

## Partnerships

As part of fulfilling our mission statement and the instructions Jesus gave (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:18-20), Lancaster Alliance Church has set a strategic priority for establishing partnerships *locally and around the world*. In doing this, LAC is seeking to reflect the direction being set by the Christian & Missionary Alliance and the Eastern PA District of the Alliance in having more direct engagement with teams and the work. Partnerships are meant to be:

- **Missionally Aligned** – the work is gospel focused and contributes to the Great Commission
- **Multi-Generational** – all ages can be engaged with the partnership
- **Mutually beneficial** – we all can learn from the partnership how to be more effective missionally in our own spheres and lives, as well as serving or giving to the partner.

## Global Partnerships

Toward having a gospel presence in a rapidly changing world, LAC began an official, global partnership with Riverside in 2022.<sup>1</sup> LAC embraced this strategic model and achieved this goal identified by church leadership, i.e. establishing a global partnership that met the criteria above. Beyond serving on site there, LAC is learning effective strategies for having a gospel presence with others in our local



Vision Trip Team 2022

**And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

Matthew 28:18-20

supplies, which were delivered by the team of medical professionals who did training for the staff, students, and other adults in the community there. Afterward, one family in the Middle East shared how they had saved their baby's life from

community by building relationships with people different from us.

LAC has sent four serving teams to Riverside: an initial Vision Team in 2022 to serve and confirm the partnership, a medical training team in 2023, and an ESL teacher and a Construction Team in 2024. For the medical trip, LAC donated, gathered, and sorted medical



2023 Medical Team with ESL Students

<sup>1</sup> Riverside is a Code Name which allow us to protect the identity of the workers and the work. If too many details are known or the workers there are seen to be affiliated with a church, this might inhibit relationship building or permissions to remain. The work at Riverside is supported by giving to the Great Commission Fund. See Creative Access Countries to understand more.

what they learned. In 2024, LAC sent an ESL teacher to Riverside to teach for a full term. Just afterward, a construction team went to help modify the buildings there and increase their capacity.

Riverside had been operating Community Centers in two locations, with a new one planned. They have a presence in Riverside as a non-profit development organization focused on alleviating basic felt needs leading to self-sufficiency, personal development, and health in the community, especially among the poor and disadvantaged. Their programs include ESL, women's wellness, poverty alleviation, mentoring, and robotics. Over six thousand people have been served by their programs. This one-stop location for meeting many felt needs is a model that has been used in other fields and has even had influence on the design of the new Alliance headquarters.

Under the umbrella of the work in Riverside, Green Creations is a business, which allows women to live in dignity, knowing that they have the ability to shape their own lives and those within the community of artisans. They make and sell a variety of jewelry and other crafts. (Learn more at [https://greencreations.org/.](https://greencreations.org/)) Volunteers at LAC have been instrumental in helping distribute these products within the U.S. You can see and purchase samples one last time at the Global Impact Festival week held each year in November. With the changes in the country, this formal working entity is now closing, but some of the women carry on creating.

Military conflicts and changes in grant funding toward programming have had a dramatic effect on the work at Riverside. The leadership is in conversation with the National Office of the Alliance around if and how they can reformat the work or possibly shift to a more public work alongside the national church. A lot is still up in the air. Meanwhile, a new team was just deployed. Our main contacts from Riverside are on home assignment with us this year, so we are exploring the possibilities for the future together. They will still supervise the workers in Riverside, but be based in Ukraine. We are also in conversation with many other workers and entities around potential next or additional partnerships.

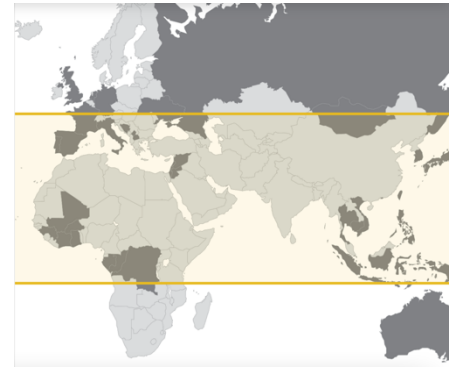
## What are Creative Access Countries?

Creative Access Countries (CAC) is the phrase used to talk generally about countries it would be better not to name specifically, as with Riverside.

- "80 percent of Alliance international workers live in this area, home to more than 80 percent of the world's remaining unreached peoples."



- “(The Alliance continues) to press deeper into the unreached places remaining on our planet to take all of Jesus to all the world.”
- “Just in the last year, we’ve commissioned more than 50 new international workers to go to some of the hardest places.”
- “In many of these countries, less than 1 percent of the population has heard a clear presentation of the gospel message. Through the work of the Holy Spirit and the coming together of God’s people, countries shrouded in spiritual darkness are being illuminated by the light of Jesus. This is what we are doing—bringing Jesus to the hardest corners of the world and fulfilling the Great Commission.” (Source: <https://101.cmalliance.org/module-4/what-we-do/>)



## Local Partnerships

Similar to global partnerships, and using the same criteria, LAC has been engaging with a number of entities and organizations to find a local partnership. One example was Bethany Christian Services, whom we worked with to sponsor a refugee family from Ukraine. After we received the family, BCS closed doors in Lancaster, PA. By then, we were hosting the family and building relationships. Many people within the LAC community helped the family with rides to work and to appointments. Some helped with English tutoring and we were generally just very available to support them in this dramatic transition. Some people even gave driving lessons! The family has now moved into their own home, both parents and both older kids are working, and they seem to be doing very well. They often thank us and speak of their “beloved church.” You can meet them here on any given Sunday.

Seeds, Inc. is an organization that helps meet the needs of families and especially children. They were integral in supporting the Ukrainian family with English instruction and toward finding housing. They helped with many of the unknowns as we began this venture. Formal partnerships with Bethany and Seeds have not been the right fit, so we continue having conversations and exploring with others.

Servant Stage is a Christian-based theater organization that has been renting use of faculties at LAC. Making the most of the building’s features, having that income stream, and being able to exercise loving hospitality toward people who would otherwise not step into a church building have potential in arrangements like these or with conferences held on site. These are being explored.

Meanwhile, LAC gathered and delivered a truckload of supplies for hurricane disaster relief this past year. There is a team who leads a Bible-based, after school program for K-5 at the nearby Country Club Apartments. And there are many people serving and volunteering behind the scenes in known and unknown ways at places like Water Street Mission, Anchor, and Lancaster Prison.