

rapport

THE NEWSLETTER OF RADSTOCK MINISTRIES • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

Samuel and Fiona McWhirter got mixed reactions when they decided to spend a month in northern Iraq this summer.

Samuel, a Radstock trustee, explains what took them to the Kurdish people 2000 miles away – and back to Kurds at home in Sheffield, UK.



Samuel and Fiona McWhirter and the Kurdish flag

Journey of Discovery

“With so few believers here it seems even a small gesture of solidarity goes a long way”

“We wanted to see what it means for Kurdish believers to trust Christ”

When our Kurdish friends describe their homeland as “zor horsha” (very beautiful) they are not biased. But in our taxi back across Turkey it was people’s faces, not Kurdistan’s breathtaking mountains, which stuck in my mind.

Fiona and I had travelled to the towns of Erbil, Sulimaniya and Kalar. With us was Charlie Allison from Eastbourne, UK, who, like us, leads a ministry in his local church among Kurdish people. As well as learning more of the language and culture, we were keen to support the local church and missionaries with our combined offerings of English teaching and Speech therapy, and to see what it means for Kurdish believers to trust Christ.

We quickly realised how much there was to learn from our Kurdish brothers and sisters. As one host took me to the roof of his house to pray looking over the city, I explained in my broken Kurdish that I felt very small in their presence. Never before had I flicked through photo albums hearing “this is a picture of my friend who died because he was a believer...”

As we told our own story one evening among a small house church, our hosts in turn seemed surprised to realise that our church’s dream is to see a church planted amongst Kurdish people in Sheffield, and that we had

come to learn from them.

Straightaway they talked about praying for us, and were encouraged to hear of our videos with greetings from churches at home. With so few believers here it seems even a small gesture of solidarity goes a long way. Our prayer is for our churches in Sheffield and Kurdistan to help one another as we serve Kurds with the gospel of Jesus.

Now back from our unusual summer holiday, we feel more than ever the need to serve our Kurdish friends in Sheffield. And with news of a Kurdish man becoming a believer here, we have much to discover about how this journey will progress.



Fiona in traditional Kurdish dress

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connect! Join a church-planting team in Sheffield with cross-cultural experience and a commitment to work long-term with Muslims

Learn Sorani (Kurdish) for beginners – 5 days’ teaching in Sheffield from 11th February

Contact samuel.mcwhirter@thecrowdedhouse.org or either Radstock office.

Global Mission: local impact

8-10 February,
Irthlingborough, UK

THE RADSTOCK CONFERENCE 2008

"Ignoring issues of social action and the gospel is surely a middle-class luxury"

This concern – voiced by Radstock's Executive Director Brian Jose – lies at the heart of the 2008 Radstock Conference. 'Global mission – local impact' will focus on social action and spreading the gospel – and how churches can help each other do it 'home and away'.

"Too often there is a false distinction drawn between evangelism or church planting, and social action. If you're poor, or live amongst the poor, the massive amount of biblical wisdom on the poor just makes sense."

Building on the 2007 conference, 'Global mission – local impact' will bring together church leaders, planters and members from across the Radstock network, and others



Brian Jose

coming to see how their churches might get connected for mission that makes a difference.

It is hoped that churches from even more nations will be represented this year, with delegates from Cambodia, Lithuania and India keen to participate. With the same great setting and upgraded accommodation, many of this year's delegates will be back for more too!

"Hearing the experiences of others who have planted churches was so valuable," comments Sarah Diomedede, whose family came in 2007. Teaching sessions,

seminars and time to chat mean there are plenty of ways to air questions, share expertise and forge new partnerships, for local churches to have a greater social impact, locally and globally.

"This conference is an urgent biblical call to act now," explains Brian. *"The reality is that people are going to a lost eternity because we don't do enough social action, not because we do too much."*

"Too often there is a false distinction drawn between church planting and social action"

• Book your places

Delegates and families welcome for the full weekend or for the Saturday (9th February)



• Sponsor an overseas delegate

Make it possible for someone to come by paying for their conference fees and / or flights

For more information, booking forms and payment, see www.radstock.org/conference.html or contact Katy Jones Parry kjp@radstock.org

A tale of two cities

Radstock's chair of trustees, Steve Timmis, considers why cities matter to churches – and why churches matter to cities.

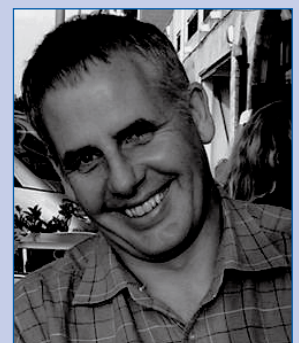
Cities are increasingly significant in our world. Sometime in 2008 the human race will make the historic transition to over 50% of the world's population being city-dwellers. Our churches must help each other respond to these developments.

According to Revelation 21 and 22, a city is the climax of God's work, and the Bible story can be seen as 'a tale of two cities': the city of God and the city of man. Local churches are to be outposts of the city of God within the cities of men. To thrive in the city of man, we need to be part of the city of God

Our churches need to equip people to *"seek the peace and prosperity of the city"* as God instructed the exiles of Jeremiah's day. That will mean involving ourselves in the city at every level to impact it for righteousness and so

commend the true City where righteousness reigns. Local churches must be producing artists, architects, politicians, business people and developers: men and women with skills, vision and grace. We must also place ourselves among the poor and marginalized. Even the best cities are littered with broken people, and the love of God compels us into those places.

As the city of God in microcosm, church is an *authentic* and *alternative* city. This is the city as it is meant to be: where the true King reigns and where racism, prejudice, inequality, indifference and injustice have no place. As we live out our corporate life together as his Church in the midst of the city, let us thank God for the cities he has placed us in, and for the opportunity to serve them, learn from them, be blessed by them, and point them by our lives and words to the Saviour.



round up

SHARING IN SERVICE

"With our Father, there are many possibilities for help"



Children at the Khanty-Mansiysk mission events



Money sent for summer camps in the Khanty-Mansiysk region of Siberia this summer went a long way – in more ways than one! In total, nearly 70 children aged 2 to 16 were involved. At least two gave their lives to Christ, and one church has now started a youth club after 37 children came to their camp. Please pray for them – and for plans for a camp next summer.

Set in a remote area in the north-west of Khanty-Mansiysk, the new camp is planned to run from 5th-21st June, with some teenage believers taking part. *"We don't know how many people will be there – perhaps not more than 15 – but we invite you to participate in it,"* said one of the team.

It is thought that around 3,000 euros will be needed to

get the team to and from the settlement, with food and accommodation. Tents and beds for the children will also be needed. *"Of course, there will be many mosquitoes, but what adventure is there without difficulties? Join with us – we will be waiting for you!"*

The Siberian mission team also sent a further request. *"We have transport needs for our new puppet theatre. If you can, please help us, if not materially, then support us in prayer. With our Father, there are many possibilities for help."*

"We are glad that you so helped our church. Once again, enormous thanks, and let our Lord abundantly bless all who shared in our service."



connect!

- Praise God for children reached with the gospel through this year's camps
- Pray for churches' ongoing youth work, and for the 2008 camp – for team members, finance, and local children to come

To partner with the Siberian mission team, contact Paul Williams paul@radstock.org or either Radstock office

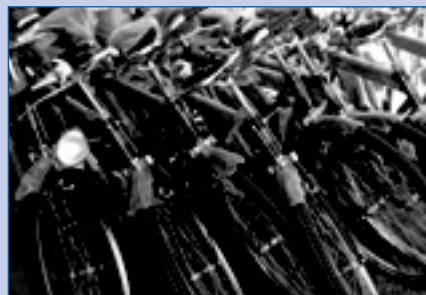
MILES MORE MISSION

Mission resources are also going the distance in Zambia. While Nick and Erica Lugg of Lordsway Ministries, Mufulira, have been back in the UK for a few months, gospel seeds sown earlier this year are already bearing fruit.

"The church continues to grow - we planted a church in a small township of Mufulira in August and already have an adult congregation of around 100 people."

What's more, response to their appeal for bikes

(shared in May's *Rapport*) has been far more than they expected. *"We were able to buy 19 bikes in the*



early part of the year, and have now received money for a further 10," reports Erica. *"This is fantastic, especially as we look to take the gospel into the surrounding areas and beyond."*

"When we put out our request for bicycles some months ago I expected we may get five or so. Praise God who always does 'abundantly more than all we can ask or imagine!'"



RADSTOCK
churches connected for global mission

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Radstock's vision is to see local churches taking up the privilege and responsibility of mission for themselves. Radstock, which takes its name from Lord Radstock, the nineteenth century pioneer missionary to Russia, offers expertise and networking in church-based mission.

We have specialist consultants in children in crisis, church planting, drug rehabilitation, mentoring church leaders, and micro-enterprise development. If you would like regular news of Radstock, or would like to discover how we can help your church take the next step in mission, then contact:

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