

As the Mission Director of Crosslinks I hold an enormously privileged position. Firstly, I get to spend time with men and women who are serving the Lord all over the world proclaiming the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus or training other people to do it.

Secondly, I get to spend time with church leaders from across the world who would very much like the assistance and partnership of churches here in the UK to enable them to flourish in their ministry.

And thirdly, I get to spend time with men and women here in the UK whom our churches are preparing for overseas ministry and to play a part in that discernment process.

I also get to hear of everything that happens across the Crosslinks world and you will have heard something of those encouragements in the videos that I send out to members twice a year. If you are here this evening, but not yet a member of Crosslinks, can I strongly encourage you to sign up. I'm sure Rupert would be very happy to talk to you about that before you leave.



This map gives you an idea of the spread of our Mission Personnel: Mission Partners, Associate Mission Partners and Local Mission Partners. The darker the colour, the more people we have serving in that country. In all 99 Adults serving in variety of ministries across 26 Countries.

This last year has seen quite a bit of change in our mission personnel. Luigi Palombo returned from Italy after 10 years service, Mark & Jane Oden returned from Italy after 13 years service and Janet Hume returned from Thailand after 15 years service.

One has to be careful highlighting any one person in particular on an evening like this, but can I say what an inspiration Janet has been to so many. In fact, I was speaking at a church in Cambridge just two weeks ago and someone said to me how convicted they were, thinking about overseas missionary service and inspired by Janet's example.

Janet retired here in England from being a Music teacher, and rather than pottering about the garden, she joined Crosslinks and moved across the world to teach English to students in an outreach ministry in Chang Mai. So many students have been blessed by her ministry and I know it was a real wrench for her to return to the UK this year. Let us pray for more people like Janet willing to serve the Lord as a second career after retirement.

Thinking about moves and changes:

Neil and Sharon Watkinson moved to Australia as a base for Neil's training in Asia Pacific. Matt & Sarah Gurtler moved from being Associate Mission Partners to Mission Partners and have relocated to new location in Moldova to serve in a church. Trevor & Andrea Watson returned to Sweden following a stint in Northern Ireland. Josh & Cathy Hooker have just returned to Namibia after Josh's placement serving the Diocese of Down & Dromore to increase Biblical literacy and promoting expository preaching. Julian & Nicky Milson have left the IERE and started a new church in Valencia, and we are partnering in that with the Anglican Convocation Europe.

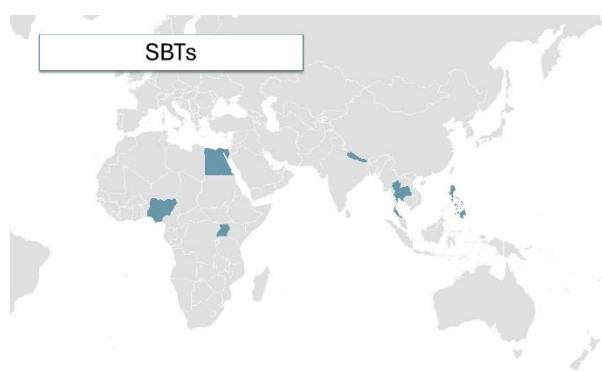
And then you'll be glad to hear that we have had new people join us: Michael Durant, whom we heard from earlier, joining as a mission partner serving alongside Jem with BUILD Partners. Ralf & Marie-Christine Wenz joining as mission partners and imminently departing to serve in church ministry in Leipzig, Germany. Jony & Jenny Bertin became local mission partners and Jony is setting up a new Bible college in Argentina. Gulio & Lucy Abortivi became associate mission partners with plans to serve in Italy. David & Kathryn-Ann Masters have joined in a new category of service for us, Missionaries in Training, and will be heading to Brussels Bible Institute imminently.

And then, of course, are the people who are various stages of our recruitment process whom we hope will be serving in the next one to two years. They are enquiring to serve in The Middle East, India, Hong Kong, Kenya, Sweden and Czechia.

Teams & Short Term: This year's GAP team is drawing to an end in Cape Town and preparations are well under way for 2027 GAP teams. A real blockage in recent years has been the availability of people to lead those teams and both prayer and a social media campaign has wonderfully produced enough leaders for us to send two teams next year.

And next week we send our first church team, since before Covid, with Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh Diocese sending a team to Cape Town to visit Alun & Debbie Burt

And there continues to be a good stream of people serving on short term placements, this year in Italy, Kenya, Senegal, and Argentina.



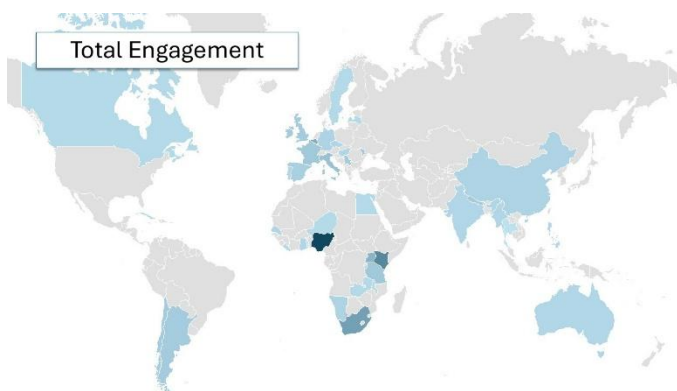
Each year we send teams to various locations to teach at one of our SBTs, Schools of Biblical Training. Usually this means churches releasing one of their ministers to join others regular preachers, and sometimes a member of the wider Crosslinks team, to run a series of trainings that will inspire and equip local ministers to teach effectively from the

Bible. And this year we have run SBTs in Nepal, Egypt, Nigeria, Uganda, Thailand and The Philippines.



Thinking about our BEST programme. Bursaries Enabling Strategic Training. As at the beginning of this June, Crosslinks is committed to supporting 123 Study Partners. Who are actively engaged in theological and ministry courses in 36 different colleges across 20 countries. In all, we commit about £100k each year to providing these

bursaries which we pray will play some small part in enabling the global church to grow in number, maturity and stability.



Putting all of these together. If we put mission personnel, study partners, projects and training teams all on the same map you can start to get a sense of the total reach of Crosslinks ministries at present. Supporting a total of 243 people and ministries across 44 countries.

Thinking about that global perspective. In recent years we have held regional conferences in Europe and Africa for our mission personnel and been very blessed by the opportunity to be together. Well, we have confirmed the dates in July 2027 for our Global Partners Conference at the High Leigh Conference Centre, here in England.

This is going to be a very busy year for the Office Team in preparation for us all being together under one roof. I'm not sure that I know when that last happened in Crosslinks history. Please do pray for all that will go into making that event the blessing we want it to be for all who are there.

The only other thing that I want to mention this evening is the relocation of our Ireland Office. Most people this side of the Irish Sea will not know that we sold our small office building last year and have moved into a shared space with other missionary organisations in Belfast. Much as we did last year here in London.

The premises in Belfast had served us well for many years, and we are grateful to those who raised the money that allowed us to buy the building originally. But we would now have needed to spend a considerable amount on the building and for other practical reasons we just needed to move out. One example was BT telling us that we could no longer have internet from the end of the year. And

so the Ireland Team are very pleased with the new premises and it is a blessing to be with like-minded organisations.

Finally, it remains for me to thank the Crosslinks Board for their support and encouragement to me as their Mission Director. But also to thank you, our members, for your continued prayerful and practical support of Crosslinks, and all of our ministries. Thank you.

John McLernon  
Mission Director