

# GO

Lives and  
communities  
transformed  
through  
encounter with  
Jesus Christ

Mar 2025

 Interserve

## GOING TOGETHER

The importance of  
partnership



## Partnership is who we are

Partnership is one of Interserve's key values, shaping our work and relationships around the world. We demonstrate Christ's love through our words and actions, and also by the way we live alongside one another (John 13:34-35). At Interserve, the term 'Partner' usually refers to those sent by our National Offices to engage in wholistic ministry among peoples of Asia and the Arab World; underlining the importance of partnership in all we do:

"The global challenge of God's mission is huge, with no one movement or group able to even begin to cover. So we seek to walk with a wide range of others – organisations, denominations, movements, and churches. Some are long-established relationships, and others are just emerging. Beyond the mere practicalities of partnership, is God challenging and establishing our missional paradigms?"\*

This edition of GO is inspired by a new partnership emerging at the forefront of our fellowship. Other articles explore the value of partnership between mission agencies, with churches and church leaders, and with local communities and government bodies, as Interserve Partners serve alongside local believers in Great Britain & Ireland and around the world.

As you read this magazine, thank you for partnering with us in God's mission.

### Amy Durrant

Prayer & Communications Coordinator,  
Interserve Great Britain & Ireland

\* Interserve IPG 2025, page 7

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# Two voices one mission

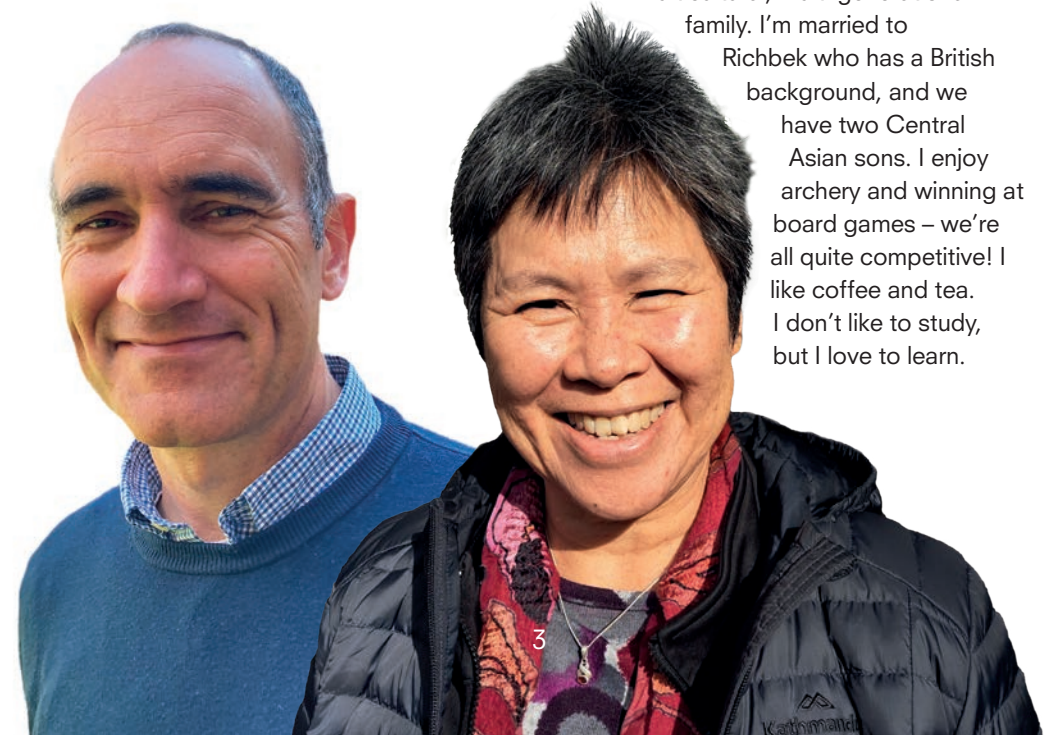
## NEW LEADERSHIP FOR INTERSERVE INTERNATIONAL

This March, a new global partnership is developing to share the task of leading Interserve's international fellowship.

In the spirit of working together, we've been collaborating with Kaitlyn from Interserve's National Office in Australia to interview our new International Co-Directors:

**Kaitlyn:** *It's my privilege to take this opportunity to get to know you both. Tell us a bit about yourselves...*

**Lyn:** I'm based in Australia and call myself ABC, 'Australian born Chinese.' – I'm fourth generation Australian on my mum's side and my dad is from Malaysia. We have a very multicultural, multi-generational family. I'm married to Richbek who has a British background, and we have two Central Asian sons. I enjoy archery and winning at board games – we're all quite competitive! I like coffee and tea. I don't like to study, but I love to learn.



◆ Interserve is at its best when God uses us to help catalyse things, and others may not even realise that we've been there.

**Chris:** I was brought up in England and currently live in the West Midlands. My wife, Rachel, is from the USA and we met as Interserve Partners in Central Asia. We've been married for 18 years now and have three teenage children. Living in Asia, I got used to drinking tea, but I prefer coffee. I love being outdoors – that's my happy place.

**Kaitlyn:** *You've both been around Interserve for a while... How have you been involved up to now?*

**Lyn:** I began supporting Interserve when I was a student. I went on to serve as a Partner in Central Asia, where I was also involved as a medical advisor and placements coordinator, and in member care and various other roles. My last role was as Regional Director for East Asia and the South Pacific.

**Chris:** I began with Interserve in Central Asia where both Lyn and I served on the Country Leadership Team together. Then we moved to Southeast Asia, and I was part of the International Leadership Team for a while, also with Lyn! I was Director of People Services there for four years, and then Regional Director for Eurasia for four years. In 2020 we moved here to England and I've been National Director for Great Britain & Ireland for the last five years.

**Kaitlyn:** *That's quite a scattering of roles - in Country Teams, National Offices and in International Leadership. How did you discern that this shared role as International Co-Directors was the way forward?*

**Lyn:** The most significant thing, from a theological point of view, is who God is. He is God in Trinity, three in one. Being in a relationship with Him, and with each other, is foundational. And it fits Interserve's values. Mission across the globe is becoming more collaborative. As a fellowship, we've seen an increase in shared positions over the last ten years. We see God at work this way across Interserve. It's an exploration, because it's not a job share, it is that we're both International Directors.

**Chris:** International Director is a huge role – one person can only bring so much. Two people in the role means we offer a broader range of gifts, experiences, and perspectives. It introduces a new way of

## Passing on the baton

We praise God for Bijoy Koshy who has served faithfully, wisely and servant heartedly as Interserve's International Director over the last ten years. He now passes on the baton to Chris and Lyn. Thank you, Bijoy for all that you have done for the Interserve community around the world and for the mission community at large.



working, but also a stronger foundation to bring more diversity to a role like this. Different models are good at various times. This feels like a good thing to do now.

**Kaitlyn:** *As you go forward in this role together, the theme of partnership is going to be important. What does partnership mean for you?*

**Lyn:** Partnership is more than collaboration, and it's more than that it 'helps to get the job done'. I think it's mutual submission, love, and grace. Partnership takes place at many different levels, and we partner with God in the gospel - we are co-labourers with Him. It's an amazing privilege.

**Chris:** Partnership is key to who we are as Interserve. We work at our best in situations where we embrace partnership. As a fellowship we've been there at the start of joint mission organisations in various parts of the world. And it's the way

that we encourage Partners to work in their own context. In Central Asia, I worked with a local pastor who had unique experiences and cultural insight that I would never have. I brought my skills and gifts, and it made it a much richer experience. We see that repeatedly. We're not a fellowship that tends to jump up and down about what we do, and I love that about us. Interserve is at its best when God uses us to help catalyse things, and others may not even realise that we've been there. But that's very much a Kingdom value. That's God at work.

**Kaitlyn:** *That's so true. I can sense that heartfelt partnership through both of you. Going forward, what makes you excited to be part of Interserve?*

**Lyn:** We have such fantastic people. There's a sense of belonging - when I connect it always feels like 'these are my people'. I can see that despite chaos in our world, God is still on his throne. We hear about amazing things that God



is doing through his Church, through Interserve and the wider community. I'm excited to discover what God has in store for us...

**Chris:** I love that we are an international fellowship - there are opportunities to build rich and deep relationships with people across diverse cultures who you wouldn't meet otherwise. I've really enjoyed being National Director for the last five years, but I'm also looking forward - to working with the International Leadership Team, reflecting on what God is doing around our world and how He's asking us to get involved.

**Kaitlyn:** *God is doing some amazing things in the world. But we also see that the world is changing. Both Interserve and the wider global mission community face various challenges. What do you think we'll need to navigate in coming years?*

**Lyn:** One thing that immediately comes to mind is learning to love and listen to people who think very differently to us. Not just from different cultures - perhaps also from the same culture. How can we listen and love, and not just dismiss?

**Chris:** Building on this, we've grown into this wonderful international fellowship, but our structures are still quite Western. Internally that is one of our biggest challenges. We've talked about this but not yet grasped how to make changes - how can we move forward in becoming a truly global fellowship?

**Kaitlyn:** *Big things for all of us to be grappling with. How can we be praying in this new season?*

**Lyn:** Pray for good listening - not just ears but listening hearts and minds. And pray for the grace and patience to wait and listen to what God wants us to focus on or take up.



## An international fellowship

As an inter-denominational organisation, we serve in partnership with the local Church in over 35 national contexts. We have 14 National Offices, including Great Britain & Ireland. Our International Leadership Team and Council are spread across the globe, connected through our International Office in Southeast Asia.

Find out more about our international fellowship at [interserve.org](https://interserve.org)



**Chris:** Please pray for our families as well - it's a big adjustment for all of us. And pray for the relationships that we will be building with others across our international leadership - some we've worked with before and some new. We want to steward the role well. We come with a sense of awe and cautiousness - we want a stance of humility and of listening, but also the courage to step out when that's the right thing to do.

**Kaitlyn:** *We will certainly be praying that God will continue to work in and through you both - thank you for everything that you've shared. We look forward to seeing how God will be at work!* ♦



**T**his Spring we're pleased to welcome two new Partners to our team of Regional Connectors across Great Britain and Ireland. Moji, originally from Nigeria and now based in London, and Heather in Northern Ireland, recently returned from serving in South Asia. Both are already actively engaged in connecting with supporters and churches, and are keen to build more connections in their regions with those interested in the work of Interserve.

Our growing Regional Connector team exists to inspire the involvement of churches, groups, and individuals in God's mission through Interserve. We currently have five Regional Connectors and are actively seeking to develop this team. They are often the first point of contact with supporters and those

exploring God's call to mission in their lives. You may meet our Connectors representing Interserve at conferences and mission events, such as the ongoing 3 Billion Reasons tour, a collaboration of eight UK mission agencies organising inspiring regional events across the country.

Yet much of the fruit of our work comes simply from individual contacts and connections. At a recent Churches Together group in the West Midlands, a Muslim background pastor introduced Connections Coordinator David King to another local church leader of Asian heritage. David invited him to speak at an intercultural mission taster event, attended by representatives from five churches, and it was clear that his passion and skill in connecting with Asian



communities inspired his listeners to action. We never know where God might use a simple conversation to bring about His purposes in and through us.

**DAVID RIDING, ONE OF OUR REGIONAL CONNECTORS, SHARES:**

Maybe it's just me, but mission was not originally part of my Christian thinking and theology before I got involved with Interserve. I've come to realise that God has a mission, and a key part of being a Christian is getting involved in His mission. It's something that I would love to see in more churches near me. Mission can look different for different

people – it could be local, national or international. It might mean being actively involved yourself, or supporting in other ways. I love to help churches engage with mission, whatever their starting point. Some churches I speak to are so busy just trying to keep things going that the idea of mission feels overwhelming, but perhaps we can help identify a manageable first step. Other churches say, 'We'd love to, but how?'

Connectors are here to say, "Hey, we're in! We love mission - this is who we are!" We ask, "What's your view of mission?" and, 'How can we engage?' We've got people with decades of experience, fantastic resources to help Christians grow in cross-cultural mission,

we can offer talks tailored to different churches or groups. It's exciting to be meeting the next generation of people who will become Interserve supporters or perhaps Partners with us overseas or here in the UK. But we also love to spend time with our local prayer groups across the country, connecting with established supporters and finding out how things are going. That fellowship is important because at times we also need encouragement. Our role is to build relationships and see where that goes.

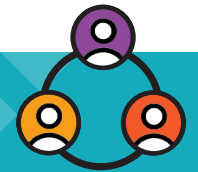
◆ **For me, the priority is to simply get people involved in mission.**

The other aspect of the Connector role that I really enjoy is sharing about Interserve. I've been part of Interserve for over eight years - I've stayed because it's such a great organisation and full

of good people. I love sharing stories from our Partners, and I'm proud of how our staff carefully prepare and support those serving with us. It's a real blessing to be able to share Interserve with other people, with churches and local groups. Where people are thinking about God's call to mission in their lives or in their churches, and wondering whether God might be leading them to work with Interserve, we love to be part of that journey. If they want to take mission further with us, we are that point of contact that says, "This is what we do." But for me, the priority is to simply get people involved in mission. If they get involved with Interserve or not, I don't mind. I would just love them to go away thinking, "Mission is interesting and important, and perhaps I could get more involved." God invites each of us to discover what part He wants us to play in His mission. ◆



David Riding



Contact Interserve Connections Coordinator, David King, to find out more or make contact with our Regional Connector team, via: **davidk@isgbi.org** or **03333 601600**



# Stepping through an open door

**INTERSERVE PARTNERS IAN AND ELISABETH SHARE HOW THEY ARE PARTNERING WITH A LOCAL CHURCH IN CENTRAL EUROPE TO WELCOME ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES IN THEIR CITY**

It's a frosty Friday morning as a woman wearing a hijab steps off the street into a modern church building. She is warmly welcomed by a group of volunteers from the church. There are drinks and homemade snacks, accompanied by the chaotic chatter of a group of women with young children in tow. Many have recently arrived from the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia. Often this is the highlight of their week, a community where they can belong. There is no fixed programme, but low-key conversations cover numerous topics both mundane and profound, and the ladies are yet to run out of things to talk about!



One such lady is Karina\*, a bubbly young woman in her twenties who I met through a ladies event at the church. She recently started following Jesus since moving to Europe from the Middle East. She began coming to the café every week and bringing friends, and was excited to have the opportunity to openly explore her new faith. She had a lot of questions, so we started meeting regularly to talk about what it means to follow Jesus. Her husband, Darius,\* became a Christian at the same time. He's been asking 'What's for the guys? We need something too.' So, we're starting on that next...

We've been able to connect with people like Karina and Darius thanks to a growing partnership with a local church in the city. When we first arrived, we began working with refugees within a different project, but it was always our desire to engage churches in this work. Two years ago, we started meeting to pray with an Asian family from our church serving with another mission organisation. Others then joined us, with the blessing of our church leadership, to pray and see what might develop. And last year we decided to start a weekly drop-in café for women, building on our existing networks and relationships.

The church leadership are excited and open to these new opportunities. Some of the women have started to come regularly to other established events, engaging with church members at a monthly breakfast and a free conversational language course. The church is changing, and more people from other cultures are joining us on Sundays, with services now translated from German into English and Spanish each week. Nonetheless, we are still on a journey to see the whole community

engaged in understanding and welcoming the stranger. We are currently finalising a German translation of the Joining the Family course, designed to equip churches to be family for believers from other faith backgrounds. We hope to run this later in the year with other churches locally.

This work is not always easy. We must work through language barriers, cultural lenses and different understandings of mission. But when we want to work together and can agree on what matters, then these differences become our strengths. In the European context many people see Christianity as irrelevant. When we demonstrate that the Church can be a safe, relevant, and inclusive community, then our partnership plays a vital role in our witness to the world.

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Currently, our wonderful church building often stands empty on weekdays. Our dream is to see this place filled with vibrant community, with all sorts of people coming and using the space. As we partner together, we pray that many more people will step through the doors to find a place of belonging and welcome, where they can explore faith and grow into their true identity in Christ. ◆

\* Names changed for security purposes.

# United in purpose

**IN REMOTE AND RURAL AREAS OF SOUTH ASIA, COUNTLESS COMMUNITIES ARE CRIPPLED BY POVERTY. YET MANY ARE WORKING TOGETHER HERE TO BRING TRANSFORMATION**

**IN ONE MOUNTAINOUS REGION, THIS WORK IS ENABLED BY PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN NATIONAL AND EXPATRIATE BELIEVERS, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES, GOVERNMENT BODIES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**M**any local and expatriate Christians have chosen to live and work here in order to bring God's blessing to the region. Interserve Partners from Great Britain & Ireland serve here as doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists and architects, and in anti-trafficking, disability support and leadership roles. They are accompanied by frequent visitors on short-term 'On Track' placements, keen to discover how God might use them in mission overseas. Interserve has been involved with two Christian development agencies here since their beginnings in the 1950s. Many of our Partners serve within these national organisations, which are now supported by multiple charities and NGOs around the world.

Interserve Partner Rachel has served here for over 30 years. She writes,

"It seems a Biblical model to work together and pool skills and resources. It is very rich to be part of an international community; we learn from each other and share our lives. We are part of the local body of Christ too, and that is an encouragement." The hospital where Rachel serves works closely with surrounding communities, identifying felt needs and ensuring local ownership of new programmes and projects. They also partner with the government wherever possible, supporting national health initiatives. Rachel explains,

"Obviously it would be easier to work with people 'exactly like me'. Healthy partnerships require work, good communication and a sense of humour. But the end result is so much more effective than going it alone. We can challenge each other - we all have blind spots, but together we see clearly."

One of Rachel's colleagues is Roshan, a local believer originally from a Hindu background, who works as both a dentist and Hospital Director. He writes,

"Partnership is a Biblical model, enhancing professional achievements and helping to meet our goals in the workplace. As followers of Christ, our professional life and Christian life cannot be separated. God may bring many people to work alongside us, both Christians and others, and He blesses us through them. God has made us to carry each other's burdens."

◆ God has made us to carry each other's burdens.

"Long-term expatriates who follow Christ play a vital role here in encouraging and mentoring staff and the local community. They provide quality and wholistic medical care. They are blessings since their salaries are funded overseas, reducing financial burdens for local organisations. There can be challenges working with expats with limited language and cultural experiences, but overall, I've found it less challenging working with like-minded expat professionals. Expatriates in leadership roles can sometimes be valuable as local politicians cannot exert pressure on them, and they can also be effective fundraisers for our work."

Rachel describes Interserve as an 'invisible force' in this work, often unnamed and unseen. Yet through God's people here, and those supporting them around the world, He is bringing hope and healing through the power of partnership. ◆



# Building the *body of Christ*



**BEN STANSFIELD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, REFLECTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIP ACROSS THE UK MISSION COMMUNITY**

**Y**ou have likely heard the famed African proverb, 'if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together'. I am less convinced about the first part, but definitely sold on the second! Our journey as Christians is more of a marathon than a sprint. And I don't see many marathon runners getting to the end well without receiving support and refreshment from others along the way. But even this analogy can be too individualistic. In John 17:21, Jesus prays for all who will believe in Him, that they

will be one just as He and the Father are one. Our identity as Christians as different parts that make up the one body of Christ must be central to who we are, with the emphasis on the 'one'. Jesus prayed this for us after all!

Athletes train their bodies so that each muscle and tendon propels them higher, further, and faster. This image helps us to reflect on our effectiveness and health as a body of Christ and mission community. In the body of an athlete, different limbs need to be in sync with each other,



Global Connections is a vibrant community of UK-based charities, churches, colleges, individuals, and support services, working and learning together to explore the future of mission, and seeking to equip and inspire Christians in the UK for cross-cultural mission.

They offer resources, mutual learning, forums, networking and more for the UK mission community. **Find out more at [globalconnections.org.uk](http://globalconnections.org.uk)**

especially when in motion. However, if the body is stationary, this is harder to see.

If the need for unity in a body seems so obvious, and follows a clear call from Jesus, why are we so often tempted to go it alone? If we are honest, it can seem a whole lot easier and less complicated to act independently. There are fewer opinions to consider, less strong personalities to negotiate (at least fewer that disagree with us perhaps!?), simpler decision-making processes and we know who is in charge - us!

In true partnership amongst equals there must be a relinquishing of control. In the body of Christ, we are not the head – Jesus is. The left hand can't tell the right hand what to do, nor the eye the ear. We all need to take direction from the head and stay connected with each other, which allows resources and oxygen to flow through us all.

◆ **I am regularly impressed by the shared desire to cooperate and collaborate for Kingdom benefit rather than individual gain.**

In Global Connections I am regularly impressed by the shared desire to cooperate and collaborate for Kingdom benefit rather than individual gain. Through this coming together to pray, encourage one another, share expertise and resources, and build friendship and trust, there have been numerous examples of agencies partnering together to further God's kingdom - from joint prayer initiatives to full mergers of large organisations. Each response is as valid as the other. It is the understanding and outworking of our identity in Him that truly has the potential to see this great body move into action.

True partnership in mission enables us to reflect God's unity, to maximize resources, and to respond to global needs with greater impact. It embodies the truth that the mission belongs to God, and His work is most powerfully accomplished when His people join together. Let's go higher, further, and faster together! ◆





JOINING  
-THE-  
*family*

Joining the Family is a **six-session course** helping churches to understand, love, equip, and learn from Christ's followers of Muslim heritage.

The updated digital resource includes videos, participant handouts and leader's guide.

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