

4 corners

SPRING 2024



ufm
worldwide

ENGAGING WITH MUSLIMS

Considering Llull's approach

**GOD IS FAITHFUL WHEN THE
TASK IS OVERWHELMING**

Senegal

**THE CHURCH GROWS
AMIDST UNCERTAINTIES**

Myanmar

Thank you - and be encouraged!



'The history of missions is the history of answered prayer' Samuel Zwemer, the early 20th Century missionary to Arabs, observed.

We want to begin this issue of *4 Corners* by thanking those who support UFM and its mission partners in many ways. Your prayers are vital, your financial support significant and your practical service precious.

We have really enjoyed reading your recent feedback on our publications. It has been a wonderful reminder of the vast army of supporters standing with those sent by their churches for the fame of Jesus Christ among the nations.

One supporter wrote: 'I always look forward to hearing about the

latest from some of the people I have been praying for over many years; I feel I almost know them due to the regular prayer requests on their behalf.' Another said: 'I really love receiving it. I am now 90 years old.'

The work of supporting mission partners often goes unseen, rarely looks glamorous, and at times it can be hard to see the fruit. Yet we praise God for this kind of 'labour prompted by love' and hope that you are encouraged in this work.¹ The Lord is using your prayers and support to sustain!

From our days with UFM in Indonesia, we have known personally the privilege of being on the receiving end of such love and support.

As we prepared to go to SE Asia, people invested in us and trained us.

As we were set apart by our church to be sent, thousands of pounds were pledged by friends, family and others we hardly knew.

When we rejoiced at gospel progress, people rejoiced with us. When we shared the heartaches of life overseas, people shared in our sufferings. When we came back on home assignment, toys and debriefing were given.

When we faced a possible medical evacuation, people mobilised for prayer. When we had practical needs – homes and holidays, vehicles and vaccines – each was met. When we came home earlier than anticipated, disappointed and disorientated, our church welcomed us, listened through our tears and gave us space to find our feet.

1. 1 Thessalonians 1:3.

Friends, be encouraged! The Lord hears your prayers, he is honoured through your sacrificial giving and he uses your practical service to be a great blessing. You are part of a wonderful work that God is doing.

In 3 John 8, there is a great reminder of the true partnership that exists between those who send and those who go, as 'workers together for the truth.'

As supporters of UFM, you are workers together for the truth in places where recently:

- In SE Asia, 800 people from a least reached people group came to an evangelistic event organised by a church
- In Uganda, over 200 children heard the gospel at a Bible club
- In Lille, France, a new church plant had their first public meeting

In answer to prayer, we have seen new workers raised up to serve in Nicaragua, Madagascar, Hungary, Scotland, Eurasia, Central Asia and Kenya. There are

now 200 long-term workers in the UFM family, with over 100 more involved in short-term mission and as volunteers.

As some friends recently wrote to their supporters, after 10 years overseas:

'We trust that you have experienced the joy that comes from knowing that Jesus Christ is simply too significant, too wonderful, too worthy, to be known only in a small part of the world amidst a few people (Isaiah 49:6), that joy of seeing him loved and worshipped and honoured and obeyed to the ends of the earth.'

As you continue to read UFM publications, we hope that they will not only provide fuel for your prayers, but that you will know the joy of seeing Jesus loved and worshipped among all peoples.

Michael



FEATURES

Three years on – life and ministry in Myanmar

4

Mission field becomes mission workers

6

A vision for Ireland

8

Raymond Llull and engaging with Muslims

12

God is faithful when the task is overwhelming

14

TRICKY QUESTION

How can we encourage those living in a conflict?

10

CHURCH RESOURCES

Home education: living fully where you are

16

FOCUS ON

Indonesia

19

WHAT'S IT LIKE ... ?

Taking the step of a medical elective

21

NEWS

New to UFM

18

The church grows amidst uncertainties in Myanmar

T and M are serving in Bible teaching and church ministry in South East Asia

Shrapnel from air strikes blasting through wooden homes; a young girl losing her legs, while her mother is blown up beside her; people travelling home from work shot dead without warning; women questioned at checkpoints, beaten and left to die; people fleeing their homes unable to return. Three years since the coup, things continue to escalate in Myanmar. These are the atrocities that we hear on a daily basis – not stories happening to strangers but the reality of friends and relatives.

This has become the normal situation for many people in Myanmar, and the fighting is spreading. The war and the impact of it is huge and disturbing; a failing economy, long power cuts, shortages of basic medicines and foods, a fuel crisis, a failing education system, an exodus of people and companies as they leave the country, and we could go on. The city we live in is one of the safest places, for now.

About ten years ago, when we first returned to Myanmar, we did not know that we would be building a ministry amidst so many uncertainties. We had many ideas of what our ministry would look like. At that time, planting a church was not one of them, but through various events, God has led us to that immense privilege. The church we have planted has just celebrated its fifth anniversary.

Looking back over the past five years, we can see how the church has



grown, not suddenly but gradually, bit by bit and step by step. Of those five years only the first was a 'normal' time. The second year was plagued by Covid and that was followed by the military coup in 2021.

Our church is situated on the outskirts of one of the larger cities, in an area where most people are from Buddhist backgrounds and earn £2-5 a day. Covid hit the world hard, but people like these particularly suffered as their meagre income stopped completely when the country shut down. But things got even worse as the coup unfolded. The hope that five years of democratically elected leaders had brought to the country came crashing down. The elected leaders were arrested, jailed or forced into hiding, and the military took back full control. Those who protested peacefully were gunned

down on the streets, arrested, tortured, and many died.

At over seven decades, the armed conflict in Myanmar is currently the longest ongoing civil war in the world. The coup resulted in larger scale, less localised fighting.

Despite all this, we are so grateful to see God growing the church. We started in a simple bamboo hut with two families and a couple of single people; just 15 attending in total. God has given us opportunities to build relationships with those in the community, to share the gospel with them and to help them during the difficult times of the last five years. The enmity we first encountered has lessened dramatically, but the numbers coming to faith are small yet precious. With some baptisms and with some believers having joined us, we now often have 70 attending on a Sunday morning. We have been able to appoint four elders and hope to appoint deacons. Our prayer is that the difficulties the people of Myanmar face will draw them to him and that we, as a church, will strive daily to be a healthy, growing community of believers.



The church beginnings (left) and today (below)





Mission field becomes mission workers

Mark and Gill Newham return from 30 years in Mongolia serving in pastoral care, mentoring nationals, training leaders and equipping workers for mission

It's a frosty, dark morning as we drive to the airport in Ulaanbaatar. Our purpose: bidding farewell to another young Mongolian family as they prepare to return to the mission field of Central Asia.

As we enter the departure hall, a knot of people surround the family – their pastor, mission leaders, and friends are all there to see them off.

The idea of Mongolians serving as mission partners might be surprising, but it's a reality. God is raising up passionate Mongolians who want to spread the good news of the gospel beyond their borders, especially to the remnants of the once vast Mongol Empire, many of whom have never heard the name of Jesus.

Mongolia is just a glimpse of what God is orchestrating across the broader Majority World. In the

last thirty years, the landscape of missions, traditionally viewed as 'from the West to the Rest,' has undergone a profound change. God is ushering in a new era where mission sending is 'everyone, to everywhere, by every means.' Ghanaian medical professionals, prompted by their churches, come to evangelize Britain through opportunities in the NHS.

In 1910, 66% of Christians lived in Europe. By 2010, 62% of Christians were in the Majority World

Filipino Christians share Christ in the Muslim heartlands while serving local families. Mongolians become sports teachers in an international school in Central Asia – just a small fraction of the incredible diversity in the world of mission. Christianity's centre, at least in terms of numbers, has shifted



Left: Rural Mongolia, above: Mongolian friends leave for mission abroad

over the past century. In 1910, 66% of Christians lived in Europe. By 2010, 62% of Christians were in the Majority World: Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania¹. This shift turns traditional mission fields into a force reaching into their localities and even the West.

Mission agencies like UFM recognise this shift and naturally ask how we can come alongside and support what God is doing in the Majority-World. How can we utilise our experience and resources to enable these new sending opportunities to become more sustainable? UFM's response has been to create a new initiative within the Senior Leadership Team, to consider how we might expand our current ministry focus to incorporate this paradigm shift.

After a decade of involvement with the Mongolian cross-cultural mission movement, Mark has been invited to

join UFM's Senior Leadership Team. With our pooled knowledge and cross-cultural experience, we aim to explore how UFM can deepen its partnership across the Majority-World.

For almost a century UFM has been actively engaged in mission work to the Majority-World. Naturally, this will continue as the Great Commission remains unchanged and there are still many who have not heard the gospel. But, as invited, we desire also to come alongside emerging mission movements and see them strengthen and flourish to the glory of God.

This new season is undoubtedly messy. The lines between mission senders and receivers are less defined, and mission workers are heading in all directions. Whether from the west, east, north, or south, the keyword is 'partnership' – working together. The global Church is called to "Go... and make disciples of every nation..." an audacious and God-sized challenge that UFM, in its small and humble way, is embracing by God's grace.

1. www.gordonconwell.edu/blog/the-100-year-shift-of-christianity-to-the-south

A vision for Ireland

James and Julia McMaster are involved in evangelism and church planting in Co. Mayo, Ireland

“How are things at Calvary Church Westport?” is a question I’m often asked. Responding is a bit challenging, as there’s much to be encouraged about, yet also areas where we hope to see progress.

Nevertheless, one certainty we all share is that none of us is here forever, and sadly, this includes our beloved pastor, Paudge Mulvihill.

Paudge, humorously dubbed ‘the evangelical pope of Ireland’, has been our pastor since the church’s inception. Beyond his national recognition as an evangelical leader, he is the visionary behind Calvary Mission, addressing the neglected West of Ireland with the gospel. Paudge’s exceptional vision, doctrinal clarity, and God-given wisdom have sustained the work through challenging times.

Established in 1998, Calvary Mission’s fourfold goal – evangelize, disciple converts, train church leaders, and plant biblical churches – has grown remarkably under Paudge’s leadership. Today our network is made up of eight churches across Mayo, Galway, and Roscommon – a far cry from the days when all mission workers could fit comfortably in Paudge’s sitting room.

The recent news of our Pastor’s proposed retirement at our last church AGM was met with tears. Transitioning to a new leader will be significant, but the challenge lies in finding the right person, a task made difficult by the scarcity of pastors in Ireland. We seek your prayers for the Lord’s provision.

Paudge’s foresight led to the establishment of a board elected by the churches to assist in overseeing





Calvary Mission's work. Fortunately, Paudge isn't retiring from this sphere of service, with the mission benefiting from his guidance for a few more years.

... we continue to look to the Lord for more workers ... in the world's most unreached English-speaking country ... And to think that it is on the doorstep of the UK ...

Besides Paudge and his wife Emer, our greatest blessings have been Karen and Rhonda. These two single ladies from Northern Ireland played a crucial role in launching Calvary Mission in 1998. Their sacrificial service, practical help to locals in distressing circumstances, and countless Bible studies with ladies have led to several coming to faith in Jesus. Through their efforts, they've

earned significant respect for the church within the local community.

Looking ahead, while leaders may come and go, the Almighty God and his Word remain unchanged. We move forward, trusting in the everlasting gospel of God's grace to transform lives. Like many churches, we desire to see more young couples with children join our membership. We recently welcomed our first such couple, even if transferred from a sister church, and we hope they will be the first of many.

My wife Julia and I are grateful for the partnership with UFM, providing excellent families to Calvary Mission. However, we continue to look to the Lord for more workers, recognising the numerous areas in the world's most unreached English-speaking country that desperately need a church. And to think that it is on the doorstep of the UK ...

Far left: Calvary Mission, left: The Mulvihills, above, left: Mayo, above: Karen and Rhonda



How can we encourage those living in a conflict?

A and T are serving in Eastern Europe in discipleship and humanitarian relief ministries

Pain and trauma are the new 'normal' where we usually live and serve. People are under constant bombardment, their neighbouring land out to wound them, kill them and destroy their hope. The conflict drags on.

Children are put to bed on the floor in corridors, elderly people run for underground bunkers in the middle of the night, no-one sleeps from the constant air raids. Everyone knows someone in danger defending the country, bereaved, or constantly checking if their loved ones are alive.

We have found ourselves with a new kind of ministry in this conflict – not one we planned or wanted, but one

which the Lord has shown us is vital for those we love. It is a ministry of supporting, strengthening, coming alongside the broken, giving hope to the desperate and hurting.

Many servant-hearted believers continue to labour long hours every day in this conflict, reaching out to those cut off or wounded or now homeless. They have served above and beyond and are now exhausted, feeling weak and inadequate, crying out to God for help to face another day, another winter.

Add to that the grief and trauma of being separated from loved ones, as mainly men and the elderly remain, their families having left as refugees.

How can we encourage them to keep enduring in such a struggle? With these three things that profoundly encourage us:

Despite the conflict, the Lord is doing amazing things.

Acts 14:22 tells us that, “through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God!” (ESV) Away from the media’s coverage, there are many people pressing into the Kingdom in these days of war.

This is encouraging. Spiritual conflict is even more real than the physical one around us, and the death and resurrection of Jesus is powerful enough to set people free – to liberate slaves and captives, to make them forgiven and free, even as their lives are in danger every day. Grace is more powerful than sin; this encourages us and keeps us going.

God gives strength to those who call upon him.

Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that, “they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

The people of Eastern Europe are not super strong or super brave; they are weak and exhausted. But they have learned to trust and rely on their God who strengthens them every single day. Prayer is not something they have to remember to do, or schedule in – they are crying out to God like they breathe oxygen. And God is sustaining them miraculously.

The end is already decided.

Isaiah 46:9-10 tells us: “I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning ... saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’”

It is very hard living and serving under daily enemy fire. Fear for our lives is very draining and saps all hope. Yet to know that the purpose of God is greater than man’s purpose, and more certain, uplifts the soul.

We can endure in this race not because of the strength or wisdom or faithfulness of men, but because God is faithful and he will glorify his name and uplift his Son. May all who try to raise their empires arrogantly against him be defeated and come to nothing.



Above, left: children in the warzone, left: frontline evangelistic team serving people in the war zone, below: outreach in the warzone



Raymond Llull and engaging with Muslims

H & E (and family) serve in France in church and evangelistic ministries

In December 2023, H defended his PhD thesis on Raymond Llull's method of reaching Muslims in the 13th century and his contribution to modern interfaith dialogue.

Llull can be considered the first Christian to develop a complete approach to mission based on unique principles of communication that are still used today. For fifty years he devoted himself to proclaiming the gospel to Muslims (and Jews). His theory of mission may be summed up in three parts from which we can learn sound practical lessons:

1. First he stressed the need for a thorough knowledge of the culture and language of Muslims.

He wanted to provide better language study and improved teaching about Islam for trainee mission workers. To that end he wrote several works promoting to Christians the idea of mission to Muslims, a remarkable fact considering that the 'Christian' world in the 13th century generally did not like Muslims or seek to understand their beliefs. Llull himself was aware of the spiritual

struggles he would face and he did not feel ready. He decided to prepare himself first, spending nine years learning Arabic and studying Islam. He also travelled widely to attempt to persuade universities and popes to establish courses in which Islamic language and culture would be taught to future mission workers.

2. His second theory of mission involved the establishment of a philosophical and educational system to persuade Muslims of the truth of Christianity.

He compiled a kind of 'logical machine' in which, through careful reasoning, he set out the Christian faith in the form of circles, squares, triangles, and other geometric figures. One controversial weakness was that he often placed philosophy ahead of revelation in attempting to explain certain key mysteries of faith – such as the Trinity and the Incarnation. Llull strongly believed that human reason could be used to learn about the triune God, sometimes forgetting that only the Holy Spirit can convince men of the truth. Samuel Zwemer, an early 20th century missionary to

Muslims, comments, *'In the age of scholasticism, where many trivial questions were seriously debated in the schools, and philosophy was anything but practical, Llull proposed to use the great weapon of his age, dialectics, in the service of the Gospel and conversion of the Saracens.'*¹ Muslim thinkers of Lull's time had developed their own system of philosophy and he recognised the important need to 'meet people where they are'.

3. Llull's third criteria was for mission workers to be willing to give their lives in witness to Christ.

Llull lived this out himself at a time when many Muslim countries enforced the death penalty for those caught proclaiming the Christian message. He sailed to Islamic countries three times to proclaim Christ and reason with Ulama (Islamic scholars). His conviction was to teach by example.

In his discussions with Islamic scholars, Llull often concentrated his argument against Islam on one major point – the doctrine of God. He sought to show the lack of harmony in the attributes of the God of the Qur'an. How can one obtain forgiveness from a God who is at the same time merciful yet also holy, loving yet also just? Imagine a man who has lost an arm: he is still a man and his human nature has not



changed, even though one side of his outline is lacking something. But it is not so with God. If we remove just one of his attributes – his holiness or justice, for example – we cannot say he is God with something missing! No, his whole being is affected by this loss. Llull insisted that it was vital to understand this because one could easily create a false picture of God.

The case of Llull presents areas of light and shadow. Certain aspects are likely to please or displease, depending on the extent to which we look at them through a modern perspective on political, cultural and religious issues. Our hope is that a better understanding of Llull's contribution to interreligious encounters will help to promote better relations with Muslims and provide lessons for effective ministry amongst them today.

1. Samuel Zwemer, *Raymond Lull: First Missionary to the Moslems*, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1902, pp. 33-34.



God is faithful when the task is overwhelming

Ténébou and Bethan (and family) are serving in Senegal, focusing on evangelism, medical care and hospitality

Last year we shared with you the story of Josiah, a young boy in England whose dying wish was to help provide medical care in rural Africa. Josiah's gift became the seed money for a new clinic in Senegal, answering many prayers for greater healthcare access in remote villages.

Now, a year on from laying the first brick, when we consider the vision God has given us to build this medical clinic from scratch, it can still feel like an utterly overwhelming task. How will we obtain everything we need? How do we find workers who share our values? Where will our provision come from? But God continually proves himself faithful in the face of each impossible need.

As we pondered questions like these, we were approached by Ernest and Isobel Carrick and their team

in Northern Ireland. They run the ministry Helping Others Worldwide, sending shipping containers overseas. The Carricks offered to fill a 20-foot shipping container with equipment we needed from the UK. So we gave them a wish list, not expecting all the items to be sourced to fill a whole container.

But God moved in amazing ways through the Carricks' contacts and incredible team of supporters. Soon individuals, schools and hospitals were donating far more than we ever expected. Before we knew it, the Carricks had rallied support to fill not the 20-foot container but a 40-foot container! It was packed with office furniture, building materials, medical



equipment and other items on our list. Their team collected, prepared and packed everything!

This huge outpouring of love and generosity was an unbelievable encouragement. It has reminded us that God can move mightily through his people to abundantly meet needs. God has shown us incredible grace, miraculously linking us to the Carricks. This assures us that if God can provide these supplies, he will certainly equip us for every other need in fulfilling this vision. We know we can fully trust him with the rest.

And so, the project continues moving forward. We have put the concrete ceiling on the clinic side and hope to do the same on the maternity side soon. We also aim to plaster the walls, then start tiling the floors and installing doors. Progress depends partly on the country remaining stable through the upcoming elections.

We are thankful that the local community are fully behind this project, doing all they can to help. It has truly become a clinic of their own. We're humbled to witness God touching hearts as we work to make

Above, left: the local community get involved, below: the new building, above, right: The team in Northern Ireland load up the container



quality healthcare available. We thank God for a Christian labourer who, along with us, has had many opportunities to share his faith.

Thank you for standing with us in this work. Please pray:

- for stability and peace in the country,
- for the practicalities of becoming authorised as a clinic in Senegal,
- for God to bring medical staff with the same vision to work with us,
- that God would continue to draw people to himself through this work,
- for Omar*, one of the workers, and his family, who are searching for truth but facing strong cultural barriers. Animism has a large grip in the area – please pray for open hearts to receive the gospel.





Home education: living fully where you are

David and Liz are involved in Bible teaching, training, helping needy mothers and homeschooling in West Africa

How do you give children a well-rounded education in a context where there are no formal activities available? For us this means putting down roots, for however short a time, whether in remote African towns or bustling cities. God has us there and he wants all of us engaged in living out our lives for him. Instead of worrying about what your children are missing, go looking and you will find rich treasure.

Music

Every culture has a rich heritage of music and movement. We play the great composers at home, then go and take local drumming classes and learn to play gourd balaphones. Musicians love to share and teach you their songs and stories of long ago and far away. You can learn songs and stories that have formed nations, with tones and languages new to you, while forging relationships with real people who have had the joy of sharing, and you, the blessing of receiving.

Home economics

Join the women in their kitchens. Learn how to make local foods – you will be welcomed. Eat these dishes, caterpillars and locusts included.

Visit the local restaurants; have them explain the wonders of different plants and what they are used for.

Then there are the tailors and shoemakers. Take an interest and ask if they are willing to teach! Enjoy the brightly patterned, extravagant fabrics. Sew clothes without pinned patterns – gloriously lavish outfits you could never wear in your home country! Greet the lady throwing the shuttle at her loom. Put your hands into the cotton balls straight from the field and learn how to spin it.

Sciences

These are everywhere! Join the soap-making ladies around their big bowls of oils, palm, karite, and cotton seed oil. Learn Chemistry making cold pressed soaps and skin products.

Everyone keeps animals where we are. Learn small scale farming, vegetable gardening, and at the same time responsibility and perseverance. Poke peanuts into the soil, dig holes for maize seeds and wonder at their fast growth. In Biology make your education truly living (pun intended)! Order some chicks; your kids will love you for it.





These things will pay dividends beyond the learning: new skills, a deeper appreciation of your host culture and languages, new relationships, and gospel opportunities. You are acquiring transferable skills as a tool kit for your children that will go with them and help form them for a lifetime – not just skills, but deep empathy, discipline and character traits that run so much deeper than the skill itself.



Look after them, learn about them, draw them, feed them, and rejoice and be thankful when someone finds that first egg.

Art

A wealth of culture is enshrined in the clay pots, the baskets, the sculptures in the artisan markets. What are the stories, the symbols, the 'why'? Are the artists willing to teach their skill?

Being an educator is often about being a facilitator. You don't need to have skills in every area! The world truly is the classroom. You'll create memories and opportunities that your children will never forget as you explore together, laugh, and learn. There is no school bell to say that lessons are over for the day. Education is life and life is education, the lines blur beautifully. That is how we as a family have learned to love this journey of lifelong education.

Welcome!



Paul Daniel will be evangelising and equipping diaspora groups in the UK as well as least reached in Asia. He is sent by Noddfa Baptist Church, Abersychan.



Jo Adkins will be serving in a Christian school in Nicaragua with her husband and two children. She is sent by St Ebbes Church, Headington.



Artur & Maria Pruteanu will be serving in church ministry in Turkey. They are sent by Resurrection Church (Voskresenie), Minsk, Belarus.



Peter Mukungi will be serving in a church plant in Kenya. He is sent by St Andrew the Great, Cambridge.



Joel & Estzi Richards will be church planting in Hungary. They are sent by Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, USA.



Jess Merkle will be serving in a women's ministry in Scotland, UK. She is sent by Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, USA.



Louise Little will be serving in a medical ministry in Madagascar. She is sent by Portadown Elim Church.



Hannah Griffin is taking part in the iWitness programme in Bordeaux, France. She is sent by Wheelock Heath Baptist Church.



FOCUS ON ...

Indonesia

Not many things about Indonesia are small. Take the geography. We're not sure who counted, but we're told Indonesia is made up of over 17,000 islands. This vast archipelago covers an area the size of Europe and holds the world's fourth largest population.

And then there's the economy. For many the financial struggles are huge – over 25 million below the poverty line. Yet according to the World Bank, over the past 20 years, 115 million Indonesians have entered the middle class and the country is a member of the G20, a group of the world's largest economies.

Sadly, natural disasters are frequent and often on a massive scale – earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis, such as the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004 where 150,000 tragically died.

Nothing is small about the country's religious population either. Whilst not an Islamic state, Indonesia has the biggest Muslim population of any country in the world. Over 83% of its population – nearly 200 million people – describe themselves as Muslim. Within that number, beliefs range from radical to nominal, from folk Islam to religion simply as a cultural marker.

However strong or weak people's allegiance might be, this is their default position and all they have to rely on. And yet, in the midst of all of this sits South East Asia's largest church. Over 20 million

Please pray for ...

Our national partner asks us to pray for the Indonesian church to:

- reject a sacred/secular divide and live whole lives on mission for Jesus, having a greater impact on society
- work in greater collaboration for the sake of the Kingdom, rather than just looking to grow in their own location
- be active in reaching the many unreached peoples
- continue to grow in its mission sending from Indonesia



Indonesia is ...

World's **4th** largest population

270 million

Indonesian is relatively easy: for plurals, just say the word twice

Most people speak the language of their people group plus the national language, Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian)

83.3% Muslim
11.5% Christian (3.22% evangelical)
2.7% Ethnic religions
1.8% Hinduism
0.7% Other

*Joshua Project

55 recently active

no. 1 in the world

the only place to find the **venomous**

(able to take down a buffalo)

Komodo Dragon

Population

(Compare with 29% in the UK)

60% aged under 30

M

F

profess Jesus Christ as Lord. The potential of the Indonesian church to impact their Muslim neighbours is huge, yet the barriers are great. There are plenty of reasons why the majority of churches here find it hard to reach out with the good news of Jesus. Three stand out:

Christians are a minority

Many feel overwhelmed by the size of the task, a challenge compounded by the legal pressure not to witness to those from a different religious background.

The church has been and is persecuted

Christianity is recognised, but opposition is a reality. At times Christians have been and are persecuted. Fear is, therefore, a barrier to outreach in many areas.

The diversity is immense:

With nearly 800 people groups spread across 17,000 islands, speaking more than 700 heart languages, the task cannot be understated.

And so we can understand why so many churches choose to keep themselves to themselves, and focus on other things. It's not a problem unique to Indonesia.

The task of reaching the unreached, humanly speaking, is overwhelming. There are 229 unreached people groups. The largest, the Sundanese of West Java, numbers 33 million people, with less than 0.1% believing in Jesus.

The Indonesian phrase for unreached people is 'suku terabaikan', literally 'a people ignored.' Please pray for your brothers and sisters in Indonesia. The work is hard and the opposition is real. Yet God is able. Pray that he will raise up many workers for the unreached peoples of Indonesia, from within and beyond the country, that millions more might praise his name.

< Cut here, pop in your Bible, and pray for Indonesia



What's it like ... taking the step of a medical elective?

Stephen and Grace spent just under a year at Kiwoko hospital in Uganda

Embarking on a medical elective in Uganda was a significant decision. Stephen, an NHS surgical trainee, took a year out for an 'OOPE' (out of programme experience), aiming to enhance his surgical skills and engage in gospel work.

Inspired by friends in West Africa, our desire to serve the Lord in cross-cultural mission led us to Kiwoko Hospital in Uganda, where we spent a fulfilling nine months in 2022-2023.

Life before Uganda found us in the West Midlands, active in our local Baptist church. Stephen, immersed

in surgical training, and Grace, tending to Samuel and Elijah, both became deeply involved in church and community service.

Concerns about finding a church and like-minded co-workers in Uganda were alleviated when God showed he had taken care of all our needs, even providing accommodation.

Surrounded by a tropical garden (complete with monkeys!), our days began early, often with our boys waking us before 6am. This was followed by hospital duties, homeschooling, ...

Below: Surgery at Kiwoko, Right: Police station ministry, Above: Homeschooling with staff children



community engagement, and evening meetings. The hospital's motto, 'We treat, Jesus heals', was a lived reality, with staff starting each day in worship and prayer for patients. Even the pre-surgery checklist includes prayer being made for the patient. Ward ministry teams and the Chaplain regularly visit the patients and Christian workers are encouraged to share the gospel.

...we already really miss this freedom to do ministry so openly!

One gospel-minded colleague shared this thought: 'Imagine if every patient who came through the gates heard the good news about Jesus'. The opportunity to speak to lost and needy souls is great at Kiwoko Hospital. The local St Luke's church provided us with avenues for worship, preaching, and Sunday School service.

The greatest blessing was ministering in a culture open to the gospel. Examples include a police station Sunday service where 26 out of 50 detainees responded to the gospel and a Christianity-explored course with nursing students. Medical missions to local villages and one-to-one witnessing provided numerous other gospel opportunities. Since coming back to the UK, we already really miss this freedom to do ministry so openly!

It has been really wonderful to witness the fruit of our labours in

Kiwoko. However, we are also aware that God was doing a work in us. We've been under more stress than we've probably ever experienced before, we've felt out of our depth and out of our comfort zone, and we've been really humbled realising that there is so much we don't know.

By God's amazing grace, however, we can say that he has been with us through everything. There were multiple times, worshipping God in the meetings or in our quiet times, or taking in his creation, where we felt God's love towards us personally and we truly felt that underneath were the everlasting arms.

Returning to the UK, we had the chance to reflect on personal growth, humbled by God's grace amid challenges. As Stephen re-enters NHS training, Samuel and Elijah start nursery, and Grace explores part-time work, the future is uncertain, but we remain open to God's leading. Our hearts long to return to Kiwoko, even if just to reconnect with dear friends. We would truly encourage anyone who is thinking of medical mission, that you can use your clinical training in a unique way for the Lord overseas and minister not only to physical bodies but to eternal souls.



Upcoming Events

Considering your role in mission, or supporting others? Join us for Bible teaching and a chance to chat at our events.

Find out more at ufm.org.uk/events

Irish Spring Conference

10-4pm, Saturday 13th April

Moira Presbyterian Church

Scottish Day Conference

10-2.30pm, Saturday 20th April

Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church

Summer Conference

5th - 9th August

High Leigh, Hoddesdon,
Hertfordshire EN11 8SG

Volunteer Opportunity

Can you spare a couple of hours a week? Are you a gifted writer with a passion for global mission?

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Summer Conference

5-9 August 2024

High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire
With main speaker, Paul Mallard



ufm.org.uk/summer-conference

UFM Worldwide exists to support churches in making disciples of all nations.

Since 1931 we've had the privilege of helping churches to identify, train, send and support workers for cross-cultural mission. We currently serve about 250 mission partners in 40 countries, sent by 100 gospel-hearted churches.

UFM workers are committed to making disciples of all nations, taking the gospel to the least reached, and supporting under-resourced churches around the world.

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