

40 CORNERS

WINTER 2025



CHIPS FOR SHIPS

Liverpool

OUT OF THE QUIET
Middle East

INVITE AND ACCEPT
INVITATIONS
Church resources

Goodbyes for the gospel



Michael Prest, Director, UFM Worldwide

Departures. It can be a funny place at the airport, can't it?

For some there's that wild sense of excitement – the holiday has finally begun. Yet for others, departures means saying goodbye to someone they love. There's a knot in the stomach and tears in the eyes.

Life is full of goodbyes, yet in Acts 20:13-38 we read about a particular kind of goodbye, as the apostle Paul says farewell to the Ephesian elders: a 'goodbye for the gospel', an intentional goodbye in response to Jesus' call on Paul's life, Acts 19:21, 20:22.

As Christians we are a sent people. In John 20:21, Jesus says "as the Father has sent me, I am sending you." We're sent to make disciples to the very ends of the earth, so saying

goodbye in one sense is just a normal part of the Christian life.

At UFM, we have the privilege of walking with people through significant goodbyes – some preparing to be sent, others preparing to leave a place and a people they've served, sometimes for decades. Please remember them in your prayers.

At the time of writing we're anticipating two commissioning services: a family with young children being sent by their church in London for service in Central Asia and a young man being sent to serve among the lost and the least in a country in the Middle East.

Will you pray for them, their families and their churches as they say goodbye? And as you pray, will you keep in mind three wonderful lessons from Acts 20:

Goodbyes for the gospel are good

As Paul said goodbye to the Ephesian elders, he wasn't moving on because he fancied a change or had a better offer. No, Paul was saying goodbye *because* of the gospel. He was on the move to Jerusalem, then later to Rome, preaching as he went.

And that is why the goodbye was good. It was a farewell full of meaning, taking seriously Jesus' words in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Friends, being faithful to the gospel will compel us frequently to say goodbye, because Jesus is never just at work in one place. He calls us, he commands us, he

gives us the joy and the privilege of participating in the work that he is doing. That's why saying goodbyes for the gospel is always good!

Goodbyes for the gospel come at a cost

As Paul said goodbye, we read 'they all wept,' Acts 20:37. To be separated comes at great cost.

As we were preparing to move to Indonesia, I remember a supporter praying for our parents. As she spoke, you could hear her voice beginning to break up. Her son and his family were mission workers in the Middle East.

Yet as we feel the cost of gospel goodbyes, we know that Jesus is worthy of our very lives, Acts 20:24, "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."

Goodbyes for the gospel never leave us lost for words

At the point of his goodbye, Paul was full

of confidence for those he was leaving behind, "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified," Acts 20:32.

At the moment, it's like we are standing in departures at the airport. But of course there's another place in an airport: arrivals.

It can be a beautiful place can't it? People no longer separated. Tears of sadness turned into tears of joy. Christian friends, don't lose heart. Through the gospel, Acts 20:32, God is preparing you for a future, reunited with all of those you've said goodbye to for the gospel, presented with an inheritance that will never perish, spoil or fade, brought into the very presence of Jesus.

So friends let's go on, even through the tears, saying goodbyes for the gospel.

Michael



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A new building: reaching the broken and needy

Kip and Rachel Chelashaw serve in Kenya, in Bible teaching, training leaders, pastoral work and children's ministry.

As we sat down in our living room in 2020, to meet for church as a family, with Samy, a young man who stays on our property, little did we know that this tiny fellowship would continue after Covid days, growing to a congregation of 80 and a Sunday school of up to 180 children from the nearby slums.

Ephraim, our children's and youth minister, and Peter, who is working with us as he prepares to church plant, had just finished their ministry apprenticeships at iServe-Africa. They came to help us and began the outreach to children in the slum.

... pastoring people who have come from broken and often chaotic home situations has its challenges.

Week by week, we were amazed and somewhat overwhelmed by the

numbers of children who started to come. We began mid-week Bible studies, fellowships and holiday Bible clubs. We recruited Isabella, to help us reach out to the Swahili-speaking ladies in the slum. Elisha joined as an apprentice and we quickly discovered his brilliance in helping organise and preach at events such as the Sunday school carol service, when we host 3-400 people. To date, 45 people have been baptised at Christ Church, Loresho. But discipleship is not easy, and pastoring people who have come from broken and often chaotic home situations has its challenges. We are comforted as we remember that it is God who builds his church, and shepherds His people.

After years of looking for a suitable church venue that is within walking distance from the slum, we were delighted to find a dilapidated property with a large garden at the entrance to our estate, and to agree with the owners a 2-year payment plan to purchase it. It has been amazing to see the Lord provide the finances for the first and second of





Above and top, left: The property purchased by the church, left: Rachel helping in the weekly slum fellowship with a short-term worker.

three payments and we trust he will continue to supply what is needed. Opposition to gospel ministry should not surprise us and, indeed, we have experienced strong opposition from some middle-class neighbours. In July, we received a threatening message from the chairman of

our residents' association asking us to stop all religious activity and specifically asking us to move the holiday club that we were hosting at that time. We pleaded for God's help and rejoiced as we saw God answer our prayers for the ministry to continue and for some middle-class residents from the estate to join the church. We are currently waiting for "change of use" so that we can start using the new church property. Please pray that God would continue to establish his Church so that, for years to come, there might be a gospel witness in this burgeoning neighbourhood that so desperately needs the light of Christ.

Out of the quiet: the Spirit at work in the Middle East

C&E were appointed to UFM as Associate Mission Partners in early 2025. They carry a long-term vision to see churches planted and local leaders raised in the heart of the Middle East.

It had been months of silence. When we returned from the Middle East, our hearts were full of stories – and yet empty. We had given all we had. We had seen God move: a church planted outside a major city, Jesus proclaimed in places we never imagined setting foot. It was beautiful. It was hard. And when it was done, we were tired.

So we rested. We prayed. We asked God what was next. Because when you have walked the dusty streets of the Middle East with the gospel in your hands, you cannot simply “move on.” You need vision. You need clarity. You need Him.

Slowly, through prayer and the counsel of others, the Lord made the next step clear: UFM. Again and again, His people pointed us in that direction. Scriptures spoke of being sent, not going alone (Romans 10:14–15). Our church affirmed it. And so, UFM became His answer – His way of saying: I am not done with you yet.



Above: A local in a busy, Middle Eastern street

UFM exists to walk alongside churches and mission workers with care, accountability, and prayer. They are not just an organisation but a family – rooted in the local church, the gospel and committed to Christ’s glory among the nations.

At the same time, God opened a door for me to serve as assistant pastor at a church in Somerset, while also pursuing further study. This is no accident. If the unchurched are to have a church, it needs shepherds shaped not by zeal alone but by the Spirit – tested, humbled, equipped, and taught to love Christ’s Bride. This season is one of learning: to preach

with them. What changed him was not religion but the real presence of Jesus: Father, Friend, Provider, Healer.

**... once a fighter for
ISIS ... grace remade
him, and today he
leads a small flock ...**



In a neighbouring Middle Eastern country, Adam* – once a fighter for ISIS – now preaches the gospel he once despised. Grace broke him, grace remade him, and today he leads a small flock under constant danger, with tears and trembling, but with Christ’s power.

And now, before us lies our destination. A city scarred by war, haunted by memories, yet longing for peace. God has given us a vision of a church there: not just a building, but a healing house – a place where the weary find rest, where the broken discover forgiveness, where disciples are made and sent out with the gospel.

This is the story God is writing. From silence to sending. From weakness to strength. And all of it for one purpose: that the name of Jesus would be lifted high, in the Middle East and to the ends of the earth.

“Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory” Psalm 115:1.

*Names and identities have been changed
Photo for illustration purposes only

faithfully, to walk with the broken, to guard the truth, and to serve with patience.

Meanwhile, the Spirit is at work far beyond us. In another major Middle Eastern city, Archie* – once frail and starving – now gathers sixty people weekly, breaking open the Scriptures



Brewing tea and sowing seeds

William and Rosalind Brown served with UFM in Ivory Coast, West Africa before their current roles as UFM Head of Personnel and TCK Coordinator

Ahmed* and his wife were just two of a group of thirty-five indigenous mission workers who gathered at a conference organised by the UEESO-CI church in Côte d'Ivoire in September. We had the privilege of being invited to teach on "The Mission Family" and we left the conference with full hearts and a greater understanding of the challenges faced by these workers.

Ahmed was born into a devout Muslim family in Niger, in a community steeped in animism. His father was the local sorcerer, and from a young age it was clear that Ahmed was destined to succeed him.

As a teenager, he was consecrated to the spirits, inheriting his father's "gifts" and gaining the ability to perform supernatural feats, such as handling snakes. Locals sought his guidance, recognising him as the keeper of spiritual knowledge.

He hated Christians when he met some while studying Fine Arts in Côte d'Ivoire, and on his return to Niger, he was furious to discover that his own uncle had become a follower of Christ. His uncle offered him a book to read, and despite initially rejecting it, Ahmed felt compelled one Sunday morning to go and ask for it.

He encountered the words of Jesus: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

He learned that Jesus, in His earthly ministry, delivered the demon-possessed and healed the sick, and that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) Finishing the book that afternoon, he fell to his knees, weeping, and pleaded with the Lord Jesus to deliver him from demon possession and save him.

... his father attacked him from behind in the fields, striking him with a heavy metal hoe.

Ahmed’s life was instantly and dramatically transformed. He felt as though a weight had been lifted, and he destroyed his fetishes and declared to his wife that he would follow only Jesus for the rest of his days. Just six days later, his father attacked him from behind in the fields, striking him with a heavy metal hoe. Despite severe blood loss, Ahmed survived and was even more determined to follow Jesus. Witnessing his unshakeable faith, his wife came to faith too, and together they found a group of believers with whom to worship. Ahmed forgave his father, and they were reconciled as a family.

Through a series of divine appointments, Ahmed and his wife found themselves in Côte d’Ivoire again. A local Christian man financed

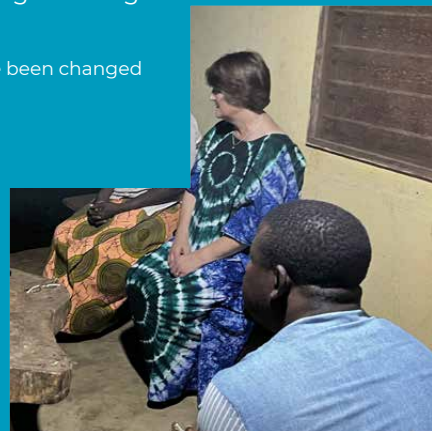
their studies at Bible school. With a burning heart for Niger and the surrounding Arab nations, they have been commissioned by the UEESO-CI church in Côte d’Ivoire to serve as mission workers based in Niger.

Ahmed has a deep understanding of Arab culture, having spent two years immersed in four different Arab nations near Niger. He uses the traditional activity of brewing a pot of green tea in the open air to draw people in for conversations about faith. He has planted a church, and his wife runs a thriving kindergarten during the week for children from local Muslim families, where she weaves Bible truths into songs.

These mission workers and their families understand firsthand what it means to “share in his sufferings” (Philippians 3:10). It is an immense privilege to partner with them.

Please pray for God’s provision and protection for these faithful servants, and that the good seed they are sowing will bear abundant fruit among unreached people groups within Côte d’Ivoire and the neighbouring countries.

*Names have been changed



Fruit at long last

David and Wilma serve in church planting and discipleship in Ireland

**“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.”
– Psalm 118:22-24**

We serve a God who turns things around, who reverses fortunes. This passage, of course, refers to Christ, rejected by men but exalted by God. We were bound for hell,

yet He redeemed us; we were lost, but He found us.

Here in Charlestown, Co. Mayo, we sense that God is doing something new, and it is marvellous in our eyes. For many years, we simply plodded on, seeing little visible fruit. But now, we are witnessing the Lord at work in remarkable ways.

In recent years, David also walked through a season of depression, yet at the beginning of 2025, he sensed that the dark cloud had finally lifted. God is restoring joy and strength.



Alongside this personal renewal, the fellowship has been encouraged by several new believers moving into the area and committing to the church.

The church began praying for her husband ... he too trusted in Christ.

One of these is a lady who found us shortly after coming to faith about a year and a half ago. The church began praying for her husband, and six months ago, he too trusted in Christ. In June, they were baptised along with four others: a lady in her 70s, two middle-aged men and a young man whose family already attend the church. Recently, another woman asked David to pray with her as she sought forgiveness and to meet Jesus personally. What a joy to see hearts being softened and lives changed.

Once a month, we hold an outreach service followed by lunch. We encourage believers to invite

Left: baptisms, below: lunch after the service



friends, family, and neighbours and rarely has one of these services passed without unbelievers present to hear the gospel. Please pray that many will be saved through these opportunities.

Our monthly Ladies' Friendship Group has also been blessed by the presence of women who don't yet know the Lord. Some of the ladies in the fellowship recently asked to start a ladies' Bible study, and it is a joy to see them searching God's Word and being transformed by it.

The Men's Breakfast continues monthly as well, with good attendance. The men are currently reading Jerry Bridges' *The Pursuit of Holiness* together, and the discussions have been both honest and encouraging. David is also training some of the men with a view to future leadership. Please pray that God will raise up godly, faithful leaders for His church.

We hope to develop a youth ministry, as we have around eight young people in the fellowship. We long to provide something that will help them grow in Christ. Pray for God's leading.

Robert Murray McCheyne said that during a time of revival in Scotland, he felt like a bystander watching God at work. We feel much the same, marvelling at what the Lord is doing. Please join us in giving thanks and continue to pray that His Spirit would sweep across our community and our land, turning many hearts to Jesus.



Invite and accept invitations

Unfortunately, most first generation immigrants have never been invited to a Western home. Even second and third generation Muslims rarely experience this. The solution is very simple: invite them!

There are several reasons that may prevent us from doing this. We can feel just too busy, or that it would be complicated to have someone over we don't know very well. We may feel uncomfortable about it. But let me encourage you to invite them into your home and persevere with your invitations. This will help your Muslim contacts get used to Western culture. Invite them! They can only say yes or no! In Arab culture, hospitality involves multiple invitations. You have to ask three times before the invitation is considered serious and valid. So don't expect your friends to accept the invitation first time round. You will need to persevere!


Sometimes they will be afraid to come to your home. They may be as scared as you are! "What should I wear?" "How should I behave?" "What will they offer me to eat?" They are asking themselves the same

questions! Help them accept your invitation by telling them that you will buy the meat from a local butcher. In this way, you implicitly inform them that the meat will be halal. If you are uneasy about halal meat, then tell your friend that you would cook fish or vegetarian. This gesture will mean a lot to them, but don't worry if they don't eat much on their first visit.

On a practical level, depending on their country of origin and background, they may not be used to eating with a knife and fork. They may find spaghetti and other pasta very difficult to eat so please do not serve them such dishes on their first visit.

In many cultures, your friends will be embarrassed if you finish your plate.

A common response to your first invitation may be, "No, but come to my home!" If this happens, accept their invitation. When you go, bring a simple gift such as flowers or sweets for the children. When you enter their home, take off your shoes, even if they tell you it is not necessary. Sometimes oversized slippers are



provided for you to put on. Try not to point the soles of your feet at anyone as this is considered rude and offensive. Do your best to sit comfortably, laugh with them and simply enjoy the new experience!

Don't hesitate to say that you are full ...They will be happy

If they are refugees or students, they may not have much money. But if they can afford it, they will serve you expensive food. Don't feel guilty about it, eat up! If you don't eat, the offence will feel far more serious to them than any possible financial difficulties. At the same time, don't eat until you are completely full up either, or even to the point of cleaning your plate. In many cultures, your friends will be embarrassed if you finish your plate. They will think that you have not eaten enough and will feel ashamed. So, leave some food on your plate, even if they encourage you to eat more. I remember times when a mother or grandmother would even take the food in her hands and offer it to me directly.

Don't hesitate to say that you are full: say "Thank you" or "Alhamdulillah" ("Praise God" in Arabic). They will be happy and so will you. Most of all, build relationships and enjoy their

company during this first visit. If it goes well, you will have many more opportunities to share the gospel.

Hospitality is a most important factor here. There need also be no scruples on the part of Christians in sitting at table with Muslims. I have often been approached by Christians who believe we should object to halal symbols appearing on poultry, margarine, etc., in our supermarkets, fearing lest we be in some way affected by Muslim practices. I believe there is no need for such reactions. We are a free people, delivered from scruples about food and drink (Luke 10.8; Colossians 2.20-22).

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Chips for Ships

Ben Griffin serves in the UK with 100Fold, working to share Christ using technology

Chriswin Raj's call to Maritime Christian Ministries (MCM) came one evening as he reached into a sack of potatoes. Having settled in the UK from India to study, Raj had been convinced of the UK's need for Christ-centred, biblically rigorous teaching. But how could he serve?

It was in 2019 that he delved to the bottom of that potato sack and found it lined with the pages from an evangelical newspaper. Under a thin film of soil, staring back at Raj, was an advertisement from MCM for the post of port chaplain in Liverpool.

Since that day, Raj has served faithfully with MCM bringing the gospel to hundreds of sailors who arrive in Liverpool each year aboard cargo ships. With the vast number of cargo ships arriving¹, it soon became evident to Raj that the opportunities for discipleship and evangelism were immense.

However, with opportunities come challenges. Not only does Raj have the challenge of reaching so many, but often he cannot speak their language. What's more, he only has

a short window before the ship sails and his opportunity to share the gospel vanishes over the horizon. How could he maximize this God-given opportunity and address the challenges of a ministry where the world comes to you in their hundreds, but just for a fleeting moment?

A providential encounter between Raj and Trevor Condy, a former chairman of Grace Baptist Mission, lit the touch paper for what is now known as Chips for Ships. Raj had shared with Trevor his vision for using MicroSD cards, also known as "chips," to share the gospel with sailors, yet he lacked the technical ability to do this. Trevor, however, knew Keith Charlton, a UFM mission partner who serves with OneHundredFold.

OneHundredFold has developed an off-line mobile app called the Mustard Seed, mounted on a Micro SD card which is inserted into a phone. This can contain hundreds of hours of gospel material, in hundreds of languages that can be read, listened to, or watched by anyone with an Android mobile phone, even where there is no internet. Keith and the team at OneHundredFold, have

1. 2,250 cargo ships arrived in the ports of Liverpool in 2024 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/port-freight-annual-statistics-2024/port-freight-annual-statistics-2024-arrivals>)



developed a Mustard Seed targeted specifically at sailors arriving in the UK. Once inserted in their phones, sailors from say, Romania, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, or Georgia, will have access to Christ-centred, biblical teaching in their own language at the touch of a button.

Once Chips for Ships is fully rolled out, this will transform the work of port chaplains. There is already interest from chaplains in two other UK ports. Sailors plagued by loneliness and boredom with their nomadic lifestyles will have an almost unlimited access to gospel videos, sermons, discipleship material, and, most importantly, the Bible.

Raj will be able to share the gospel with those on the ships and leave them with a Chips for Ships Mustard Seed. Although they may never meet again, the sailors now have access to the Word which brings eternal life, and the means to disciple believers.



Top: Raj with the crew, Above: Raj

Raj urges people to pray that the Word be planted, watered and that God give the increase. He also asks for churches and individuals to come alongside him in reaching out to the sailors. He is but one man reaching out to hundreds of lost souls. Maybe this time the Lord won't use a newspaper at the bottom of a potato sack to inspire someone to reach out to sailors, perhaps He will use an article about Chips for Ships in 4 Corners?



The global church

When *Matthew Martin*, UFM Communications Manager, set out to Southeast Asia, his aim was to capture short films for the mission. What he brought back was more than video clips, it was a renewed vision of God's global Church.

I couldn't hold back the tears. The moment they began to spill down my cheeks, I knew resistance was futile. Hearing *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* in the local tongue proved to be the final straw. The congregation's heartfelt chorus, echoing in a packed room, magnified the intensity of worship and bound us to the worldwide Church.


It wasn't only the familiar melody, the focus on God's word, the sermon, or the prayers – it could have been my home church in the UK, if not for the foreign language, the ninety-

percent humidity, and the monsoon rain pounding on the tin roof. My reaction to the unfamiliar was, in truth, because it was familiar. And I couldn't ignore the Spirit's whisper: Matthew, this is a taste of my Kingdom – and it is good.

I interviewed faithful men training for leadership, young converts ostracised by parents of another faith ...

Yet this church differs from mine in one major way: it meets in a





nation torn by civil war. Men risk forced conscription into the deeply unpopular and brutal military, while civilians endure rolling blackouts, food shortages, and collapsing infrastructure. In the days leading up to that service, I had travelled across the region, capturing stories of God at work. These people were hard-pressed on every side but not crushed, perplexed yet not in despair (2 Cor. 4:8). Through my camera lens, I saw the radiant joy on their faces as they spoke of the treasure they had found in Christ.

While many mission partners had been evacuated, they chose to remain, denying themselves the comforts of the West to plant a gospel-hearted church ...

With the help of a translator, I interviewed faithful men training for leadership, young converts ostracised by parents of another faith, and our UFM mission partners – quite possibly the only family planting a church in that area. While many mission partners had been evacuated, they chose to remain, denying themselves the comforts of the West to plant a gospel-hearted church and raise up faithful men, like those I interviewed, to lead it forward, even at overwhelming personal risk.

There is nothing novel in what these mission partners are doing. Yes, it is the first evangelical church of its kind in that area. Yes, many in the congregation are coming to Christ. But the model itself is one UFM has prayed for and worked toward for nearly a century. Insignificant though we are, God continues to grant us the privilege of playing a small part in His great plan for the nations.

For me, it was a glimpse of heaven itself: worshippers from every nation, every tribal group (135 are officially recognised in this country), and every language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb (Rev 7:9) in unified praise.

It saddens me to say, there is something almost indulgent about trips like these. Even though their purpose is to support mission partners serving long-term and provide resources for sending churches, returning to the comforts and security of home often brings a sense of guilt. Yet these experiences also serve as a wake-up call, that outside my quiet Wiltshire bubble, God is building, and will continue to build, His Church. That Church is truly global. When what is “foreign” feels like home, you are reminded that you are part of one body with many members, a body we are all called to support, whether by sending, going, praying, or giving. I implore you: don’t stop.



Welcome!

Samuel Chikkala has been appointed as an Associate Mission Partner and is serving in Germany. He is sent by ICF Frankfurt.

Simon Kang'ethe has been appointed as an Associate Mission Partner and will be serving in church ministry in Kenya. He is sent by East London Tabernacle Baptist Church.

Josh and Becca will be serving in Central Asia. They are sent by Emmanuel Church, Bramcote, Nottingham.

Liz Payne is serving alongside Bosco and Heidi Bukeera in Uganda. She is sent by High Pointe Baptist Church, Austin, USA.

Ger and Kathy McNamara are involved in medical and educational outreach across Hungary and Eastern Europe. They are sent by Mallow Street Christian Fellowship, Limerick, Republic of Ireland.

José and Sarah Caicedo will be serving in church ministry in Spain. They are sent by Aughnacloy Presbyterian Church.

C and J will be working in medical care in the Middle East. They are sent by Great Victoria Street Baptist Church, Belfast.

Anna Autrey Campbell will be serving in student ministry in the UK. She is sent by Shades Mountain Community Church, Birmingham, Alabama, USA.

Elisha Komba will be serving in church ministry in Kenya. He is sent by Hambro Road Baptist Church, Streatham.

Promise Mukungi, wife of Peter, has been appointed as an Associate Mission Partner and is serving in children's and women's ministry in Kenya. She is sent by St Andrew the Great, Cambridge.

Short-Term Partners (Transitioning to Long-Term)

Jeremy and Janet Boddington are serving in South Africa in aviation mission. They are sent by Emmanuel Evangelical Church, Chippenham.

Yosry is serving in the UK in evangelism and outreach. He is sent by Duke Street Evangelical Church, Northampton.

Alex and Miri Stephenson are serving in Frankfurt, Germany, focusing on church ministry and youth work. They are sent by Bethany Baptist Church, Bangor, and Calvary Chapel, Heidelberg.



What's it like ... to come 'home' after 30 years living cross-culturally

Mark and Gill Newham served with UFM in Mongolia for over 30 years, most recently supporting the first generation of Mongolian mission workers. Since returning to the UK in 2023, Gill has been reflecting on the challenges of re-entry and what it means for mission partners to return 'home'.

The loss is savage. Numb with pain, we went through the motions, packed up our house, sold it and gave away most of our possessions. Mongolia had been our home for half our lives.

We love its wildness, the long cold winter that brimmed with blue skies ... and the people. Yes, the people ... we have learned to love them deeply. They are part of our lives as we have become part of theirs and together, we have watched God work.

Waves of grief consumed us as we said our last goodbyes and boarded the plane bound for England. We will see our friends again, but we shall not live in Mongolia again. Gracious friends and family welcomed us to Britain, helping us set up home and find some semblance of normality. Their love and support have been invaluable, but we cannot find ourselves in this place. We do not feel at home. While the UK is our birthplace, our passport country, it is Mongolian



Above: Rural Mongolia

culture and people that have shaped and changed us.

We left Mongolia sensing God calling us back to Britain for a new season of ministry. But we cannot discern a clear, delineated plan. Each day we read his word, pray and keep our daily disciplines, but God appears silent. And there is so much we don't know, so much to learn – awkwardness and fear only seem to amplify our ignorance further.

In our brokenness, we ask, 'Have we lost our identity?' The question hovers beneath the surface as we acknowledge our impatient desire to belong. Building new friendships takes time, especially with people who live full and busy lives. We understand. It isn't always easy for people to add new friends to their circle, plus our experiences are different and don't easily connect to daily life in Britain.

Then one day, quite unexpectedly, God speaks to us through his word. We sense his presence again – he has not left us. Feelings of loss remain, but something

is burgeoning alongside: hope! Hope has returned, which in turn strengthens our trust in God. Yes, we have left what felt secure and familiar and walked into the unknown. But in a lightbulb moment, we realise that Jesus understands, *truly understands*, because he too left his home to come to earth. He knows what it is to live as a stranger in a strange land. Yet, in coming to earth, we note that he did not break communication with his Father.

Now we are doing the same in reverse; learning to live in a culture that is new to us ...

It is in this revelation that we begin to remember the long years it took to make Mongolia our home. Years of learning the language and way of life, time spent getting to know the people and becoming integrated. Now we are doing the same in reverse; learning to live in a culture that is new to us, we ask the Lord to adjust our expectations, enable us to grow in grace and nurture new relationships while seeking safe places to process our struggles. It is a slow journey of letting go of what was, to embrace what is – knowing that Christ is with us and he has given us his promise. We will pass through this. We will grow, there will be fruit and not just in our lives.

SPAIN



FOCUS ON ... Spain

Catherine works with ethnic minority groups in Spain.

Spain has never had a reformation. Its faith history is shaped by both resistance and opportunity. During the 16th-century Protestant Reformation in Europe, reform efforts in Spain were largely extinguished by the Catholic Church and the Inquisition, leaving the country overwhelmingly Catholic with few Evangelical roots for centuries.

In the 20th century, under the Francoist dictatorship, Evangelical believers faced persecution yet quietly grew in number and maturity. Rural Spaniards moving to industrial cities encountered Christians who often used the Bible to teach literacy and witnessed conversions.



Please pray for ...

- **Spirit-led creativity** as churches reach curious young people
- **Christlike witness** among Christian immigrants engaging with new communities
- **effective collaboration** between churches, mission workers, and newcomers
- **regional language engagement**, that Catalan, Basque, and Galician speakers may see the gospel shared in their heart language
- **hearts open to Christ** across Spain, especially among those with little exposure to the gospel
- **students and young adults**, that universities and schools would become places where the gospel is shared and discipleship is encouraged
- **training for Bible handlers**, that new leaders may teach God's Word faithfully and confidently

Spain is

4th
largest
European
country

17 autonomous
regions

4 official
languages: Spanish,
Catalan, Basque,
Galician

~2% Evangelical¹

Other

49
million

39% non-believers
(atheist, agnostic
or indifferent)

55.4% Catholic
(18.8% practising)²

1. radical.net. 2. Wikipedia

producer of
nearly 1/2 the
world's olive oil



Football is the most popular
sport; clubs include Real
Madrid and FC Barcelona.

48
UNESCO
World
Heritage
Sites

including the
Alhambra
and Sagrada
Familia

Although persecution has ended, the Evangelical church today faces new challenges, as well as many opportunities. Some Spaniards identify as Evangelical mainly due to family ties, even though society often views them as a sect. Many churches remain in a posture of receiving help rather than sending workers, and unity can be fragile.

Spain's Catholic church, historically tied to the dictatorship and marred by publicised abuses, left deep scars. Even though many in Spain reject religion, younger generations, often largely unaware of the gospel, are curious and open to hearing it. They represent a growing proportion of new believers. Spain stands at a crossroads, shaped by history yet full of potential for gospel renewal.

A Changing Nation

Migration over the past 30 years has increased Spain's linguistic and cultural diversity. Spanish is now the first language for about four-fifths of the population, with Catalan, Basque, and Galician spoken regionally. Most immigrants, largely from Morocco and Latin America, learn Spanish first, presenting opportunities for local believers and Christian immigrants to reach others with the gospel. An estimated 4-5% of the population is Muslim.

"From one man he made all the nations... God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him."
(Acts 17:26-27)

< Cut out, pop in your Bible, pray for the Spain

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

Local Church, Global Mission:
Chippenham

Saturday, 24 January, 2026
Emmanuel Church, Chippenham

Edinburgh

Saturday, 7 February 2026
Chalmers Church, Edinburgh

Called to Serve

Saturday 7 March 2026
UFM Office, Swindon

UFM Scottish Day Conference

Saturday 18 April 2026
Sandyford Henderson Memorial Church, Glasgow

UFM Irish Spring Conference

Saturday 9 May 2026
Moira Presbyterian Church

Summer Conference

27 Jul – 31 Aug 2026, High Leigh,
Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire

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for prayer,
teaching and
fellowship!

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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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