

link

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Gap Year Teams

In January, our latest gap year team head to Cape Town! Five young people and their leader will spend five months getting alongside Christian ministries in Cape Town, serving as interns at local churches and a Christian school. Please pray for them to serve and integrate well, and to grow in faith and dependence on God. You can sign up for their monthly prayer letters on our website. Could you go next year, as a team member or leader? Email contact@crosslinks.org to find out more.



Last year's gap year team in Cape Town

Join us in prayer

Join us at our online prayer meetings. We meet in the evening on Zoom with supporters to hear from and pray for Crosslinks mission partners. Sign up at pletters@crosslinks.org to have the Zoom details sent to you each month.

19 Jan, 7pm

with Mark and Jane Oden,
serving in Italy



26 Jan, 7:30pm

with Chris and Lotta Strajnic,
serving in Sweden



16 Feb, 7pm

with Adam and
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serving in South Africa



2 Mar, 7:30pm

with Trevor and Andrea Watson,
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The great news is the gospel we're sharing is bearing fruit all over the world. As I read our mission partners' prayer letters, there are so many encouraging stories ...

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The rewards of prayer

Struggling for motivation to pray? Jesus teaches us about the rewards of private prayer, as we partner with others in God's global mission.

'And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.'
Matthew 6:5-6

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' extended lesson in true spirituality. It's a lesson in being genuine disciples, citizens of the King – as opposed to the false hypocrisy of failed fake religion. Whether that's the literalism of the Pharisees or the liberalism of the Sadducees, Jesus corrects faulty belief and behaviour in these packed chapters.

And at the start of Matthew chapter six he addresses the trio common to so many religions of the world: giving, prayer and fasting. What motivates you to give, to pray and to fast? It's all about reward.

One of the surprises in these verses is that the hypocrites loved to pray. They would be the first at the church prayer meeting, quick to log on to the monthly missions prayer meeting – they made sure they were there. And the adulation they received for their public piety was the sum of their efforts. Behind it lay their pride.

... it did not seem to us ... common sense to keep on talking to God as though he were deaf ...

Rather than praying to be seen by others, Jesus commends privately praying to an unseen God, our heavenly Father who is in secret, or as some translations put it, 'who is in that secret place.'

Now what's interesting is that the word for room in verse six was also used for the storeroom where treasures might be kept. The implication being that there are treasures already waiting for us when we pray.



Which was certainly the experience of CT Studd, a leading cricketer of his day from one of the wealthiest families in the land, who gave it all up as one of the leaders of the Cambridge Seven who took the gospel to China. Let me share some of his words that both encouraged and challenged me:

'The last of our supplies was finished, and there was no apparent hope of supplies of any kind coming from any human source. The mail man had just set out that afternoon, and in a fortnight he would bring the return mail.

If the return of the postman brought no relief, starvation stared us in the face. We decided to have a night of prayer. We got on our knees for that purpose.

I think we must have stayed there twenty minutes before we rose again. We had told God everything that we had to say in those twenty minutes. Our hearts were relieved; it did not seem to us either reverence or common sense to keep on talking to God as though he were deaf or could not understand our simple language, or the extremity of our circumstances, or the weight of the words of his Son, who said that God knew everything before we told him, or as he said himself, "Before they call I will answer."

And verily he did. The mail man returned at the appointed time. We were not slow to open the bag. We glanced over the letters; there was nothing, and we looked at each other. I went to the bag again, took it by the corners and shook it

mouth downwards; out came another letter, but the handwriting was totally unfamiliar to us.

God has prevented me from sleeping tonight ...

This was the letter:

"I have," he said, "for some reason or other received the command of God to send you a cheque for £100. I have never met you, I have only heard of you, and that not often, but God has prevented me from sleeping tonight by this command. Why he should command me to send you this I don't know – you will know better than I. Anyhow, here it is and I hope it will do you good."

The name of that man was Frank Crossley. We had neither of us seen each other or corresponded.¹

Now rewards in the Christian life are of course not restricted to £100 cheques from people we've never met! He refreshes our soul, satisfies our hunger, quenches our thirst, brings light to our paths. His rewards are various and bountiful, and yet the secret to them all is closing the door and praying to our father in the secret place.

Let's seek the rewards of the Father and maybe as we do that we'll be rewarded as Frank Crossley was with the privilege of partnering with others in their gospel work.

Rev Rupert Shelley is Director of Mission Partnerships

1. Quoted in C. T. Studd: *Cricketer & Pioneer*, Norman Grubb (London: Lutterworth Press, 1970), pp. 98-99.



Sustained by prayer

None of our mission partners can do their work on their own. Liz and Tom Trump share how they've come to depend on people's prayers, and the truth that shapes everything they do: 'Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.' (Psalm 127:1)

We arrived in Brussels on 17 June 2013 having packed the contents of our small flat in East London into a white van with the help of our church small group. We had both benefitted from the gospel ministry at St Helen's Bishopsgate and felt challenged by the question: 'Given the truth of the gospel and the gifts we've been given, how can we best serve the Lord?'. We wanted to

use our lives for Jesus, maximising our potential for gospel advance. We could never have imagined how deeply we would come to depend on the prayers of supporters back in the UK.

Tom had grown up in Belgium and spoke French, and I was working in Westminster. Brussels felt like a good fit – the gospel needs were huge and although there was faithful gospel work

Emmanuel Etterbeek, where Liz and Tom serve

going on, overall the church was and still is fragile and lacking in trained Bible teachers. We had already been involved for several years with the bilingual InterAction summer camps in Belgium and felt confident, with the enthusiasm and naivety of youth, that we could serve there. We found new jobs in our new city and without spending too much time counting the cost, we left the UK.

Five years later Tom resigned from his finance job to train for ministry at the Brussels Bible Institute and five years after that became the pastor of Emmanuel Etterbeek church, a French-speaking community of around 30 adults.

We are so aware that we cannot do this work on our own and are deeply grateful for the prayers of our six supporting churches and many faithful

individuals across the UK. We recognize that prayer is costly – joining a prayer meeting at the end of a long day often requires real sacrifice. Yet these prayers have carried us.

One thing we often ask people to pray is that God would bring people through the doors of the church.

Half of the population of Etterbeek, the European quarter of Brussels where we live, are not from Belgium and there is a high turnover. Yet, without fail, every time someone dear to us leaves, God brings new people to work alongside us and to do life with. One year early on we hadn't yet got used to this cycle of arrivals and departures and were feeling bereft after two close friends moved away. A French Christian student got in touch with our church and asked to stay for a few nights while she searched for a flat to rent. She knocked on our door and very quickly lifted our spirits and boosted our small church with her godly attitude and enthusiasm.

Little by little the church is built and prayers that are tentatively prayed are powerfully answered.

A few years later a young man joined our church after reading the Bible on his own at home and becoming a Christian; another lady found her way through the doors and discovered that Jesus is worth much more than the relationship she had been clinging to; a young couple grew in their gospel convictions

and were trained to read the Bible with others, and Sunday school teachers appeared out of nowhere. Little by little the church is built and prayers that are tentatively prayed are powerfully answered.

On a personal level, prayer has also sustained us. Tom is bilingual, while for me working in a language that is not my own has been stretching and at times exhausting. Before teaching a Sunday school lesson or leading a Bible study I can do nothing but pray that God would use what words I have.

... the ministry of the gospel is both glorious and hard.

Through our fervent prayers and those of our supporters he has always provided for us – a house at just the right time, miraculous financial support despite living in one of the most expensive countries in Europe, visits from faithful supporters that cheered us up when we were at a low ebb.

Last May, our church weekend away was especially helpful in driving this home. We spent time in 2 Corinthians, and two realities came into sharp focus: the ministry of the gospel is both glorious and hard. That isn't a contradiction – it's God's design. Ministry is hard – the discouragement that comes with slow progress, the strain of difficult relationships, or the practical challenges of family life. But the gospel is glorious as God opens blind eyes, using our prayers and meagre efforts to bring new life.

So, thank you for praying. Please keep praying – for faithfulness, for godliness, for encouragement in times of weariness, daily provision and gospel advance in Belgium. We know that prayer is not an optional extra but the very means by which God sustains his people and builds his church.

Liz and Tom Trump serve in Brussels, Belgium where Tom is pastor of a local church plant



Liz and Tom Trump and family

Prayers in endless goodbyes

Feeling the pain of saying goodbye? It's a sad but inevitable part of life. But there is great comfort in bringing that pain to our heavenly Father, and in being united to our brothers and sisters all over the world.

I stood at the back of church and broke down in tears...again. I'll tell you why.

Alex and I have been serving at a small international church in Busan, South Korea for almost seven years. At our church, we have mainly three groups of people: expat families on work assignments, English teachers, and international students. All three groups often stay between two and four years, and very rarely longer than that. This means we say heart-wrenching goodbyes regularly, maybe every other month. It's somewhat ironic – as the church grows in love for one another, we cry more often because of our inevitable goodbyes.

Where can you turn when dear friends are torn away from your life? You no longer benefit from their tender, loving, truthful counsel in times of trial. In our desperate state, we turn to God in earnest prayer. A friend read out a prayer at yet another goodbye meal recently which touched my heart deeply. Here is

an excerpt from 'A Liturgy for Leavings' from *Every Moment Holy*, Volume 1:

'Grant, O Lord, that we might take our leave of one another now, feeling a right joy for the blessings of the hours we have shared, even as we feel a bright and hopeful sorrow at their close.

Friends and saints and fellow pilgrims, we part now in the confidence that in our diverging paths we walk the same road, fanning the same flame, and that in time we will meet again in a fellowship forever unbroken.

*By your Spirit, O Christ, make us faithful in the meanwhile, as we go out to labor in the diverse fields to which you have assigned us, laboring unto that better meeting, and unto that new-made world that is yet promised and that has already begun.'*¹

As she read out this prayer, I was struck by two things. Firstly, the prayer has such a hopeful tone! We have 'bright and hopeful sorrow' and we can be confident of the fellowship that will be forever unbroken. We will have a better meeting in a new-made world. We are not to be swallowed up in despair and sadness.

Secondly, this hope then led me to delight in us 'fanning the same flame'. Wherever we are, we have the same Christ, same purpose, and same final destiny. Our lives will all look very different, but we also share the same work of fanning the flame.



Goodbye photo at the Phillips' church in Busan

As I write this short reflection, however, I do not want to presume that I know your sorrow in saying goodbyes. You may be saying goodbye to a good friend, a new Crosslinks mission partner as they leave for their mission work. You may be saying goodbye to your children as they leave for university. You may even be saying goodbye to your dying loved one.

1. Douglas Kaine McKelvey, *Every Moment Holy, Volume 1* (Nashville: Rabbit Room Press, 2017), p. 247.

I'm only certain that we all go through heart-wrenching goodbyes in some way.

If you are going through another goodbye in your life, would you like to bring your sorrows to him in prayer with me? If others do not understand, God does. Every single person on this earth turned away and said goodbye to him at some point. So, to save his chosen ones, he said the hardest goodbye on the cross – God the Father abandoned his Son, Jesus. Because God suffered the worst goodbye, we do not have to face the ultimate goodbye with God. When the world despair in their hopeless goodbyes, we have the only true hope of reunion.

And let's together keep praying for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in our goodbyes. Isn't it wonderful that we fan the same flame? Crosslinks mission partners on the other side of the world fan the same flame as you. We will not see fully how we are fanning the same flame in this world. Yet, one day, that flame will be brighter than the sun and flood the whole world with the light of salvation. We will rejoice in our perfect reunion with the Lord and with one another. Please keep fanning the same flame where you are, and please help us in our fanning of the flame through your prayers even as we remember you fellow pilgrims.

Kate and Alex Phillips serve in pastoral ministry at an international church in Busan, South Korea

Building two-way partnerships in prayer

It's not always easy to feel connected to your mission partners and keep them in your prayers. But the mutual benefits of committed partnerships are huge.

Church partnerships are vital to the work of Crosslinks mission partners, project partners and study partners. Each of our partners has a church or cluster of churches who support them in all kinds of ways, including financially and in prayer.

But how can you as a church help each other to keep mission partners in your prayers? We caught up with three partner churches to hear how and why they go about building meaningful partnerships with gospel workers overseas.

Why adopt a mission partner?

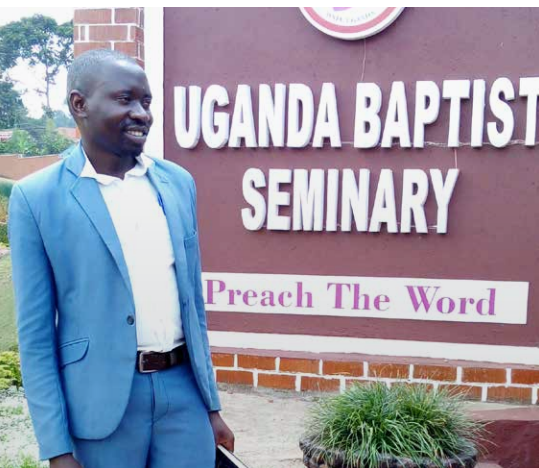
For all three of these churches, playing

their part in the call to go and make disciples of all nations is a key motivator for adopting mission partners. But it's not just about obedience.

Bow Baptist Church support a study partner, Franco Masereka, who studies at Uganda Baptist Seminary. For them, when their ministry feels weak and fragile, having partners around the UK and the world reminds them of what's really true: 'that Jesus' kingdom is huge and growing, and we have a part to play'.

These partnerships are also strategic. Saint John's Walthamstow completed a Church Mission Consultation with Crosslinks a few years ago, which helped them rethink their approach

to partnerships. As a church family, they committed to 'engage in mission in our parish and beyond by forming and nurturing a *realistic* number of committed gospel partnerships'. They'd noticed there are lots of Eastern Europeans in their local community, so they wanted to partner with someone working in Eastern Europe. Around the same time, Graeme and Bequi Innes were serving at a local partner church, so they deliberately grew their relationship with them before getting behind them as they left for Moldova.



Franco Masereka, supported by Bow Baptist Church

St Helen's Bishopsgate took a similar approach in choosing to partner with Tom and Liz Trump and Steve and Dawn Orange in Brussels. They saw an opportunity for both short- and long-term connections in French-speaking Europe, thanks to existing links and their geographical proximity. They could also see 'gifting and godliness' in both couples, and so the decision was made.

So, it doesn't have to be complicated. There's obedience to the big-picture call, but also some pragmatic thinking about how you can best partner with others to answer that call. Sounds great in theory, but how do you build meaningful partnerships in practice?

How to keep mission partners in your prayers

A key element of that is committing to them in prayer. But if you only see your mission partners once every few years, how do you help each other remember them in your prayers? Here are some of the ways these three churches are trying to do it:

- Link your mission partners with a small group / homegroup or similar, who can commit to them in prayer and which the mission partners can join when they're visiting
- Invite them on your church day or weekend away so they can get to know people better
- Encourage church family to take part in short-term mission trips, helping them to better understand how they can be praying for partners, and encouraging church family to do the same on their return
- Have pictures of your mission partners up in church
- Make sure they're regularly included in your church prayer points – in prayer diaries, Sunday services and prayer meetings

- Invite Crosslinks to present at church prayer meetings once or twice a year, to keep partners and the wider organisation on your radar
- Use sermon applications to encourage people to pray for mission partners
- Sign up for mission partners' WhatsApp prayer groups or PrayerMate feeds, to get regular updates in between prayer letters

Mutually beneficial relationships

That's by no means an exhaustive list. But maybe it already seems like a lot of onus is on the church. What's in it for you?

Bow Baptist describe it is a privilege to 'learn from their perseverance and faith'. Having a study partner is a humbling reminder of 'the barriers our brothers and sisters often have to overcome to study God's word'.

Both Saint John's and St Helen's speak of being spurred on in their evangelism too. Seeing and hearing of 'God's power and grace at work in other parts of the world' and the sacrifices that mission partners make can encourage disciple-making, including cross-culturally, in your local context.

So, it's not a one-way crusade to take the gospel to the nations, or a distant, hands-off relationship. It's an opportunity to learn from and be encouraged by brothers and sisters living out their faith in different places



A team from Saint John's visiting the Innes family

all over the world. And your mission partners really mean it when they say they want to know how they can be praying for you too – so tell them!

Where to start?

What, then, would these three ordinary churches say to anyone just starting out or thinking about adopting mission partners?

In a word: go for it! Do your research, do some thinking as a church about mission, and then pray about who you could commit to partnering with. 'Even if you don't consider yourself to be a "wealthy" church, you may find that what you can give has a much bigger impact than you might think.'

If you'd like to know more about adopting a mission partner, or how to deepen your existing partnerships, please get in touch with us! We'd love to hear from you at contact@crosslinks.org.

With huge thanks to Lizzie Jelfs (Bow Baptist), Kieran Bush (Saint John's Walthamstow), and John Wood and Anna Lamb (St Helen's Bishopsgate)

Is God **answering** our prayers?

Sometimes the needs we see can feel overwhelming. What can we pray in the face of such need? Is God still there when the big prayers seem to go unanswered?

While at Bible college in South Africa, a Ghanaian friend told us that the first missionaries to Ghana packed their belongings in a coffin. They knew that a tropical disease was likely to take their lives, and so they were very likely to die without seeing much progress in the work they had given their lives to. Our friend didn't tell us this to put us off, but rather to put God's work into perspective. Those first workers sowed a seed that the Lord then watered and caused to grow in his time and the gospel spread throughout the country.

Zambia, like Ghana, has a long history of Christian missions over the years. In fact, it is a self-proclaimed 'Christian nation'. In reality, however, the church in large part is being bombarded and swayed by influences that peddle false gospels, ones which mean that people make demands of God for their immediate felt needs, treating him a little like a cash machine or some sort of magic charm to intervene in their lives. The sad reality is that people are being led astray.

So much of this comes down to people not knowing their Bibles or being taught faithfully from the pulpit. We are serving in Zambia to help change this situation, so that the true gospel can be heard and people can live their lives devoted to the God who has revealed himself in Scripture. A mountain!

The challenge with such an overwhelming task is exactly that – it can be overwhelming. How can we do it? Who should we focus on? What do we do when the work we're doing seems so small, bearing such little fruit in the face of such big needs?

Well, we pray! We turn to God and ask for him to use us. We ask for him to bless the work we are doing. We ask for his guidance and his working. We ask him for perseverance despite discouragements. We ask him to satisfy us with himself, that to know him is enough.

And, in our experience so far, God often graciously gives little encouraging answers in amongst our big prayers.

Hearing someone say, 'Well, it is good that Andy was there to hear that error – now he can gently correct it', or seeing an older Zambian man, who is a church elder, understand that Jesus was the perfect servant and then wash the hands of those around him before eating food – those are the little things that help us to be thankful to God and remember that he is doing his work in his way through us.

Moses, Jeremiah and Gideon all asked 'who am I that you would use me?'

The Psalmist said to lift our eyes to the hills because our help comes from the Lord (Psalm 121), and he said it because that is the best place to look.

Moses, Jeremiah and Gideon all asked 'who am I that you would use me?'. God went on to use them mightily and, while nationwide revival would be awesome, we may not ever see thousands flocking to Bible handling seminars in rural Mkushi. But what we will see is that it is not about our measure of success or visible outcomes. Instead, it is about trusting in our God who is faithful and can do immeasurably more than we will ever know. It is good to celebrate the times that we do see answered prayers, as this can sustain us in the big, seemingly unsurmountable ones. C. S. Lewis sums it up beautifully in this quote: 'I know now, Lord, why you utter no answer. You are yourself the answer.'

Andy and Rachel Symons serve in Zambia, in teaching and pastoral ministry



A training session run by Andy, for leaders of a church in Mutanuka

How PrayerMate and technology are fuelling global mission

In the previous *Link* magazine, we shared how we're seeking to use social media to encourage engagement in God's global mission. How else could technology help you join in?

Technology is a double-edged sword: it can feed our sense of distraction, but when used intentionally there are many ways it can aid us too. You only have to look at tools like the printing press to see how God can work powerfully through technology to spread the gospel – when people catch the vision for how to use it.

For tens of thousands of people every month, the PrayerMate app is a practical tool God is using to help them pray. It fits into a wider movement of tech tools supporting mission, such as Bible translation software, online training, livestreamed services, radio broadcasts into closed countries, and so on.

Of course PrayerMate can't do the praying for you – it still requires that intentionality to carve out time to set aside for it, and to establish a daily discipline. But it can really help to facilitate faithfulness in prayer.

How does it work?

Practically speaking, PrayerMate is a collection of personalised prayer lists. You add names of the people you'd like to pray for, and then every day it suggests a smaller selection from across all of your lists to actually get on and pray for, which you just swipe through one by one. It means that over time you can be reminded to pray for everyone without feeling overwhelmed by too

many different prayer needs in one go. It also includes features like regular reminders and event notifications, the ability to subscribe to prayer feeds and shared lists with a group of friends.

It helps turn our vague intentions ('I should pray more for so and so') into daily, actionable habits. In many ways it's not so different to using physical prayer cards or lists, but whilst they can be easily lost or forgotten, PrayerMate goes with you everywhere. That way, it's right there in your pocket when somebody tells you something they'd value prayer for.

The joy of partnering in prayer

One of the joys of developing PrayerMate over the last 14 years is how it has connected us with this amazing community of God's praying people around the world. Over the years we've heard so many stories of how PrayerMate has helped people engage in global mission, in big and small ways.

Like the commuter who said they'd scrolled past the same prayer letter from their mission partner friends in their email inbox so many times, and then when it popped up in PrayerMate they finally got on and read it and prayed for their work in the South of France. Or the person who saw a prayer request in the app that God would bring an end to war in a particular country – only to read on their news feed that same day that a historic peace treaty had finally been signed by that country's president. Or the mission worker sharing the encouragement of how it helped them

partner with their supporters as they laboured amongst students in Canada.

At the end of the day, partnering in prayer with people on the front line of world mission is a real privilege. Hearing their stories of how God is at work in contexts totally different from my own is a great blessing, and I love being able to partner with them through prayer. Praying for them in turn helps me be more proactive in looking for those gospel opportunities in my own context. You also get the joy of hearing back from mission partners about how your specific prayers were answered.

So if you want to get involved in praying for global mission, and are finding it tough, PrayerMate is a simple but powerful tool to support you. Why not start small? Get the app (it's a free download!), subscribe to the Crosslinks prayer feed (<https://praynow4.org/crosslinks>) and commit to praying regularly. You'll also find several Crosslinks mission partners have their own feeds – look out for the PrayerMate link on their profiles on the Crosslinks website.

The nature of prayer is that it's something we often do behind closed doors, so nobody knows if you're doing it or not. But through prayer you can be a part of God's great work around the world. Let's not neglect it.

Andy Geers, PrayerMate founder





Five things I'm learning by praying for Crosslinks mission partners

Unsure where to start with praying for mission partners you don't really know? You're not alone, but even the weakest of prayers is incredibly powerful.

As a Crosslinks staff team, we have the privilege of gathering twice a week to pray for our mission partners. I've just joined the team, so I'm often faced with prayer points for people I haven't met yet or ministries I'm unfamiliar with. It's a humbling experience! Here are five things I'm learning along the way:

You can pray for people you don't know

It sounds obvious, but even if you've got no real idea who you're praying for, you can lift them to the Lord and he knows who they are and what they need. A prayer which basically consists of reading out the bullet points they've provided word-for-word doesn't feel very impressive or effective, but our heavenly Father loves to hear our prayers and involve us in his work through them.

Of course, over time you hope to get to know your mission partners better through their prayer letters, church visits, prayer meetings and so on. But God has chosen to work through our weakness (1 Corinthians 1:27), so seemingly weak prayers are ok!

We all come before the same throne of grace

Not only that, but I was reminded recently that as we pray we come before the 'throne of grace' (Hebrews 4:16). Not the throne of prayers graded from one to nine, or the throne of disappointment in our lack of eloquence. No, we come before the throne of grace. What an invitation! And what a comfort when we're weak. There is grace for all of us, from a God who always welcomes us back with open arms.

Lives are being changed: Brada, mission partner, Serbia, baptising believers. Photography: Dejan Valek.

Mission partners are not immune to suffering

Do you know who else is weak? Mission partners. Yes, they're gifted and bold and doing great work. But, sadly, they're not immune to the ordinary struggles of life, from bereavement to persecution. Their perseverance and self-sacrifice are a huge encouragement, but we shouldn't forget they sin and the Christian life is hard for them too, with all the spiritual battles we face only magnified by being far from home and in an unfamiliar culture. They need our prayers, and if you're not sure what to pray for them then praying for their walk with Jesus would be a great place to start.

It all comes down to Jesus

At the end of the day, these are ordinary people with one common goal: sharing

Jesus with the people around them. In many ways, they could be anywhere in the world doing that, but they happen to be doing it in Zambia, or Argentina, or Belgium. Much like you and I are aiming to share Jesus in our own contexts. And as you pray for that goal to be accomplished in Thailand, a brother or sister there is praying for people to know Jesus in South Africa, and someone there is praying for gospel fruit in Ireland, and so on. We're all united in this common purpose, as ordinary as we all are.

The gospel is changing lives today

The great news is the gospel we're sharing is bearing fruit all over the world. As I read our mission partners' prayer letters, there are so many encouraging stories of lives turned around by Jesus. Whether it's a prisoner turned pastor, or a child neglected at home but shown the love of Christ in a Christian school, the gospel is far from just words on a page or a comforting idea of the past. God's word is going to God's world and it does not return to him empty (Isaiah 55:11). Your prayers play a part in that.

So be encouraged that prayer is powerful, and please make use of our prayer diary – enclosed with this magazine and available on our website – even if you're not sure who all the people named within it are!

Dan Reid, Communications Lead

Giving the gift of prayer

Is there a mission partner or a country you could commit to praying for regularly in the year ahead?

Use our prayer diary or website to find out more about how you can pray for God's global mission.

