

Link map



Where are Crosslinks partners serving?

/ World Cup edition / In the world but not of it

In the world but not of it: **building bridges** for the gospel

Love it or hate it, the World Cup is about to take over. A mission partner shares how we can use sport to reach out to others while also sensitively communicating the gospel.

In West Africa, football is BIG! Watching the Africa Cup of Nations final in our town square was a national event; there were well over 5000 frenzied spectators standing on the central plaza and many exuberant fans igniting fireworks at *any* opportunity (half time or a free kick to our country!).

Someone somewhere once said that we should be 'in the world but not of it'. Jesus says in John 17: *'My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one.'* But being in the world or participating in the affairs of the world does not mean conforming to the world. As Paul encourages his readers: *'Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.'* (Romans 12:2)

So, what does being in the world and not of it look like? One way in which we can be in the world is by engaging in activities that the world loves and which are permitted in scripture, such as



football. Across the world, people have found football to be a useful tool for engaging people with the gospel because it acts like a bridge. It gives you common ground. The shared love of football and membership of the same team gives a starting place for relating to and sharing the gospel with unbelieving teammates.

But there is a danger: A bridge is only useful *if* you cross it. We have to intentionally cross over the bridge with the gospel of our Lord so that people can hear, believe and be saved.

Over the last six months I had the privilege of partnering with Yakaar Football Academy in training some of their leaders and football coaches in walking over that bridge. Yakaar Football has been running for four years and has coaches all over the country running football teams in their areas. They are known to be Christian and still hundreds of kids from Muslim families come along for training.

A few months ago we looked at a gospel overview (Yoonu Ajana) using the names of the prophets as a springboard for speaking about God, his holiness, our sin and solutions that don't work. After the session, one of the leaders said: 'If I had known this before I did all my outreach in the capital I would have done it differently. I asked for details and he explained how he used to preach that God had sent his son* Jesus to die on a cross* for our sins and that we must worship* him or face the eternal fire.

His message was completely true. The problem, as I've been working with these leaders to see, is that before you even get to explain the gospel, by mentioning certain things* you have closed the door (or broken the bridge) that might have been open to the gospel. It's like entering a hospital at visiting hours to see a sick friend but immediately being presented with a very large needle dripping with who-knows-what-type-of medicine about to be plunged into your arm. 'STOP! STOP!' We would shout, 'Why are you trying to poke that needle into me?' We rightly need to know that we are sick and with what before we accept the needle! Similarly with the gospel. Muslims generally don't see sin as rebellion against a holy God. Sins are mistakes that need to be balanced out with religious good works. The god of Islam is holy, but not so holy that we need our hearts washing before approaching him. Our hands, feet, face and ears are sufficient. In this context we need to spend lots of time speaking of God's holiness and our sinfulness. Until people are asking 'How then can we be saved?', the gospel is just a big needle easily rejected. Pray for these leaders to be bold contextual preachers of the gospel and pray for God's word to return to him having accomplished its purpose (Isaiah 55:11).

A, serving in West Africa



Mission partners – our long-term mission partners are passionate about making Jesus known and serve for at least three years wherever Bible-based ministries are needed.

Project partners – we also support indigenous partners running gospel projects in their own countries. These projects are all involved in training Bible teachers and church leaders, or in direct evangelism.

Opportunities to serve

As you explore where Crosslinks partners are serving, why not consider how you might answer the call of the global church too? You'll find many more opportunities at crosslinks.org or get in touch at contact@crosslinks.org to find out more.

Summer Gathering – book now!

Join us on Tuesday 23 June 2026 in central London or on Zoom for our Summer Gathering and AGM!

We will be gathering at St Michael's Chester Square, SW1W 9EF from 5:15–6:45pm with mission partners, staff and friends of Crosslinks to look back at how God has worked through Crosslinks in the last year and prayerfully consider the year ahead. There's an option to join us online too. Book your free place at crosslinks.org/events.



Join us in prayer

Join us at our online prayer meetings with supporters on Zoom. Hear from and pray for Crosslinks mission partners. Sign up at pletters@crosslinks.org



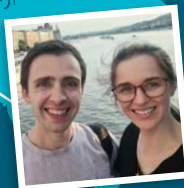
19 July, 7pm

Chris and Lizzie Brown,
serving in Italy



**7 September,
7.30pm**

Simon and Abigail
Donohoe, serving
in Ireland



21 September, 7pm

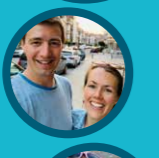
Matt and Sarah Gurtler,
serving in Moldova

Europe

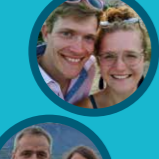
InterAction Camps, Belgium, France, Germany
Youth ministry & evangelism



Belgium
Robbie and Lizzie Bellis, Louvain-la-Neuve
Church leadership



James and Lou Clark, Louvain-la-Neuve
Student ministry



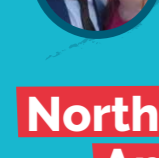
David and Kathryn -Anne Masters, Brussels
Mission partners in training



Steve and Dawn Orange, Brussels
Church leadership



Charles and Frances de Roemer, Binche
Church leadership



Tom and Liz Trump, Brussels
Church leadership



Czech Republic
Jirka and Keira Kralovi, Olomouc
Student ministry



France
Sena and Jane Ounate-Lare, Caen
Church leadership



Germany
Ralf and Marie-Christine Wenz, Leipzig
Church ministry



Hungary
Andy and Zsófi Oatridge, Budapest
Training youth leaders



Ireland
Alastair and Elise Donaldson, Gort
Church planting



Simon and Abigail Donohoe, Dublin
Church planting



Helen Sheridan, Castlebar
Women & children's ministry



Italy
JP and Sue Aranzulla, Bologna
Church leadership



Chris and Lizzie Brown, Bologna
Student ministry



Jonny and Ruth Pullar, Modena
Church ministry



Moldova
Matt and Sarah Gurtler, Nisporeni
Church ministry



Graeme and Bequi Innes, Chişinău
Church ministry



Serbia
Riste and Tea Micev, Novi Sad
Ministry training



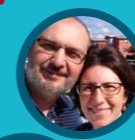
Brada (and Yatza) Radanovic, Novi Sad
Church leadership



Spain
Julian and Nicky Milson, Valencia
Church leadership



Chris and Rosy Redfearn, Valencia
Church leadership



Sweden
Chris and Lotta Strajnic, Stockholm
Church leadership & ministry training



Trevor and Andrea Watson, Gothenburg
Church ministry



Portugal
Joe and Rachel Clarke, Coimbra
Church leadership



UK
Gillian Pegler, South Wales
Prison chaplain



Thorsten and Kerstin Prill, Edinburgh, Scotland
Mission consultants

Pāradaugava Reformed Church, Riga, Latvia
Church ministry



Asia and Australasia



John and Gillian Robinson, Bangkok, Thailand
Children's ministry



Neil and Sharon Watkinson, Sydney, Australia
Church ministry & international ministry training



David and Rachel Williams, Melbourne, Australia
Training mission partners with CMS Australia



Kantipur Church, Kathmandu, Nepal
Church ministry



Word Works, Manila, Philippines
Ministry training



John and Gillian Robinson, Bangkok, Thailand
Children's ministry



Neil and Sharon Watkinson, Sydney, Australia
Church ministry & international ministry training



David and Rachel Williams, Melbourne, Australia
Training mission partners with CMS Australia

Opportunities

TEFL teacher evangelists in Southeast Asia

The Lord is using TEFL teachers to share the gospel with many people. There are opportunities to serve in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos, short-term or long-term.



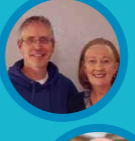
Across Africa



Rick and Alanna Creighton, Jos, Nigeria
Theological training



Michael Durant, East Africa
Ministry training



Josh and Cathy Hooker, Windhoek, Namibia
Theological training



Jem Hovil, East Africa
Ministry training



Andy and Rachel Symons, Mkushi, Zambia
Supporting church leaders



Portia Yiadom, Accra, Ghana
Student ministry

North & South America



Jony and Jenny Bertin, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Theological training



Matt and Helen Pope, Santiago, Chile
Supporting church leaders



Andrew and Bethanie Walker, Mendoza, Argentina
Church leadership

The Arctic Diocese, Canada
Church ministry



Prédica Fiel, Havana, Cuba
Ministry training

Africa



Uganda
Rachael (and Bernie) Muluuta, preparing to return to Uganda
Youth ministry



Ethiopia
Nekemte School for the Deaf, Nekemte
Children's ministry



South Africa
James and Lucy Buchanan, Johannesburg
Church leadership



John and Jenny Miller, Johannesburg
Theological training



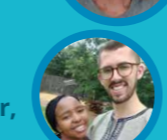
Nat and Helen Schluter, Johannesburg
Theological training



Alun and Debbie Burt, Cape Town
Church leadership



Janet Webb, Villiersdorp
School Bible worker



Adam and Nomfundo Tomalin, KwaZulu-Natal
Student ministry



Christ Central Soweto, Johannesburg
Church ministry



Kenya
Gerald and Louise Mwangi, Nairobi
Ministry training



Alison Talbert, Kilifi
Nutrition intervention research



Jomo Nderitu, Marsabit
Youth ministry & evangelism



Ken Irungu, Kikuyu
Youth ministry & training



St Julian's Centre, Limuru
Ministry training

Opportunities

Gap year team leaders

Every year 20-30 young people apply to be part of Crosslinks gap year teams. But without team leaders, these trips can't happen. Could you or someone you know serve the global church in this way?

 Mission Partners

 Project Partners

Mission partners and project partners serving in sensitive locations or ministries are not included for their safety. Please don't let that stop you praying for them - see our prayer diary for more detail.



Opportunities

Spanish-speaking (or willing to improve) Anglican clergy in Argentina

The Bishop of the Diocese of Argentina has highlighted the need for trained Anglican clergy who can teach the Bible faithfully. There is spiritual appetite but many churches are without clergy.