



BCMS
Crosslinks

Sharing in Mission

For youth groups

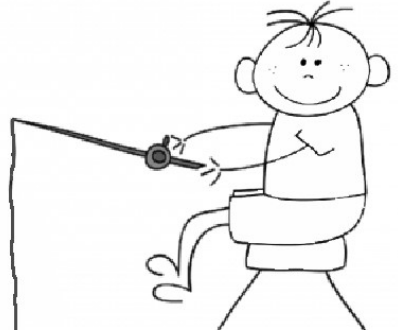


GOD'S WORD TO GOD'S WORLD

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Mission: how do I get involved?

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commanded his apostles to **'go therefore and make disciples of all nations'**. As well as being the disciples' new full-time job, Jesus asks us to do the same. He asks us to be partners with him in his fishing business - catching men instead of fish (Luke 5:1-11). God has given us the greatest gift there has ever been - salvation through faith in Christ - and he wants to use us to help this message spread throughout the globe and bring salvation **'to the end of the earth'** (Acts 1:8).



There are 2 main ways we can do this:

1. Tell people about Jesus for ourselves! Our friends, family members, classmates, colleagues and even strangers! Getting involved in a short-term overseas mission trip is a great way of helping the good news go global!
2. Partner with others who are sharing the gospel. Crosslinks has over 100 Mission Partners who work in more than 30 countries. By partnering with one of these individuals, you can play a real part in their work.

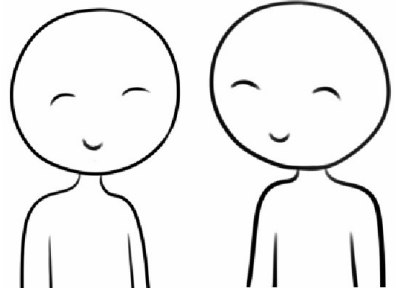
In the original Greek bible, the word used for this sort of partnership is *'koinōnia'*. It is defined as:

'an active pursuit towards a common purpose, and participation in a shared activity.'

So, this is how we ought to 'partner' with our Mission Partners. Paul tells us in his letter to the Philippian church (who partnered with him on his missionary journeys) that gospel partnership includes mutual **prayer, care** and **giving**.

The Apostle John writes, ***'You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.'*** (3 John:6-8)

As John writes, we are 'fellow workers' with our Mission Partners. They rely on us to do our half of the work, so that they can do their half! The care and encouragement that Mission Partners receive from their sending church are God's own method of caring for and encouraging them.



This booklet outlines some of the ways in which your youth group can get involved with God's mission: how you can go overseas yourself and how you can best pray, care and give towards your church's Mission Partner.

N.B. If your church wants to find out how to begin a partnership with a Mission Partner, please contact Crosslinks at cmt@crosslinks.org or phone 020 8691 6111

Short-term mission trips

Church summer teams

Your Youth Group or a mixed aged group from your church can form a team to go on an overseas mission trip during the summer. It is a brilliant way to serve God by making Christ known, explore cross-cultural mission and grow in love and knowledge of the Lord. It can also be a great way of strengthening your relationship with your church's Mission Partner.

Teams are placed with Crosslinks Partners, serving alongside them in the work they do year-round, or helping run special events. Past teams have been involved in teaching English, children's ministry and student outreach. Teams receive support from Crosslinks before, during and after their placements.

Trips last from 10 days to four weeks and cost around £700-£1500 per person, depending on location. In order to meet their budget, most people ask their church, family and friends to give, as well as working themselves to save up some money. Teams are required to have at least two group leaders which, for a Youth Group, means at least two people over the age of 18.

Gap Years

Each year, Crosslinks sends teams of 8 to 10 gap year students to serve overseas for four and a half months from January to May. The three focuses of the teams are service, evangelism and discipleship. You'll be serving the local church and community, sharing the gospel with those that you meet, working through a bible overview, taking part in seminars on various topics, and sharing in bible studies with your teammates. It's a brilliant way to serve God by making Christ known and helping Crosslinks partners overseas. Location can vary, but recent Crosslinks Gap Teams have gone to The Gambia, Uganda, Ethiopia and Thailand.

Year abroad for language students

Crosslinks has Mission Partners in a whole host of different language-speaking countries: Chinese, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Thai, to name just a few! Serving alongside them can be a great way to use your year abroad to both improve your language level and serve God.

To find out more about any of these opportunities visit www.crosslinks.org/short-term or email short-term@crosslinks.org

Partnership in prayer

Praying is so important in enabling a Mission Partner's work to bear fruit for the Lord and to bring God glory. But it can be hard to know what and when to pray!

When to pray?

- Pray for your Mission Partner during your regular Youth Group meeting
- Ensure that your Mission Partner is prayed for in the main church meetings too, as part of the intersessions slot
- ? *Your Youth Group may like to write and lead these prayers yourselves*
- Try to pray for your Mission Partner individually too, at home as part of your regular prayers
- ? *You could produce fridge magnets of your Mission Partner for each member of the Youth Group, as an aid memoir to pray at home*

What to pray?

- The best place to start is with your Mission Partner's prayer letter. Crosslinks will send these to you three times a year
- ? *Why not pin a copy up on your church notice board so everybody can read their news, or give one to every member of the youth group?*
- Your Mission Partner may choose to send additional monthly email updates to your church, to update you on current prayer needs
- ? *If you have a special prayer meeting coming up, you could email your Mission Partner to see if they have any up-to-date news and points for prayer*
- If there is an urgent need, Crosslinks or your Mission Partner will contact your church for prayer
- You could pray for your Mission Partner's country: the leadership, current events, social issues, people, etc.
- Pray for opportunities for your Mission Partner to share the gospel with those they meet
- Pray for fruitful work that will bring glory to God and further his kingdom



- Pray that your Mission Partner will make time to read the Bible and pray that the Lord will use these times to refresh and sustain them
 - Pray for health, safety and for times of rest
 - If you have a Mission Partner family, pray for the children to grow up to know and love the Lord and to serve him themselves. Pray that the children settle well; for friends, school, etc.
 - Pray for good friendships and real fellowship
- ? *Why not make a prayer diary, where you pray for one of the above things for a few minutes each day of the week? I.e. on Monday pray for their country, on Tuesday for their children etc. Stick the plan on your wall to remind you. See page 9 for a template you could use.*

When the Apostle Paul was on his missionary journeys, the church in Philippi prayed for Paul (Philippians 4:6) and Paul prayed for the Philippians (Philippians 1: 9-11). Similarly, your Mission Partner will want to pray for your Youth Group too! Email your Mission Partner your own prayer requests, including what you are looking at in your Youth Group meetings and any upcoming events. This will enable them to pray for your growth as Christians and your work as missionaries in your own community.

Extra! Extra!

If your Mission Partner reports of very challenging situations or working environments, it can be tempting to ask the Lord to take these difficulties away. But our prayers should be shaped by gospel priorities. For example, when the Apostle Paul was in prison, the church could have prayed for his release - which would have lessened his personal discomfort and enabled him to continue with his original travel plans. Instead, Paul encouraged them to thank God for the opportunities he was having to share the gospel with his jailers! (Philippians 1:12-14) *Can you think of situations like this that have happened for your Mission Partner, where adversity has enabled them to share the gospel with others? Why not ask them?*

Partnership in care

The Apostle Paul's relationship with his partners was one of deep affection: he writes, "...my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and my crown..." (Philippians 4:1). Likewise, we are encouraged to develop warm, personal relationships with our Mission Partners—but sometimes it can be hard to know *how* to do this, when they live the other side of the world!

How to care?

- Write to them! Everyone loves receiving post and this is even more true when you live a long way away from family and friends. You could write by post or email and share about your life and church, as well as enquiring about their life and ministry or telling them what encouraged you from their latest prayer letter
- ? *If your Mission Partner has children a similar age to yourself, why not become their pen pal? Or, you could help younger members in your church write to younger Mission Partner children*
- Send occasional 'care parcels' containing their favourite chocolate, toiletries or other things that they might miss (N.B. check first that your Mission Partner won't incur heavy customs duties!)
- Remember Christmas and birthdays and send cards or presents
- Skype or phone call your Mission Partner
- ? *Why not invite your Mission Partner to 'skype in' to one of your Youth Group meetings?*
- Send them your church magazine and prayer diary so they truly feel part of the church
- Organise a small group from the church to go and visit your Mission Partner. Crosslinks can help you with this and advise you when would be a good time to go

Your Mission Partner will want to show their care for your Youth Group in practical ways too, by sending Christmas cards, recommending helpful resources and helping you with local cross-cultural mission. This is their area of expertise, so do let them help you in your mission endeavours.

Partnership in giving

For Mission Partners to devote their time to gospel mission, they rely on the financial support of their partners. This is just the same as Paul's relationship with the Philippian church when he was travelling across Asia and Europe sharing the gospel. '*...you sent me help for my needs once and again*' Philippians 4:16. Although you may not feel you have a lot of money to give, there are still numerous ways that you can partner in giving with your Mission Partner.

How to give?

- ? You could take a weekly collection at your Youth Group Meetings. If 15 people gave just £1 each week, you would raise over £700 each year for your Mission Partner
- ? How about holding a fundraiser, such as a coffee morning, car wash or bring and buy sale?
- ? Host a themed evening based around the country where your Mission Partner is located and ask for donations towards their ministry. Organise appropriate food, drink and games and raise awareness about your Mission Partner's work.
- ? Set aside a percentage of your monthly allowance or pay cheque for your Mission Partner - after all, all the money you have comes from God

Mutual partnership in giving is modelled by Paul and his behaviour towards the Philippians: '*My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus*' (Philippians 4:19). Paul confidently prayed that God would reward the church for their generosity. Your Mission Partner will be doing likewise for you.

Extra! Extra!

... by giving up one can of Coke and one Mars bar per week, you could donate £60 every year

... by sacrificing one Starbucks Americano per week, you could give over £100 each year

... by walking instead of catching the bus for one journey each day, you could raise around £500 a year

Final hints and tips

The Mission Correspondent in your church should receive and distribute your Mission Partner's regular prayer letters. If you would like to sign up to be sent these directly, by post or email, contact cmt@crosslinks.org or phone 020 8691 6111 and ask to speak to the Church Partnerships Co-ordinator.

We suggest that you display information about your Mission Partner in a prominent place in the room that your Youth Group meets. To be sent a poster to display, contact crosslinks using the details above.

Your Mission Partner will return to Britain and Ireland on home leave every few years - do try and arrange a meeting with them when they come! Talk to the Mission Committee at your church, or contact Crosslinks directly to find out your Mission partner's home leave dates.

For more information about Crosslinks, visit www.crosslinks.org



Weekly Prayer Diary

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Notes

London office: 251 Lewisham Way, London SE4 1XF Tel: 020 8691 6111
Ireland Office: 32 Montgomery Road, Belfast, Co. Down BT6 9HL Tel: +44 (0) 28 9079 6028

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