



A Journey through Europe to Jesus:

how a Nepalese couple found Christ in London and Portugal.

Sagar and Shraddha are Nepali. They came to Britain after they married in order to study. She was Hindu, he Buddhist. Sagar found a job packing shelves, while Shraddha studied, but life was a big struggle for them.

One day, she was exercising in the park, feeling totally alone and in despair about their situation, when an older Nepali woman called her over. She had recognised that Shraddha also was Nepali, and asked her help in reading the book she had in her hands, as her eyesight was poor. The book was a book of hymns in Nepali. They struck up a friendship, and continued to meet in the park over a number of weeks to read together. Shraddha became fascinated by what she read and how it spoke about Jesus Christ, and shared what she was discovering with her husband. Eventually they both came to the church the lady attended, which also had a lively Nepali fellowship, and there they found new faith in Jesus.

When their visa to remain in the UK was not extended, they had two options.



Return to Nepal, or try to apply for permanent residency in another EU country. So they came to Lisbon, and that's where we came to know them. **Young Christians, eager to grow in Christ, and to serve, and trying to start a new life in Portugal.**

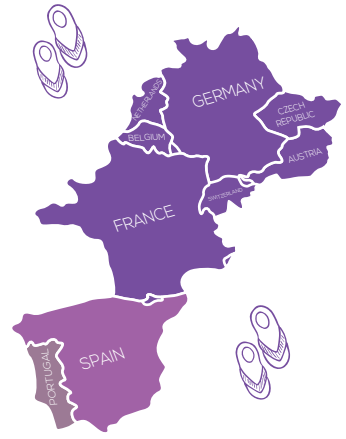
They are part of the United Nepali Christian Church in central Lisbon, and it is a joy to serve alongside them, and to see their great faith, and how God continues to answer their prayers and meet their needs. Around 50 people meet together each Sunday morning, to worship and pray in their mother tongue.

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Slowly we are finding opportunities to help this small fellowship integrate into the life and witness of the wider evangelical church in Portugal. At a time when some evangelical churches are closing their doors due to dwindling numbers, one cannot help but feel that God is doing a new thing through new churches such as this one emerging in immigrant communities.



And the story is similar across Europe from Sweden to Greece. New communities are springing up among those who found faith along the road of moving from one country to another. Fellowships that worship in Farsi, in Arabic, in Tamil. In meeting our Nepali friends in Lisbon, and others from Pakistan also (where we used to work) who have arrived and are settling in here, what has struck us is the constancy of their faith in the light of enormous adversity and regular setbacks. Life is a huge struggle for them, a constant headache of visa application, finding affordable housing, and jobs that treat you fairly. But they never seem to lose heart or give up, often praying and fasting for answers.



Could it be that this “non European” faith in a God who is for us, who can and will act on our behalf, this faith that is filled with confidence and hope, would be the thing that God uses to enrich the European church with a fresh vision of who He really is?



By Peter and Anna Crawford

Portugal