

4CORNERS

WINTER 2024

'BEARING THE FLAME' AT THE PARIS OLYMPICS

FREEDOM BEHIND BARS
Sierra Leone

**GOING TO SUPPORT: THE
TRELLIS BEHIND THE VINE**
Mexico

Faith-filled confidence



Michael Prest, Director, UFM Worldwide

As Hebrews 11 opens, we have a wonderful description of faith: Confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

That verse is followed, of course, by the great cloud of witnesses – by stories of what God’s people in history have done, by faith.

At times we read this list and are inspired: inspired by Noah, with his ark built on dry ground; by Abraham, setting off to a land as yet unknown; by Moses, his reputation disregarded for the sake of Christ.

We’re inspired by those unnamed brothers and sisters who, in living by faith, faced jeers and flogging, chains and imprisonment. Some were stoned, sawn in two and killed by the sword. *The world was not worthy of them.*

And then we move on in mission history – on even to little old UFM.

We’re inspired by the faith of the three Freds, martyred in the 1930s taking the gospel to an unreached tribe in Brazil.

We’re inspired by the 19 missionaries and children killed in the Simba rebellion in Congo in 1964. And by Margaret Hayes, seven months in captivity to those same rebels, who had been willing to lay down her life to save the lives of others.

We’re inspired – moved – by all of these incredible acts of faith.

And yet friends, don’t we sometimes find ourselves thinking: yes, I’m inspired by them, but am I like them? What I’ve been doing barely merits a column in the UFM magazine, never mind a place with these guys. And so perhaps the inspiration

turns to desperation. We reflect on our lives, we consider our works done by faith and they can seem so small.

What do we do with feelings like this – feelings of inadequacy, weakness and guilt, when it comes to our faith?

In mission life it’s so tempting to compare ourselves with others. It happens so often. One mission partner compares their language progress with another, or the good things they’ve done by faith with those in another context. Or, the supporter looks at their good deeds done by faith and feels inadequate as they consider all that God is doing through the mission partner that they support.

At times therefore we need to be reminded all over again of something so fundamental to the

Christian life: *We're in God's family by faith, not by the good things we do by faith.*

That's the clear teaching of Hebrews 11. Before and after that list of incredible things done by faith, is the unmistakable teaching that each person on that list was 'in' by faith alone: "This (*faith*) is what the ancients were commended for." (v2), "These were all commended for their *faith*" (v39).

The great cloud of witnesses of Hebrews 11 were accepted, not because of anything good that they had done, but because of everything good that he has done. They're in by faith in the perfect Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's a very good job, because if these people had got in by the good things they'd done by faith, they'd be in trouble: the drunk and naked Noah, the lying and at times lacking in faith Abraham, the boastful Joseph, the

manipulative Jacob ... and so the list goes on. Where would they be?

No they are in – we are in – not because of anything good that we have done, but because of everything good that Christ has done.

And what he has done is enough.

And therefore we can be sure of what we hope for and confident of what we do not see.

So friends, as we see signs of that faith, in both simple and profound ways, in our own lives and across the UFM family, be encouraged! We belong to him. He loves us, he's welcomed us in and by faith, he's pleased with us.

Michael



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God used our coffee and casual questions

Jonathan and Dawn Clark serve in student ministry in Greece

0.01% This is my guess as to how many Athenian students would say they follow Jesus: 20 as far as we know, out of the approximately 200,000 in total.

Students in the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) group in Athens have long wrestled with how to make contact with those who don't go to evangelical churches. There are more out there, but we don't have meaningful contact. There are Christians of university age in the migrant churches: Filipinos, Nigerians, Ethiopians and so on, but there is little relationship between them and the Greek community.

Our emphasis has been to encourage students in the gospel so that they have confidence to reach their fellow students with the good news. At the same time, we know we need to be visible and present to reach at least some with whom we would otherwise never have contact.

In 2016 we started a project called Coffee and Cookies (it does what it says on the tin!) and it was worthwhile

to a point, but it never gained traction and we never created long-term contact with anyone. Covid hit and Coffee and Cookies was one project that didn't get up after that knockout.

In 2022 however, our national director encouraged me to give it another try and so, with our intern George Sewall leading, we launched again in March 2023. We have seen such a different outcome. Last academic year we were regularly running it at three campuses in Athens, in partnership with staff from other organisations and a handful of regular students.

Each week we have conversations with at least a handful, if not a few dozen students, and in each location we have regulars every week. Some of these students have accepted invitations to come to more formal events, and some have also joined in at birthday parties and outings unrelated to the IFES group.

What has made the difference? There are two main factors. The first is that we have stuck rigidly (one might say religiously!) to the same time and place for each campus.





Above: 'Coffee and Cookies', left: Haralambos and Anna

we were there. It seems that many value the reliability of a group that enables trust and confidence. We notice people walking by with a glance one week, a lingering look the second week, and a tentative approach the third week saying, “I’ve seen you before: what are you doing?”

This was despite our best efforts to diversify! In March 2023, we planned trips to other campuses but it was as if the Lord shut the door. Each time we tried we were turned back by torrential rain, or overzealous security staff at the university gate, or a strike that closed the city centre. In the end we accepted God’s providential hand leading us to remain at the same place, same time, every week.

Some admitted they only came to class that day because we were there.

This bore fruit. Students would wait for us at 11am saying, “We hoped you’d be back this week.” On occasion we were late and they would chastise us (with smiles). Some admitted they only came to class that day because

The second factor is the questions we pose. Only rarely will we write something theological. Our simple questions bring people willingly to write their opinions. From that, conversation often flows: first at a surface level but gradually deeper and more seriously. A casual conversation can become a serious one, which can become a spiritual one.

Ilias is one of our leaders and told me more than once: “Coffee and Cookies is the highlight of my week!”

One of our regular visitors, Haralambos, greeted me at our first C&C this term with the words: “Hello Jonathan! I’ve been waiting months for this to re-start!” The question on our board on this occasion was very simple: “What do you want to do this year?” The answers reveal a whole range of desires: all met or subverted in the good news about Jesus.



Portons la flamme! *Bear the flame!*

Christopher and Laura de la Hoyde serve in church planting in France

John's vision in Revelation 7:9-10 is glorious: "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb."

"They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'"

This summer all the nations of the world gathered in Paris for the Olympic Games. Spurred on by John's vision, many also came to Paris to share the good news of Christ with people from those nations. At the Eglise de Télégraphe in the

20th arrondissement of Paris, a diverse team from our neighbourhood gathered for a week of training and evangelism called Portons la flamme!

The goal: to bear the flame of the gospel to a delightful, dark and disadvantaged district of Paris, and to the nations flooding into the city. On the agenda: teaching and prayer; eating, laughing and fellowship; street dance and singing; football and basketball in parks; a festival in a local square; afternoon games for local kids; interviewing people on the streets; sharing the story of Eric Liddell, the Christian runner and missionary who won the 400m at the last Paris Olympics 100 years ago.

What did we see God doing? He showed us again the joy of labouring with and learning from brothers and sisters from different backgrounds, nations and evangelical persuasions.

We saw him taking us out of our comfort zones and growing us in our boldness: what a joy to see two shy young women from our church blossom in their gospel courage over the week! We saw him changing our hearts towards the people around us: as I arrived late to the open-air festival in the local square, tears sprang to my eyes at the sight of brothers and sisters from our church, made up from many nations, talking to and praying with unbelievers from our neighbourhood.

... some prayed prayers of commitment to Christ. Others were delighted to take away New Testaments

We saw God open people's hearts. Christians all over the city testified to the uncommon openness of Parisians and guests to talk about the things of Christ over the weeks of the Olympics. People were happy to be prayed for, some prayed prayers of commitment to Christ. Others were delighted to take away New Testaments and literature, while some showed an interest in meeting again to find out more. What a God! Might that be in great part because, incited by some of the more controversial scenes in the opening ceremony, Christians who were watching the games all around the globe were also praying for Paris?

Above and left: An audience looks on as Christians perform and then engage in evangelism



Please pray for us – we want to help believers become disciple-making disciples of Jesus, who love him and obey him and live for him, not just converts who prayed a prayer once. Please keep praying for Christians in Paris who bear the flame of the gospel to the darkest parts of the City of Light: that people from many nations, tribes, peoples and languages might come to worship the one to whom alone salvation belongs.



“I have faith in a sovereign Father”

The following article was originally written and published on thoughtfortheweek.co.uk, by Peter Milsom. Peter served as UFM Director between 1997-2012. He continues to serve with UFM as an Associate Consultant and edits our magazine, 4Corners.

The Paris 2024 Paralympic Games has been a pleasure to watch as 4,400 athletes from around the world compete in 549 medal events across 22 sports. All the athletes have overcome disabilities to achieve an amazing level of skill. They are so happy to be at the Paralympics.

Many of them know each other and understand the challenges each of them has faced just to be at the Games. They rejoice with those who succeed and feel genuine sadness for those who don't.

Karé Adenegan is a wheelchair racer. Karé was born prematurely with cerebral palsy – a neurological condition which impacts muscle movement. In 2012, when she was 11, she attended the London Paralympics as a spectator. The motto of the Games was “Inspire a Generation”, and for Karé, whose



disability meant she'd never been allowed to play sport at school, this slogan became a reality.

Just 4 years after watching London 2012, Karé won three medals in the 2016 Rio Paralympics. In Tokyo, she won two more. Now 23, the softly spoken wheelchair racer is bidding for a medal in her third successive games. She sums up her remarkable journey as simply "Mind-blowing". She won a silver medal at Paris in the Women's 100m T34.

I do want to succeed. But I feel like God's really challenged me to let go of some of that ambition and just do what's in my control – and trust that the outcome ... is in God's hands.

Karé grew up in a loving Christian home and received Jesus as her personal Saviour when she was 10-years old. Her faith has been a constant during difficult times. As a professional elite athlete, she's broken world records, competed at major international championships and was crowned BBC Young Sports Personality of the Year in 2018. But Karé insists that she finds her true value in her Creator rather than her sporting success. Being part of Mosaic Church in Coventry is a source of strength to Karé.

Karé says, "Everything I do revolves around my faith. In the past I questioned my disability, questioned God and questioned my purpose. But I remember being on the track and having a sense of: 'Wow, God, you're with me, and you brought me here.'

On the start line, every time, my prayer is: 'Your will be done.' There is a tension sometimes. I do want to be the best athlete possible. I do want to win; I do want to succeed. But I feel like God's really challenged me to let go of some of that ambition and just do what's in my control – and trust that the outcome, whatever it is, is in God's hands. There is so much freedom when you let go of the outcome. I won't win everything and always be successful, but I trust the outcome is going to be a good one, because I have faith in a sovereign Father who is always working for good in my life."



Freedom behind bars

Lamin and Jayne Dumbaya serve in church and children's ministry in Sierra Leone

The prison guard locked the gate behind us as the inmates curiously watched us enter. That locked gate in 2018 was the start of an open door for ministry among juveniles held on remand in a detention centre in Freetown.

One of the challenges of mission in such a place is being confronted with the enormity of the loss, pain and issues these young men have faced, and continue to face, in their lives. Conditions in prisons are harsh and sometimes life-threatening. There is overcrowding, lack of electricity, inadequate provision of food and water, poor sanitary conditions, very limited medical care, and little by way of rehabilitation services.

In the dilapidated cells, the few old and dirty mattresses available are recycled between prisoners. There are no toilets in the cells, and one of the early requests we received was for plastic bags for the boys to defecate into. Many of those imprisoned have been forgotten by their family, friends and society. Most experience considerable difficulty in accessing basic legal assistance.

There is the danger of hostility, and fear and anxiety are ever-present realities for the inmates. There is no formal education in place, and the boys are regularly hungry. Their life experience has been characterised by violence, rejection, addiction and pain. How do we possibly respond to the overwhelming needs?

For anyone ministering in contexts of great physical, emotional and spiritual brokenness and suffering, lamenting to God is often part of the response. Our prayers of lament help us process the grief and sense



of helplessness we feel. We are called to compassion, and where we are able, we meet some of the temporal needs of the inmates by providing food, toiletries, laundry soap, clothes and other items, however, we know that their most fundamental need is reconciliation to God. As believers, we understand the reality of being a prisoner to our own desires and sins, and that our freedom comes through Christ alone.

[they] can be loud, boisterous, and hot-tempered, but this is counteracted by their enthusiasm to participate

We believe in the power of redemption and transformation. And so, we go armed with the only

thing that can change someone's life – the gospel. We share the good news that it is possible to have a life-giving relationship with the living Christ who has the power not only to change human hearts but to bring real hope to situations the world may deem hopeless.

We explain that while God may not always set them free from their physical prison, he can give freedom from their imprisonment by sin. We share that they have immeasurable value to God, and how Jesus heals broken people, releasing them from guilt and shame, giving them eternal life and a new purpose for living.

At times the young men can be loud, boisterous, and hot-tempered, but this is counteracted by their enthusiasm to participate in games, arts and crafts, and other social activities; their responsiveness when they receive encouragement and praise; their attentiveness as they listen to the Bible teaching; their desire to answer the Bible quiz questions; their quiet diligence as they get stuck into the worksheet; their keenness to accept a Bible; and their welcome and appreciation shown to us.

There are times when the sense of God's Spirit moving is so powerful, and only eternity will reveal how many of these young men encountered the light of Jesus in the darkness of that challenging place.

Left: Ministry in the detention centre in Freetown





Collaboration not control

The following article was originally published on lausanne.org, and written by UFM director Michael Prest. UFM was privileged to be part of the 4th Lausanne conference in South Korea with several UFM staff and mission partners making up the 5,000-strong delegation.

‘We Want to Work with You, Not for You.’

This was the entirely understandable summary from three Indonesian mission agency leaders as they reflected on the interactions between their own organizations and those with an international structure.¹

Speaking of such reasonable desires for mission partnership, Webster comments:

‘The answer does not lie in the patterns of dependence or independence, but in the recovery of that interdependence of the one spirit that marked the New Testament churches. In this basic spiritual unity and interdependence of the younger and older churches today lies the future of the church’s mission to the world.’²

Few would argue with these fundamental biblical principles. Yet many have struggled to see them applied. At a missionary conference under the slogan ‘Partnership in Obedience’, a visiting Indonesian pastor commented to a Dutch professor, ‘Yes, partnership for you, obedience for us.’³

That such experiences persist is a cause for lament. That they do so when the Majority World now sends more workers than the West is a cause for serious reflection on the international mission agency model.⁴ What needs to change? What new models might we pursue? Ones that promote humility, not hubris; mutuality, not management; and collaboration, not control.

And how might Majority World agencies and churches encourage those of us in the West to ground our



good intentions for mutual mission sending partnerships across the world church?

The Challenges of the International Model

For all the talk of polycentrism in mission circles today, in international mission organizations, it is often the multinational structure that persists. Internationalization strategies that added sending bases in other Western nations have in more recent years simply expanded to include countries across the Majority World.

Whilst this ambition to widen mobilizing reach has been well intentioned, such organizations are left grappling with the consequences of a centralized structure, leadership, language, culture, and decision-making processes: 'The organization may be international in personnel, but Western in organization and structures.'⁵

Kang-San Tan explores the consequences further, stating that '... there remains a huge risk that power is not decentralized.'⁶ He proposes a way forward that would necessitate Western mission leadership to be 'radical rather than reformist, and willing to make intentional structural changes rather than engage in mission theories and rhetoric.'⁷

The key question is what might those changes look like? Further, are such radical changes possible in large international organizations where decision making can be slow, history hard to unpick, and the hold on control hard to let go of?

Read the rest of the article at...
<https://lausanne.org/global-analysis/collaboration-not-control>

Endnotes

1. Michael Prest, 'The West with the Rest? Exploring the Role of UFM Worldwide in the Sending of Overseas Cross-Cultural Missionaries from the Indonesian Church' (MTh diss., University of Glasgow, 2022), 204–205.
2. Warren W. Webster, 'The Nature of the Church and Unity in Mission,' in *New Horizons in World Missions*, ed. David J. Hesselgrave (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 247.
3. Stan Nussbaum, *A Readers' Guide to Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 120.
4. See, eg Steve (Heung Chan) Kim, 'A Newer Missions Paradigm and the Growth of Missions from the Majority World,' in *Missions from the Majority World: Progress, Challenges and Case Studies*, ed. Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2009), 14.
5. Marty Shaw, Jr., 'The Future of Kingdom Work in a Globalizing World,' accessed 27 April 2024, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lop/globalization-gospel-rethinking-mission-contemporary-world-lop-30>.
6. Kang-San Tan, 'Western Dominance in World Mission: A Time for Change? A Response from an Asian Perspective,' *CMF Thinking Mission Forum*, 25 May 2011, accessed 14 April 2024, https://www.academia.edu/1988925/The_modern_missionary_movement_an_era_of_Western_dominance_Was_it_all_bad_and_where_do_we_go_from_here.
7. Tan, 'Western Dominance.'

Relieving the theological famine in Togo

Alexandre and Wijneke Kanri serve l'Eglise de la Grâce en Christ du Togo (EGCT), a Christ-centred, Word-based denomination of 10 churches in Togo, West Africa.

'Failure to thrive' is the term doctors use to describe malnourished children struggling to grow in times of famine. Give these children good, nourishing food and the transformation that follows is amazing! The Kanris long to see a similar transformation in Togolese churches; they too often fail to thrive because pastors often lack access to sound theological training and books.

Togo is a French-speaking, West African country. There is little overseas support for the rapidly growing Togolese church because the Protestant church in more affluent French-speaking countries is very small.

Many churches in Togo are theologically weak because pastors are often not able to effectively refute errors of syncretism or the prosperity 'gospel.' Numerous pastors have never received in-depth, sound biblical training, nor do they possess the books and resources needed for



Above, top: 3d render of the proposed building, Above: The project architect meets with the church elders to discuss the building plans

their study and ministry. Tyrannus Bible Institute is a multi-phased project that will make good Bible teaching and nourishing, sound Christian books available to pastors and ordinary believers.

In 2022 God provided the means for the EGCT churches to buy a plot of land to expand their evening Bible



training classes into an accredited Bible training institute. Discussions and prayer amongst the EGCT elders followed as to how to best make use of this plot of land for the cause of the gospel in Togo.

It was during these discussions that they came in touch with Sola Printing in Niger and heard about the possibility of *locally* printing affordable, multi-lingual, theological books and resources via an 'on-

demand' printing system. It was decided that incorporating a print shop and a conference facility into the Institute building plan would enable them to strategically address the theological famine of Togo.

The project encompasses three phases: Phase 1: a conference venue; Phase 2: an on-demand print shop; and Phase 3: on the second floor of the conference centre, classrooms for the Bible Institute with a well-equipped Christian library and student accommodation. Completing the first two phases will lay a good foundation for the growth and expansion of the Bible Institute. Not only will both ministries be sources of much-needed revenue, but they will also enable the EGCT churches to place sound theology and gospel-centred resources in the hands of a large number of Togolese Christians. We pray that exposure to sound theology through the conferences promoting the books will, in time, lead many of them to desire to study further and enrol at the Tyrannus Bible Institute.

Find out more at www.zendingintogo.nl/en/project-plan-tyrannus

Please support us by praying – apart from the required funds we pray for God to provide the right workers and staff for the Institute.

If you feel led to partner with us financially, please scan the QR code.



Going to support: the trellis behind the vine

Rebecca Hughes supports language learning, as assistant to the Culture and Language Acquisition (CLA) instructor at Radius International, a mission training school in Mexico

It's lunchtime at Radius International, Mexico. The atmosphere can be summed up as loud; a combination of nearly 70 staff and students having lunch together in the dining room. Conversation revolves around what was taught in class that morning or what people's plans are for the afternoon.

That was a lot of new content to take in for Level Three language learning.

What did you think of his definition of worldview...?

Do you have a language session this afternoon or are you planning to go out into the community?

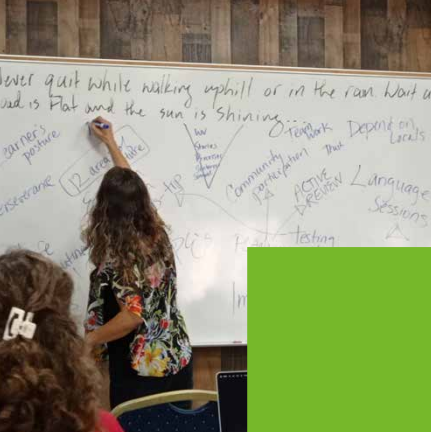
I have a ton of homework and Spanish review.

I'm gonna go down to the tortillería to see if I can get to know the owner better.

These are typical lunchtime exchanges. I am privileged to be able to join students for the midday meal most days. It allows me to keep a pulse on how they are getting on, what their struggles and victories are, and be encouraged by them in many ways too. I enjoy this opportunity to be a part of campus life and be involved in people's lives because much of the rest of my time is spent doing administrative work behind the scenes.

Although practical roles in ministry are often unnoticed or invisible they are no less important than what we often call 'frontline' missions. I have heard support work compared to a trellis. When you look at a vine or a climbing rose, you do not often think about the framework that enables it to be there, and yet a trellis is essential for the plant to continue to grow and bear fruit.

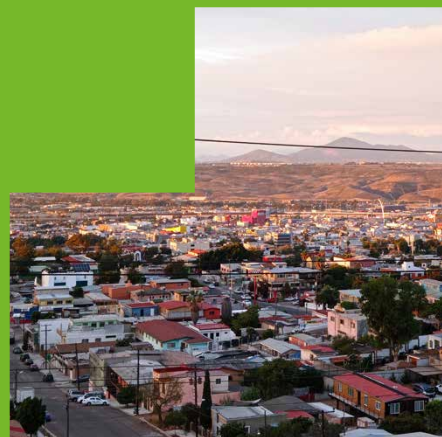




My overarching goal, by God's grace, is to see the gospel preached in languages that currently have no gospel witness and churches planted where there is no spiritual light. So you might wonder, what am I doing in a relatively well-evangelised city in Mexico? A practical training program like the one I serve in is one of those 'trellis' parts of the mission endeavour. I am so glad that God has blessed me with the privilege of serving him in this way.

There are many opportunities and challenges that come with support roles. For me, a challenge has been maintaining a healthy work/life balance, something which many people who have spent time working from home will have felt. There is a tension between investing in work and relationships on campus, versus learning Spanish and making friends in the local Mexican community.

The work that God has given me to do would not be possible without the supporters who stand behind me, prayerfully and financially, and it would be meaningless without the



people who go on from the training to plant churches in unreached languages, by God's grace and for his glory. I am so grateful to God for a church which, though just sixteen members, has sent me to do this work, and for the other churches and individuals that God is gathering around us to make it possible for me to serve at Radius International.

Above and left: Radius International and Rebecca working on administration tasks and materials

How can we support the church in Eurasia?

B serves in Eurasia.

“A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation.” (Psalm 22:30)

The Bible speaks a lot about generations. Importance is given to chronology and genealogy, and we are left in no doubt as to the value God places on one generation passing the Word on to the next. We are deeply affected by the generation preceding ours – it’s a part of who we are. In turn, invariably, we will greatly impact the generation after us, be it positively or negatively. Believers in each generation carry the responsibility of faithfully passing on the theology of their forefathers.

... one of the girls exclaimed in joy, ‘Then he was the man who told the good news to my grandmother ...’

Shortly before my father’s passing, I was given a vivid insight into the reality of this. One evening two young women unexpectedly came

to the prayer meeting at the church I attend in the city where I serve. They came from the land where my parents had served years ago and where I had been born. Astonished that we shared the same birthplace, they asked what my parents had been doing there. When they heard that my father had visited the (then unreachable) mountain villages with the gospel all those years ago, one of the girls exclaimed in joy, ‘Then he was the man who told the good news to my grandmother. She believed the message and passed it on to my mother. That’s how I also heard and believed.’ My father later confirmed that he had indeed visited the same village. He could never have known the impact of that visit. Two generations later, the same Word would be shared in a faraway country by one yet to be born.

In the late 1980s when I first visited the country where I now serve, the church here was described as a ‘first generation church’. The believers had not been brought up in believing families. Their only teachers and examples were those who had come from outside to share the message.



When I moved here eighteen years ago we were beginning to speak of 'second generation believers'. And now, today, their children are with us and a third generation is growing up.

This is one of the most exciting aspects of being involved in theology training here. It is thrilling when the children of previous attendees at our seminars come to us once they are of age. It is equally thrilling to see how these second-generation believers are so much more deeply grounded in the Word compared with their parents at a similar age. In light of this, we face the wonderful challenge of always refreshing our seminars while never compromising the truth of God's Word. We are ever mindful that the Word of God is unchanging and beautifully relevant in each generation.

In the 1950s there were only ten known believers in the whole country. Today, in a population of 85 million, there are approximately 8,500. As the church here grows she grapples with fresh challenges. Over the years, with various seminar groups, we have sought to guide the believers to a better understanding



of the difference between gospel and secondary issues, and how this is worked out in practice. More recently, in light of recent tragedies, pastors have indicated that they need guidance in helping believers develop a sounder theology of suffering.

The seminar programme itself is currently going through some challenges and at times we have wondered if we would be able to continue at all. This question has led to a useful time of evaluating our presence and purpose here, resulting in an even firmer conviction that our existence in this land is necessary if for no other reason than this, that we need to continue keeping 'the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus' and guarding 'the good deposit' (2 Tim 1:13,14).

Welcome!



Alex Weston will be serving in Bordeaux alongside the Soumagnas' in discipleship and children's ministry. She is sent by St John's Downshire Hill, Hampstead.



Christian and Alice Keza have been serving in student ministry in Cyprus and are currently on maternity leave in the UK. They are sent by Heath Church, Cardiff



Joshua & Helen will be serving in refugee and media ministry in East Africa. They are sent by Long Crendon Baptist Church.



Susana Blanco is serving two Spanish organisations from the UK in a training and mentoring role. She is sent by Trinity Church Chippenham.



Sam and Bianca are studying at Oak Hill College and preparing to move to Central Asia in 2025. Their sending church is Emmanuel North London Church.



Ágúst Ólafsson will be serving in campus ministry in Iceland. He is sent by Every Nation Church Salzburg.

Rebecca Hughes is serving with UFM at Radius International, Mexico, in administration. She is sent by Lordshill Baptist Church, Shropshire.

Paul & Tricia Todd will be serving with ACTS (African Christian Textbooks).

James and Andrene are serving in medical ministry in South Asia.

Jayne Murdock is serving in the Good News Hospital in Mandritsara, Madagascar, for a short-term medical ministry placement.

What's it like ... leading a practical mission team?

S has been organising and leading adult work teams in Africa and South Asia since 2000.

“I am a practical person, not a teacher or a preacher, so how can I use my gifts to help lead someone to Christ?”

This is a question I have been asked many times by those eager to get involved in mission work.

Growing up in Africa, I saw firsthand how essential and impactful practical people were in mission service. Their work was pivotal to the launch of new ministries and to the ongoing efforts of my parents, both in the theological school and in the hospital.

In my own ministry in Asia over the past 14 years, my primary focus has been equipping and training others in rammed-earth building techniques. Many interested individuals attend these trainings and contribute to the construction of buildings. The relaunch of the Operation

Centurion project, which leads work teams to assist missionaries on-site, aligns perfectly with my passion for using construction as a tool to advance the gospel. For instance, we built a house in a Muslim area of South Asia, which led to the creation of a Good News club and the training of leaders for children's ministry.

This summer, I led a practical work team to Moldova to assist with the construction and internal fabrication of the fifth house – Casa David. This home will provide a safe and caring environment for physically and mentally challenged men, supported by a Christian community and a nearby church. We have a team of electricians, plumbers, joiners, skilled labourers, and unskilled helpers from the UK and the Netherlands. Out of 32 interested individuals, 12 men and 3 women have committed to joining us over the course of three weeks.



Above: Taking a well-earned tea break while working on Casa David. Above, right: 'S' demonstrating one of many building techniques.

While the men focussed on the physical labour, the women – including my wife, R – led a ministry with the ladies of Casa Ana. This involved spiritual input, training in preventative mental health using CBT skills, making crafts, and facilitating other practical activities.

Overseeing this project in Moldova has not been without its challenges – language barriers, differing construction methods, and unexpected changes – but we trusted that God was in control of every detail.

While we hoped to make good progress on the building, our ultimate goal went beyond the physical work. Working together



as a team, building relationships with the local Moldovans, and encouraging fellow believers were all vital parts of the experience. Our testimony to those we encountered was significant. This project served as another vehicle for evangelism. Faith becomes compelling when it's seen in action.

... love is the defining mark of Jesus' followers. He both taught and exemplified love in action.

When Jesus was preparing to leave his disciples, he gave them one simple yet profound command: "Love one another." This is often harder than it seems, as we are naturally inclined to selfishness. But love is the defining mark of Jesus' followers. He both taught and exemplified love in action. The way we solve problems, respond to challenges and live differently from the world around us all testify to our identity as his followers. So, how will you choose to "Love Like Jesus"? 1 John 3:18 reminds us to love not just in words, but in deed and truth.

Upcoming Events

Considering your role in mission, or supporting others? Join us at our events. Find out more at ufm.org.uk/events

Called to Serve

Saturday 22nd March 2025
UFM Office, Swindon

UFM Irish Spring Conference

Saturday 26th April 2025
Moira Presbyterian Church

UFM Scottish Day Conference

Saturday 26th April 2025
Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church, Glasgow

Summer Conference

28 Jul – 1 Aug 2025, High Leigh,
Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire

Christmas Cards

Once again this year we shall benefit from the sale of Christmas cards produced by Gospel Cards, etc. 10% of their Christmas card sales will be given to 18 Christian missions including UFM Worldwide. The cards are produced to a very high standard and are perfect for sending to Christian and non-Christian family and friends.
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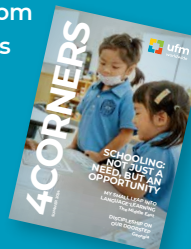
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Since 1931 we've had the privilege of helping churches to identify, train, send and support workers for cross-cultural mission. We currently serve about 280 mission partners in 40 countries, sent by 100 gospel-hearted churches.

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.

Please be in touch anytime. We'd love to help you and your church with your world mission involvement.



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