgaria but that is what happened!

We are both born again believers, Nora, from Ireland was converted when she was 18, and I, Gisli from Iceland, in 1999. We met on a Christian counselling course in 2008, got married in 2009 and 2 days later we landed in Bulgaria to work on a project with trafficked victims. This didn't take off so we both sought the Lord's guidance. We decided that Nora would stay teaching to provide us with finance and I would start a Christian Counselling Service.

In the first 2 years we worked a lot with Christians here in Sofia, including missionaries. One couple who had been serving here for almost 10 years were impressed with

the change in the Bulgarians we had counselling and suggested we become part of their Mission team, SEND international (an American Organisation). This meant we needed a sending organisation from Europe to be part of SEND, and that is where we got to know and joined UFM.

We can say we came in the backdoor because we have never been able to raise the full support necessary to serve on the field. So, we are tentmakers, selling part of our counselling service to the International Community, who actually subsidise those we came to initially work with, vulnerable people like prostitutes, trafficked victims and children in the Roma community.

After 4 years teaching at the International School here, Nora joined me in the Counselling Service and has also been working with 2 different ladies on two different projects. The first is at a secular orphanage in an area with high sex-trafficking and prostitution with 11-18 year old girls because at 18 they must leave the orphanage and often end up in prostitution. In a secular organisation we have to be careful we are not accused of proselytizing so the goal is to build up their awareness, self-value and self-esteem and to teach them to set boundaries and have choices. Their understanding on life and expectation of their role in the future is quite broken. For example, they generally identify love and falling in love with having





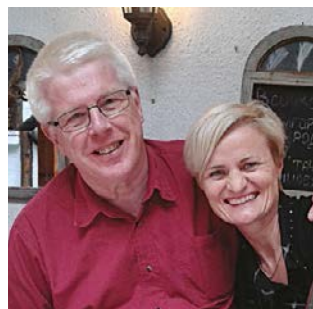
sex, and nothing to do with mutual respect and values.

The second project is working with a Roma woman who came for counselling to Gisli for a few years, she is uneducated, an ex-drug addict who supported herself through prostitution. This is how amazing God is and how you can never predict his plans for your life. **Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."** This lady feels the Lord has led her to work with Roma children using education. She has spent 4 years building up a relationship with a particular Christian Roma camp here in Sofia and asked Nora to use all her teaching and counselling experience to help her to get the kids motivated. In the weekly work there has been much joy, and also disappointment, but everyone agrees in both projects the hand of the Lord has been seen and that the kids have changed. Sadly, late this summer the camp was torn down by the government.



The leader of the project and the pastor of our church here are looking to buy land to continue the work with an even bigger vision of trying to get the children to stay in education and training the parents to pay taxes and pay for utilities.

Gisli has been counselling up to 40 different nationalities, individuals and couples with issues ranging from relationship problems, depression, anxiety and the effects of abuse. Some have been severely traumatized but one of the biggest challenges was counselling trafficked victims for 4 years who have been rescued. His goal with all has been to demonstrate the love and compassion of God to anyone who seeks help, including men, women,



church leaders, Christians and Non-Christians, homosexuals and lesbians. One homosexual is now married and has a little daughter. We thank the Lord that he has given much wisdom in the Counselling Room!

And what about the future? He let us know at one point when we were very close to giving up, **Exodus 23:20 "See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared!"** We plan to train Bulgarians in Christian Counselling so basically, we will work our way out of our roles here! It will be interesting what the Lord has in mind!

GISLI AND NORA



MAKING DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES

This week I got a little card in the post. On the front was a group of smiling students standing on top of a hill in Cyprus. On the back was this message, "Thank you for walking alongside me this year and sharing your insight and life-with-Jesus with me! It was a great idea for you guys to start the Young Staff Network. Here are a few of the smiling faces that continue to benefit from the time you spent discipling me. That's the thing with discipleship. It ripples to the end of the earth!"

I love being part of IFES. I love its vision of seeing students built into communities of disciples, transformed by the gospel and impacting the university, the church and society for the glory of Christ.

Having been part of this ministry more or less since I started as a student nearly 17 years ago I've been so encouraged seeing God at work in my own life and in the lives of students all across Europe. What a privilege!

But being involved in this ministry can also sometimes be lonely. I've felt that and I'm from a well-resourced church and student movement and am well supported. So, imagine what it's like to be the only staff worker in a pioneering movement in Macedonia, or one of two staff in Croatia in a student movement that basically collapsed and lost all its students 4 years ago and having only become a Christian fairly recently. Being an IFES staff worker

I love being part of IFES. I love its vision of seeing students built into communities of disciples, transformed by the gospel and impacting the university, the church and society for the glory of Christ.

can be really isolating and that isolation can lead to discouragement, lack of perspective, burnout... You might be able to survive for a while, but eventually it takes its toll.

It's interesting that Jesus never sent out his disciples alone. He always sent them in teams and I think, like everything Jesus did, that was deliberate. In

life, and in ministry we need relationships, we need community. That is one of the reasons why in IFES Europe we have started the Young Staff Network (YSN). This is a group of new staff from all over Europe who come together for a year to learn, grow and support each other as a community through meetings together in person and over Skype and a study programme. We want to help these staff lay down good foundations and help them apply the gospel to the way they think about themselves and their ministry. We want it to be a place where they can celebrate each other's successes and encourage each other in their struggles. And we hope that what they experience and learn in this community, they can then take to their own contexts and home communities to bless others.

As I have journeyed with this last year's group of young staff there has been one challenge that these staff face that has particularly struck me. That is the challenge to be missional. This might sound strange. Surely full-time gospel workers find it easy to spend their time making disciples of Jesus?! No, they don't. There is so much temptation to be driven by other people's expectations, maintaining programmes and structures, doing things that others can see, rather than simply sharing their lives and the gospel with others who don't yet know Jesus. In one of our recent gatherings one of the staff shared that

he knows it would be more in line with what God has called him to do to spend more time with less people, showing and teaching them what it means to follow Jesus, but he'd rather do other things because it means he gets more recognition. This is a heart issue. I love that God was helping him to see that, and that he was able to express that honestly so that others in that community

could also recognise that same temptation in themselves and ask for God's grace to help.

That's ultimately what the YSN is about. Helping IFES staff to see that we are disciples of Jesus, called by him to make him known so that others can become his disciples too. Please pray for us as we seek to do that.

HELEDD JOB



PLANTING HEALTHY, GOSPEL-CENTRED CHURCHES IN FRENCH-SPEAKING EUROPE

God has been at work in wonderful ways in French-speaking Europe over the past 70 years. Hundreds of churches have been planted and many saved. But there is much work left to be done: his sure promise is that “the earth (and even French-speaking Europe) will be *filled* with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” Habakkuk 2:14

We are the de la Hoyde family, and we moved to the Paris Region in 2015 to get involved with church-

planting in French-speaking Europe. We had been praying and planning for an opportunity to open up in France since 2001, and were so grateful when the Lord finally opened the door two years ago for us to come and get involved with what he’s doing here.

We were sent with UFM by our home network of churches, The Crowded House, and by Acts 29, with this big vision: “to help to see French-speaking Europe littered with healthy, gospel-centred church for the glory of Jesus.”

A THREE-PART MINISTRY

Our ministry is comprised essentially of three parts. First, we’ve been **adapting as a family** to living and ministering in France, and ministering the gospel in our local area. Laura and the kids had very little French when we came and God has been so kind in helping them all make great progress. We’re thankful, too, for all the opportunities we’ve had to build relationships through schools, clubs and our neighbourhood to share the gospel and to introduce local folk to our church family.



Second, we're involved in a church-plant to the east of Paris in our town, Val d'Europe. This is a town of 30,000 people with no other evangelical church and the church started its weekly services just a few months before we arrived. Del has been serving as an elder, and it's been great to get stuck in with leading, preaching, discipling young adults and running evangelistic events. The church is now 80-100 on a Sunday and Del is coaching a young man who we hope to send out in the next year to plant a new church in Villeparisis, another nearby town of 30,000 with no gospel church.

Third, Del works for half the week as Director and Assessment Coordinator of **Acts 29 French-speaking Europe**, a church-planting network which aims to help French-speaking churches and denominations to plant healthy, gospel-centred, church-planting churches by assessing, coaching, training and supporting planters and planting teams. It has been a joy to assess, coach and support planters in very different contexts and to see the Lord gathering together churches and saving people in such diverse places as central Paris, rural Corrèze, Switzerland and Belgium.

THE CHALLENGES

Our boys faced some bullying at their school last year, leading to our putting the oldest ones in a new school and home-schooling the smallest one this year. Not what we planned, and painful



to be leaving the school community we'd invested in missionally and where we felt at home; but the Lord has been kind in working good things through all of it. It's not been easy adjusting to a new church culture with different values and priorities either – but we've learned plenty through that too!

THE ENCOURAGEMENTS

Encouragements have been many, as outlined above, but one is to see how France in particular is a springboard to mission among unreached people groups all over the globe. Del travels to the Ivory Coast in February as we build a partnership with a French planter working in an unreached people group there; and the major cities such as Paris and Marseille are simply full of refugees and folks from otherwise difficult-to-access countries. The Lord in his sovereign purposes is bringing the nations to French-speaking Europe!

THE NEEDS

Here are the needs that are on our hearts as we look to the future:



Training: how can we effectively and rapidly train up planters and teams to plant healthy, gospel-centred churches to reach both French people and the nations?



The centrality of the gospel: how can we help planters and planting teams to grasp and enjoy the length, breadth, depth and height of the gospel, and to have the confidence that the gospel really is all we need and the answer to every question?



Growing a family, not a meeting: our churches are finding it's easy to grow a Sunday meeting in the major cities, but not so easy to grow a family of disciple-making disciples. How can we plant churches which display the glory of God in the gospel through the everyday community life of sinners saved and being restored by grace?



Mission through community: how can we grow a culture of doing mission together as a church community, taking not just the gospel message but also the community created by the gospel into the darkest parts of our countries?

We're delighted to be prayerfully working out the answer to these questions and to be following the Lord wherever he leads. Do get in touch if you'd like to join us on God's glorious mission in French-speaking Europe in prayer, in finances or in person. And check out www.acts29.com and www.crosslands.training to find out more!

DEL DE LA HOYDE

SERVING SHORT-TERM AT LIFE ACADEMY, BURKINA FASO



Through my links with UFM and previous summer team to **Burkina Faso** I heard of LIFE Academy; a small school in the capital of Burkina Faso. The aim of the school is to provide a Christian-based education for children, enabling their parents to refocus on their own mission projects across Burkina. Children attending the school come

from all over the world, but are taught through their common language – English. The school started with just 14 pupils, but has now grown to 25 students across 4 different classes. Most of the students attend the school full-time, but a few participate on a part-time basis, choosing to take some courses online or at home to make up a full-time table.

When I heard of LIFE Academy, I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to use my degree to serve God – Primary Education with a specialism in Modern Languages (French). As my university term ended in April, I was able to travel to Burkina for 6 weeks across April and May for the past two years. In 2017 I was joined by Fiona Boddington!

During both trips, my main focus was teaching at the school, which in turn released parents from their teaching responsibilities. I also helped out with practical tasks such as re-organising the library and major end-of-year clean-ups!

LIFE Academy is an absolute joy to teach at. If anyone is wondering about a new way to use their teaching qualifications (or interest in teaching) and has a heart to serve God, please do consider serving at a school for missionary children! Both times I have come away feeling like I have learnt more than I have taught! Different from most schools in the UK, the children have Bible class each day where they learn from God's word and pray together, which is such a blessing to be part of. The children are not only full of knowledge and joy, but have such a deep faith that encourages my own.

A highlight for both of us each week was the opportunity to be involved with 'Kids of Hope', a programme was set up to



help the 'beggar boys' in Ouagadougou. Every day a free meal is prepared and offered to the boys who are between 6 and 18 years old. We went along to help on a Saturday when the boys would play games, wash their clothes, have lunch and most importantly hear about Jesus in their local language. Despite a major language barrier, as these boys only spoke a local language, it was a pleasure to be able to spend some time playing games and sharing a meal with them.

Although very few people have heard of Burkina Faso, it is a country that holds a great piece of my heart, and I do hope I will get to return to serve the Lord there in the future. As with every time I have served abroad (or at home!) I left knowing the people and the experience taught me far more than I could ever think of teaching them. Serving abroad opens your eyes to a multitude of people who have not yet heard about Jesus, across the world, but also on our own doorstep.

LAUREN BIRNEY



NEW TO UFM

Thailand

Tom & Nerys King

Tom and Nerys are from Highfields Church in Cardiff. Tom was a secondary school Chemistry teacher for 8 years before he and Nerys studied at Union School of Theology in South Wales. Nerys studied Psychology before taking further courses in Counselling and Mental health nursing and worked as a psychiatric nurse.

In 2007 Nerys had the opportunity to go on a short-term mission to Pattaya, Thailand, working in a children's home for 6 weeks. Many of the children in the home were a direct result of the sex industry and it was such a blessing to see them being raised in a Christian setting. However, visiting the city both day and night revealed a spiritually dark place where people are trapped in the corruption and slavery of the sex industry. This ignited a deep burden and yearning for Thailand.

Since then Tom & Nerys have visited Pattaya several times and linked with a Christian organisation called Tamar Centre that works directly with those involved in the sex industry. Nerys hopes primarily to work with girls and is expecting to face issues of abuse, addiction, abortion and hopelessness and Tom plans to be involved in pastoral ministry. They both feel a deep longing to disciple those lost in that city, sharing with them the gospel and the love of Christ.



Middle East

M & L

M and L were accepted to serve with UFM in 2011 after studying in South Wales. Their sending church is Beeston Free Church in Nottingham. M is an engineer and will be exploring the possibility of engineering consultancy work. L is full-time mum to their two daughters. They are serving in the Middle East alongside J & J, initially learning the local language with a view to evangelism, discipleship and church planting work.

Ireland

Seth & Jessica Lewis

Seth and Jessica are from Daleville Baptist Church, Virginia in the USA. They have been working for 9 years in Ireland as part of a church plant in Youghal and have dual Irish citizenship. They have recently relocated to work with Midleton Baptist Church in Cork to plant a church in Carrigtwohill. They have 3 children, Daniel (10), David (8) and Rebekah (5).



OneHundredFold

Justin & Lisa Black

Justin and Lisa and their three children, Lucy (17), Emma (15) and Thomas (14), live in Bangor, N. Ireland and are members of Bethany Baptist Church. Justin has been working as a self-employed IT consultant and he and Lisa have had a strong interest in serving God with their gifts. Justin's parents trained with New Tribes Mission in England and the USA before joining the staff team at Matlock Bath in England. It was during their time in the USA that Justin came to faith in Christ. Justin heard Ed Underwood speak at Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention and went on to find out more about the work of OneHundredFold. Their son Thomas has congenital conditions and is scheduled to have major surgery this year and next which makes being based in N. Ireland a perfect fit for the family.



France

Gethin Jones

Gethin grew up in Wales and is a member of the International Presbyterian Church in Ealing, London. After University he spent two years with IFES in Paris. Although this was intended to be short-term service, he began to feel very strongly that the churches in France are not only small, with many lost people still to reach, but also weak in their understanding and enjoyment of the riches of the gospel. He felt compelled to commit to France for the long-term. He has studied at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, for the past 3 years.

Peru

Charles Hart

Charles became a Christian at the age of 17 after getting to know a man who came into his parents' business carrying a Bible. This man later gave him a New Testament and it was through reading it that Charles encountered Jesus and was irresistibly drawn to him, recognising his own need of a Saviour.

Charles lived in Spain for 7-8 years and, following his University studies, has been working as an apprentice with Carey Baptist Church in Reading, working with International students. Charles sensed God's call to Peru which was confirmed while spending 5 weeks with David and Bertha Barnes last summer. Later this year he is planning to begin studying theology in the USA for 2 years before going to Peru.

Uganda

Bosco & Heidi Bukeera

Bosco and Heidi are members of Three Bridges Free Church in Crawley. They have two sons, Ezekiel (2) and Eleazar, born in September 2017. Bosco grew up in Uganda, where he became a Christian while working in the home of a missionary, whose friend talked to him about the Lord. He has been training in the UK for the past few years to be a Pastor. Before Heidi met Bosco she served in Uganda working and living with street kids and vulnerable children. During those years she too became aware of the great spiritual and humanitarian needs in Uganda, and the great need for local Christ-centred churches. They intend to return to Uganda to be involved in church planting.

WHAT'S ON

Called to Serve

24 February

Carey Baptist Church, Reading
A day conference for those Gearing Up for Mission, considering mission for the first time, seeking God's guidance or making the final steps before you go.

Irish Spring Conference

13-15 April

Seagoe Hotel, Portadown
Bible Ministry: Huw Williams, Turin.
For more information email david.morrow@ufm.org.uk

Scottish Conference

20-22 April

Atholl Centre, Pitlochry, PH16 5BX
Bible Ministry: Michael Prest, UFM Director
For more information email iain@ufm.org.uk

Family Conference

13-17 August (please note different dates for 2018)

Hothorpe Hall, near Market Harborough
Bible Ministry: Michael Prest, UFM Director
For further information email rachel@ufm.org

SUMMER TEAMS

21 June-9 July

South Africa – holiday Bible club and Musawe Nkosi

1-10 July

Greece – student ministry in English

July

France – dates to be confirmed

Thailand – dates to be confirmed

August

Moldova – team already full

COMINGS & GOINGS

February

1-2 William to Amsterdam

4-7 Iain to Paris

10-18 William & Rosalind to Uganda

March

6-7 Michael to Barcelona

12-16 Elinor to Ireland

12-19 Michael and William to USA for OneHundredFold Conference

April

1-22 Ruth McGarvey to UK

May

7-16 Michael to Brazil for MICEB Conference



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Chosen – The Story of Charlene Barr

by David Barr



NEW BOOK

David, who is serving short-term with UFM in Thailand, has written this book about his adopted sister Charlene who had cystic fibrosis. Before she died she asked David to tell her story. After Charlene died the Project opened Hidden Treasure School in Uganda. CHOSEN tells a story of faith, hope and healing because sometimes the things we can't change end up changing us. Proceeds from the sale of the book go to Charlene's Project.

Available from Amazon on Kindle for 99p and Paperback for £8.99 plus postage.