

Monday 28th September

Our Candidates Course

We place a high emphasis on training candidates who are preparing to go to the field, provided by people with hands-on experience. This week we are running a four-day training course from Thursday 1st – Sunday 4th October. This course was originally planned for June, but was postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic. The course is residential and, at the time of writing, we do have the go-ahead to meet in person, with various social distancing measures to be in place. The teaching tends to be very interactive, with small group-work and lots of practical exercises, so we will need wisdom on how to do this effectively and safely.

However training is delivered, candidates will learn about a range of different topics to prepare them for life on the field: crossing cultures, raising financial support, discipleship-making movements, teamwork, how to thrive physically, spiritually and emotionally overseas, language learning techniques and how to share Jesus with Muslims. We will be learning more about some of these topics for the rest of this week to help us pray effectively for our candidates.

Since the course was postponed, candidates have kept in touch with one another and been encouraged and supported by Frontiers staff through monthly online Zoom meetings. This forum and the training courses give them opportunities to connect with others who have also felt the call to the Muslim world. It is where they can share their dreams, aspirations, concerns and experiences. They all come from different backgrounds and are at different stages of their journey to the field. Some are hoping to launch very soon into life long-term in a Muslim country, while others know they want to go to the field but are unsure exactly which country to go to.

We are so blessed to see more people wanting to go to the field despite the pandemic, but more workers are always needed to go where the gospel has yet to be made known. If you are interested in finding out more or know someone who may be interested, this link has useful information about resources and trips: <https://www.frontiers.org.uk/trips.php#tripsform>

- Pray for our candidates as they prepare to come on the course this week that they will learn and continue to connect well with the teaching and with one another, however training is delivered.
- Pray for all those teaching the different sessions on the course that they will adapt well to any new teaching environment or restrictions, and that their work will be well received and fruitful.
- Let's pray for more people to catch the vision and to look at exploring life as a co-worker with God overseas.

Tuesday 29th September

Crossing Cultures

For the next five days, staff members have contributed articles about the training sessions they are leading. Today's content about crossing cultures is from the head of our mobilising team.

“In this session of our Candidates Course, we consider how long it might take to understand a new culture, to feel comfortable in a new climate, to understand social interactions, facial expressions, the roles of men and women etc. We ask how long it might take to master a new language from scratch and to effectively communicate the gospel. At one level, the answer is ‘several years’. But it can also be argued that it takes a lifetime of learning. For the deeper you dive, the more cultural complexity you discover. Culture is not static, but in constant flux and it is not bound by national boundaries.

Many of our workers arrive in places where they not only have to deal with the normal challenges of moving house, settling children into new schools, starting a new job and finding their way around, but also to deal with a huge learning curve of language and culture. It can be very daunting and very humbling.

We explore some of the typical impacts of culture shock and the many ways that we commonly react when we find ourselves in new environments. We encourage a fresh look at our own cultural values and begin to critically evaluate the interplay of our home culture, the local culture and gospel or kingdom culture. We consider the fact that there will be elements of the new culture that we can affirm, there will be some (being neutral) that we can ignore, and some which we should oppose or challenge. We also consider whether our Western gospel presentations will be effective in shame-based/fear-based cultures.

I remember, during my first few months of living in Pakistan, sometimes being angry at and judgmental of my local friends, partly because I didn’t understand the cultural constraints we were facing. I have also read first-year newsletters from workers overseas which come across as critical of the culture and not very Christ-like. In this session we aim to prepare our candidates well in terms of realistic expectations and coping strategies.”

- Please pray for our candidates, that they will be humble and lifelong learners in their adopted cultures.
- Please pray for patience and resilience to develop in each of them, for their expectations of themselves and of what they can achieve to be realistic and faith-filled.
- Please pray that they will have the wisdom and the love of Christ, that will help them overcome all obstacles as they seek to share the good news throughout their chosen Muslim communities.

Wednesday 30th September

Healthy Teams

Our head of training writes:

“As an organisation, Frontiers’ philosophy is to send people out as teams or to join established teams. In this way they can immediately become part of a stable intact community that offers support. However, when a group of diverse people come together in a very different culture, issues and conflicts will inevitably arise. A good team is made up of a blend of different personalities and of people at different ages and stages of life. Some will be single, married or married with children. This all brings tensions and expectations of others.

Research has shown that teams go through a natural developmental process; forming (when people first meet and go through the honeymoon period), storming (when people begin to clash over the way the team operates or how individual team members 'do life'), norming (when through conflict resolution people begin to accept or adjust to the vision and values of the team), performing (the team is working at its best) and adjourning (as people join and leave teams, a team goes back to forming).

In our training we help people think through these different stages and the implications these may have on them and the rest of the team. We begin to look at what some of these expectations are and help candidates to begin to process and manage them ahead of leaving for the field. Unmet or misunderstood expectations are one of the main reasons for conflicts on a team. We discuss what team meetings should look like, how much to live like locals, use of time, whether to have help in the house or not, how to educate children and so forth. We use case studies to help them think through different team scenarios and to begin to think through how they might deal with different issues that might arise in a team. We also train them in what we call 'peace-making' skills, as at some point they are likely to be offended, offend others or sometimes both in certain situations.

While conflicts may arise, we want individuals to commit to live by biblical truths and seek to be gracious in embracing diversity and in pursuing peace as much as it depends on them. Overarching everything is the real joy in like-minded people working in unity with a common vision."

- Pray for people to grow in their understanding of how teams develop, how effective teams can work best and what their role in that could be.
- Pray for candidates to have an increased understanding of their expectations, how this can affect the team and to manage them before leaving for the field.
- Pray for candidates to develop their 'peace-making' skills and to be pursuers of peace as described in Romans 14:19; "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." In this way, they will be godly examples to the communities where they live and serve.

Thursday 1st October

Raising Financial and Prayer Support

A director of our British office writes:

"Everyone who goes to the field with Frontiers raises their own financial and prayer support. As you can imagine, most people initially find it awkward asking family, friends and churches for money. In our Support Raising training session we look at ways to help our workers overcome their fears and see how, by raising up a team of supporters, both those who give and those who receive can be blessed. We first approach the subject biblically looking at things such as:

- ❖ How it's always been God's design that His people would give to release a small number to devote themselves to ministry (e.g. the Levites in the Old Testament).
- ❖ How Jesus and his disciples were happy to receive support from those who travelled with them, especially from women (Luke 8:1-3).

- ❖ How Paul and his apostolic band were often supported with the gifts of others.
- ❖ How people are blessed when they give to the work of the Lord (Acts 20:35).
- ❖ We also practise asking in a way that is inspiring and honouring to those who give.

The support Frontiers workers need is more than just financial. They need a whole team behind them as they are sent out by their churches. They need committed prayer partners, encouragers who will help them to thrive overseas, and people who will help them practically when they come home for furlough. During this session we also learn how to write creative, informative prayer letters that people will want to read and respond to.”

- Please pray that, as our candidates receive this training, they will grow in confidence in approaching potential support partners.
- While Jesus commanded us to pray for ‘workers’ for the harvest field, let’s also pray for many to receive a call to support them in prayer, encouragement and giving.
- Only around 1% of churches’ money allocated to missions is used for the unreached parts of the world where no church yet exists. Pray for the release of finances that workers may be sufficiently supported as they go to Muslim peoples with least access to the gospel.

Friday 2nd October

Together Pursuing Movements to Christ

‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field.’ Luke 10:2

Our head of training writes:

“Frontiers exists to, with love and respect, invite all Muslims to follow Jesus. With 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide, this is a huge task. We are constantly seeking new workers to send out to the harvest field. However, in a number of countries where we send people, there is already a substantial number of evangelical Christians - either nationals such as in Egypt and Ethiopia or expatriate labourers as in many of the Gulf countries.

In Matthew 20: 6-7, Jesus tells a parable about the workers in the vineyard: “About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’ ‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered. He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’

Based on this teaching we seek to equip those we send out to ‘hire’ these workers so that they can also work in the ‘harvest field.’

During this training session, we take time to consider how we can envision and catalyse these individuals and churches with the biblical challenge to reach their Muslim neighbours. This often involves a different mind-set for our candidates. We think of ways we can equip, train and model sharing Jesus with Muslims so that together we can see movements to Christ begin.”

- Pray for our candidates to catch the vision, where possible, to mobilise local believers and churches so they would develop and hone the necessary skills to envision and catalyse them.
- Pray for believers in countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia and the Gulf to reach across cultural and racial divides and share Jesus with their Muslim neighbours.

Saturday 3rd October

Disciple Making Movements

A director of our British office writes:

“People join Frontiers teams because they are called by the Lord to make disciples and see new, reproducing fellowships started in places where they don’t yet exist. It might sound like an impossible task, but in the past 30 years we’ve seen an unprecedented number of Muslims come to faith in Christ. In order to be effective in the Muslim world, everyone who goes with us receives training in Disciple Making Movements. In this training session we take a look at the fruitful practices that thousands of workers have learnt over the past 40 years, such as:

- ❖ The importance of reaching families and groups, not only individuals.
- ❖ Sharing the gospel of the kingdom in a way that might be good news for a Muslim.
- ❖ Finding spiritually open people in the community.
- ❖ Looking at strategies that Jesus gave to his disciples.
- ❖ How to encourage the formation of groups where the Bible is studied.
- ❖ How those groups can become church and multiply.
- ❖ Looking at things that hinder growth.

In this way, we fulfill one of Frontiers’ principles which says; ‘Everything we do contributes toward planting healthy, reproducing churches through teams of obedient disciples who produce other disciples in the Muslim world.’”

- Please pray for our candidates to be envisioned to see what is possible as they step out in faith.
- Pray that, as the Lord leads them out to their countries, they will become effective in sharing their faith, making disciples and seeing fellowships and churches start.
- Pray for them, that when there is little fruit, they will persevere.
- Please pray for all our staff who are involved in this training course, that they and their families will be protected and encouraged.