

In Touch

News of ministries within
the Affinity Family

NEWSLETTER
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Director's Desk

Greetings in our Saviour's name!

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Affinity is a growing network of 1200 Bible-centred churches and Christian agencies throughout Britain and Ireland.

affinity
gospel churches in partnership

As I write this page our political leaders are having another tumultuous argument about Brexit – a fight which shows no signs of abating. Victory for any side seems unlikely. By the time you read this it may have all been resolved but it is more likely the conflict will go on for months, maybe years. Politicians, and the media scrum that surrounds them, are showing signs of stress and exhaustion.

If ever we trusted politicians to solve our biggest problems, surely by now our hopes have well and truly been dashed.



We have to admit that we cannot trust in our rulers to save and protect us.

The writer of Psalm 121 says,

“My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth... he will not slumber or sleep.”

God is the inexhaustible provider for, and unfailing protector of, his people.

If we pin our hopes on anything or anyone else to save us those objects of our trust will inevitably collapse under the weight of our expectation and leave us helpless. But if we trust in Christ he will never disappoint us.

I hope you will enjoy reading this latest edition of In Touch and see what God is doing in building his kingdom through the work of some of our partners and associates.

Graham Nicholls

Christian Safeguarding Services



Christian Safeguarding Services is a relatively new organisation, run by Paul and Sue Harrison, dedicated to helping churches develop best practice in safeguarding children, young people and adults. Paul has worked across health, education and social care, developing and managing projects and services, and has also worked in the voluntary sector, running organisations that support families who have children with special educational needs and disabilities. He is also a teaching elder in their local FIEC church.

Sue has worked at a strategic level with health, education and social care managers and directors, and also in supporting families with children who have special educational needs. She has extensive experience of delivering and managing the delivery of safeguarding training.

Both Paul and Sue have volunteered within church contexts for decades, working with vulnerable children, young people and adults.

Why did you start CSS?

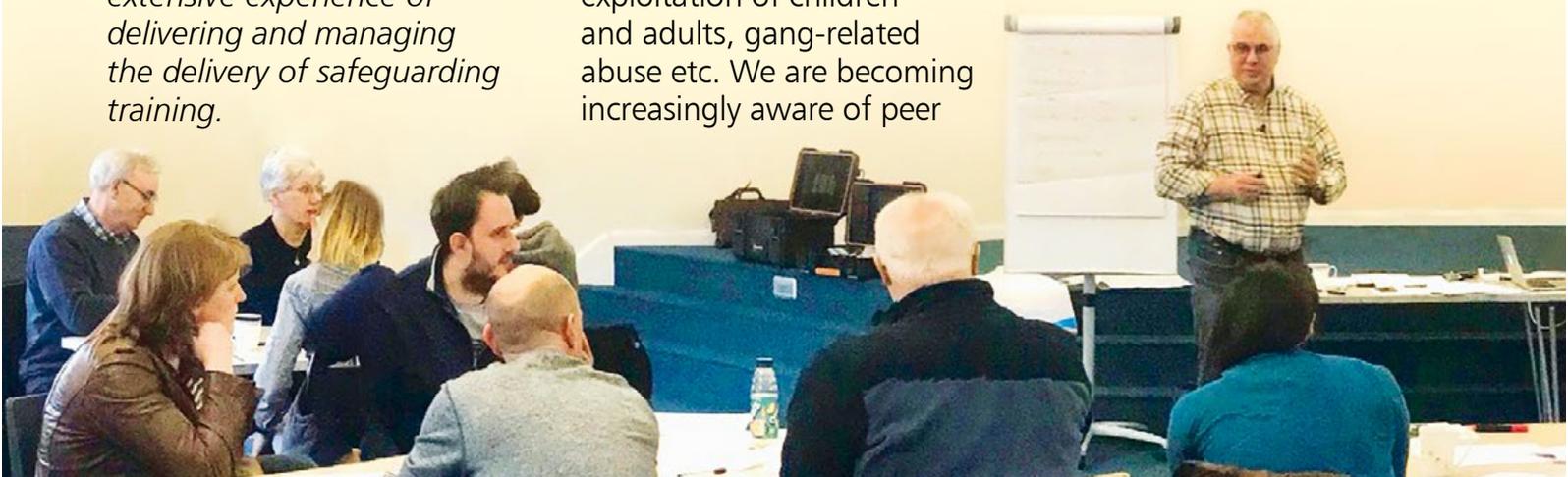
Having been approached by a number of churches, we redeveloped our training for the church context. We soon realised that there are some significant gaps in churches' safeguarding knowledge and practice; having established safeguarding systems twenty years ago, some have assumed that they are still in line with legislation and guidance today. But in reality they have failed to keep up with subsequent changes and have fallen significantly behind current thinking and best practice.

We are facing many new challenges in keeping vulnerable people safe, including the Internet, social media and mobile technology, alongside emerging methods of abuse such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, criminal exploitation of children and adults, gang-related abuse etc. We are becoming increasingly aware of peer

abuse (particularly around sexual harassment and harmful sexualised behaviours), private fostering, disguised compliance etc. As our society becomes increasingly secularised and shifts its dominant beliefs and values, we need to respond to these changes with godly wisdom.

The aim of CSS is to support, equip and empower churches (and other faith-based organisations) to achieve best practice and develop their approach in a biblically faithful way that honours God. We believe that if we as churches think through our biblical beliefs and allow our gospel principles to shape our approach to safeguarding, we will far exceed the standards that secular authorities set for us.

We bring together our professional experience, an understanding of the local church context and our passion for the gospel to provide a high quality, professional, flexible and biblically-faithful support service that is relevant, empowering and cost effective.



What services do CSS offer?

We provide a flexible range of services from free information via our website through to a full membership scheme giving a complete one-stop-shop approach to support clients with all of their safeguarding needs in a cost-effective way. This includes training for all levels of safeguarding for various roles in the organisation, safer recruitment (including managing allegations against staff and volunteers), mental health awareness, working with special educational needs and disabilities, child sexual exploitation, neglect and domestic abuse. We also 'train the trainers' to serve their own organisation.

We also provide consultancy services including policy development and review, systems review, full systems audits and workshop facilitation. We have an advice line, provide DBS processing and can act as a DBS umbrella organisation.

We have three levels of membership: free, basic and full. Free provides access to our website that helps think through how to achieve best practice. Basic also provides access to useful 'how to' guides to help churches

achieve best practice. And full membership provides a complete solution including access to premium resources, reduced rates on training and consultancy as well as five free DBS checks per year.

What about your biblical foundations?

CSS is committed to the historic, orthodox, evangelical faith, so that best practice in safeguarding is achieved without compromising core beliefs. These include relevant things such as all human beings are made in the image of God, the fallenness of man, the wickedness and deceitfulness of the human heart, God's heart for the protection of the weak and vulnerable, the responsibility of leaders to care for the flock with humility and meekness, dealing openly and decisively with sin and providing pastoral care and support in a sensitive but biblically faithful way.

Our approach to safeguarding flows from our biblical worldview and Christian values. As such, we believe that we should be held to a higher level of accountability than the state demands, since the moral and ethical standards that are provided in scripture far exceed those stipulated by the secular state.



How does CCS differ from similar organisations?

Our aim is not to compete with others but rather to complement their work and to provide genuine choice for churches and other faith-based organisations. We believe that some of our key strengths are: a firm commitment to conservative, evangelical theology; a commitment to working out biblical standards which far exceed statutory duties; a flexible approach to serving the church; a thorough understanding of independency and safeguarding in a local church setting; providing the services churches need in a flexible and cost-effective way; an approach that empowers churches to be self-sufficient and competent in safeguarding.

For more information about the services that we offer, please visit our website: www.thecss.co.uk, or email: paul@thecss.co.uk or phone **0333 303 4101**.

Paul and Sue Harrison



Introducing Africa Inland Mission



AFRICA INLAND MISSION

Today, over 300 million people have little or no opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus Christ in Africa. Many of these live in Islamic countries.

Africa Inland Mission's (AIM) roots are found in a small band of faithful men and women who, in 1895, ventured inland to reach Africans untouched by the gospel. Their vision set the course for AIM for over 120 years, as a community called and sent to live and minister among Africa's least reached peoples. This call still remains.

The landscape looks different in the 21st century; most Africans own a mobile phone; they are on Facebook; they are moving into cities, modernising, and even emigrating around the globe. Africa is the fastest growing population in the world, and by 2050 it is estimated that 1 in 4 people on Earth will be African.

As emerging global forces, African nations are caught

up in battles for their vibrant economies and valuable resources. They are also caught up in a fierce spiritual battle; deeply rooted traditional beliefs and a powerful movement of Islam hold many captive. But God has been at work and the church is here too. It stretches wide and deep, but does not touch every corner – not yet.

The 'inlands' of today – those places where the gospel is yet to take root – are not so much geographical as they are cultural and ideological. Within the borders of a given country the Church may be alive and well among one people group and completely unknown to another. Because of these barriers, about a thousand of Africa's 3,700 unique ethnic people groups are still 'unreached', with no viable witness to the good news. That is over 300 million people who have little opportunity to hear the gospel, and even less to be discipled as a follower of Jesus. It is for these we labour.

Today, Africa Inland Mission is overcoming obstacles to make inroads and make disciples among Africa's remaining unreached, wherever they may live – from the centre of the continent to the cities of Europe. And we are supporting, strengthening and partnering with the church in Africa as we together engage the unreached and look forward to seeing Christ-centred churches among all African people.

We are part of a movement infused with rich history and fresh vision. We come as learners and work in teams. We go to some of the hardest places, but we are ordinary people, transformed by Jesus and called to an extraordinary journey, privileged to be caught up in God's great redemptive work in Africa.

North
Africa



UFM Worldwide



UFM exists to support churches in making disciples of all nations.

We believe it is the responsibility and privilege of local churches to send workers into cross-cultural mission and that it is local church leaders who are best placed to identify gifts for mission service in church members.

UFM works therefore to help churches take initiative in identifying, training, sending and supporting workers for cross-cultural mission. We currently have the privilege of supporting:

- 175 long-term missionaries, sent by 90 gospel-hearted churches
- from 27 nationalities, serving in 37 different countries.

Thai student ministry

The work of UFM missionaries focuses on two main areas:

Taking the gospel to the least reached

This builds very much on our history as the Unevangelised Fields Mission. From our earliest days in 1931 we worked in unreached areas of the Amazon, Congo and Papua New Guinea. Today, UFM workers are serving in pioneer evangelism and church planting in countries in the Middle East, Central Asia and South East Asia.

Supporting under-resourced churches around the world

As the church in the majority world has grown rapidly in recent generations, so the number of invitations for missionaries to partner with local churches, under local leadership, has increased. UFM workers are involved in ministries as diverse as pastor training in India, youth and children's work among rubbish dump workers in Brazil and student ministry in partnership with IFES, across Europe.

We are also seeing an increasing number of UFM workers supporting emerging mission movements from the majority world, as churches that

have traditionally done the receiving of missionaries, increasingly send. Praise God!

iWitness

As you pray in your churches for God to raise up workers for the harvest fields around the world, the new iWitness scheme from UFM might be a help to you.

Modelled on the many UK-based church trainee or apprenticeship schemes, the iWitness scheme provides ministry experience, opportunities for practical service and mission training, all in the context of serving alongside experienced missionaries in a cross-cultural context.

We hope the iWitness scheme will be a good way for UFM to serve local churches – offering reliable training placements with like-minded missionaries, where church members with a cross-cultural heart can have their gifting tested and developed.

There are opportunities in France, Ireland, the Middle East, Thailand, Malawi, Greece and Germany. You can find more details here – www.ufm.org.uk/iwitness

It is our privilege to serve local churches as they make disciples of all nations. If we can help you in that, in any way at all, please don't hesitate to be in touch!

Michael Prest
Director, UFM Worldwide

News and Reports

Theological Study Conference

It was really encouraging to have a large crowd of people from all corners of the UK descend upon Northampton last month for our biannual conference. We considered the subject of gathered worship – the theology, history and practice of what the church does when it meets together. Even though the six papers took very different positions on some issues, there was a clear desire by all to humbly seek the Lord's will for his people on this important matter. We were inspired to go back to our churches ready to think more biblically about what we do when we meet for worship.



New Affinity members

We are delighted to welcome recent new members. More information about each can be found on their websites.

Christian Education Europe

Supporting parents and churches in providing Christian education.
<https://christian.education>



Faith in Later Life

Inspiring and equipping Christians and churches to reach, serve and empower older people.
<https://faithinlaterlife.org>



Christian Safeguarding Services

Helping churches and others to safeguard children, young people and adults.
<https://christiansafeguardingservices.phasic-ltd.co.uk>



Affinity's Director in the media

Our Director now has weekly media opportunities on BBC, commercial and Christian radio when he is able to promote biblical truth and provide a Christian perspective on many of the significant news stories of the day. Despite an often-hostile reception from radio hosts such as James Whale (on TalkRADIO) he is regularly invited back and given time to make his case.

Please do pray for Graham and when you see alerts on Facebook, Twitter and our website about forthcoming interviews, please listen in and encourage others to do likewise.

The **JAMES WHALE** Radio Show



Change of address

Please note that with immediate effect we have changed our postal address:

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