



newsletter of european christian mission ireland

WINTER 2013

www.ecmireland.org

A close-up photograph of a person's face, focusing on a single green eye. The eye is looking directly at the viewer. Overlaid on the right side of the face is a map of Europe, with the landmasses in shades of green and yellow, and the surrounding oceans in blue. The overall lighting is dramatic, with deep shadows and highlights on the skin and the map.

we see a different Europe

**WELCOME TO OUR
NEW LOOK MAGAZINE!**

INSIDE... Stories of God
at work in Ireland, Germany,
Slovenia and beyond!



OUR MISSION

ECM Ireland's aim is to glorify God through the planting and development of churches that will evangelize and disciple the peoples of Europe. It is only through worshipping, loving, communities that Europe can really experience transformational change.

WE BELIEVE

We believe that Europe needs to hear and see the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Europe has become a complex multicultural and multi religious continent full of challenges but God continues to work and His light still shines in Europe where He continues to move forward and build His church.

WE BELIEVE

We believe that church planting is the strategy to transform Europe. God has chosen the church as His instrument to reach the whole world with His gospel of salvation. By having Jesus' love, people change, local communities change, then surrounding communities, regions, and through regions, countries are transformed and through countries the whole of Europe.

WE PRAY

*Your Kingdom come ... in Europe,
Your will be done ... in Europe. Amen.*



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The Director's Chair

by Charlie Anderson

SEEING A DIFFERENT EUROPE

The words 'Europe in Crisis' have been so commonly used that most people have got bored with the subject, but it is said that the Chinese character for 'Crisis' is made up of both the symbol for 'threat' and the symbol for 'opportunity' and it strikes me that people's view of Europe could fall into either category.

Take for example your attitude to 'European' issues such as immigration, secularism and economic crisis. When it comes to immigration some of my friends talk about 'them foreigners' which seems like they feel 'threat,' but for Vimal (in Germany) and Stefan (here in Lisburn) both view immigration as an 'opportunity' to meet new people and share the gospel with them.

Others link 'secularism' with Europe and see the 'threat' associated with the collapse of traditional Christendom, but perhaps the collapse of what was at best a distorted presentation of Christianity is not such a bad thing. Too many people have written off Jesus because their only experience of Christianity was a corrupt and irrelevant church. Christendom is in decline but churches that take every 'opportunity' to teach and practice the gospel of Jesus Christ continue to grow.

And then there is 'economic crisis'- when we wonder if Europe's influence will lead to a crash that will 'threaten' our affluent life style. BUT there are some, who see economic distress as an 'opportunity' to show Christ's love to others- by opening food banks for the unemployed in Spain or homes for mums in crisis in Romania or helping those with a learning disability in Albania. And then I ask myself the uncomfortable question, might it not be a good thing if people's confidence in the power of economic stability to make them safe and complete was shaken up a bit?

We see a Different Europe - do you?



PRAYER TRIP 2013



IRELAND

What is a Prayer Trip?

A few ECM ladies mentioned that they would like to visit our missionaries in Ireland and the idea evolved into a prayer trip.

BUT what do you do on a prayer trip?

It was daunting to think of praying for 4 days – but we discovered plenty to talk about and bring before God as we journeyed and everything evolved as we went along.

Three of us drove to Claremorris where Nicola McCracken met us and pointed out possible venues for meetings, areas where 5 day clubs had taken place, the school Sarah attends and we stopped right there to pray in each place, mentioning people by name. That evening, at the McCrackens, we spent time chatting

to them about specific needs and praying for guidance on the way ahead to start a work there: that the Lord would guide the decision making, and open up the way. Back at our hotel, after a bit of fun about who should have the double bed, we settled down to our own devotions and sleep!!

This became our blue print - praying as we drove along- to Waterford to meet with Colin and Ally Holmes and the family on Saturday, the Tramore Church on Sunday, where we had lunch and an opportunity to pray with the leadership and the Malchaerts (ECM Netherlands) and back to Waterford for the meeting in the Football Club at five. We had a short time to chat with the Balls and Karen Laird (ECM Australia missionaries), then returned to Tramore for a couple of hours

Bringing Europe to Life



*left: the McCrackens
bottom left: Charis Tully
below: the Holmes'*



with Charis Tully before bed. On Monday we travelled North through Dublin stopping off to pray with Sharon Wood (ECM Australia) and the Leadership of the Grosvenor Road Church with whom she works.

Was it worth it?

Absolutely – there was something special about physically being in a place, and being physically present with our missionaries, crying out to God for the people and the needs of the ministry and offering to pray confidentially for needs (ministry or otherwise) which were burdening folk at that time.

Any great revelations?

Yes! We were challenged by our comfort in the North, so many strong Christians, so many good churches so nearby, and

we wondered should we be praying that some of these strong Christian families would move to the South to help out. It was overwhelming to see many struggling with heavy workloads because there aren't enough mature believers, and knowing it could make such a difference if a few simply moved, joined a fellowship and were active there.

The danger with a prayer like that is – ***sometimes you have to be willing to be the answer to your own prayer!!***

by Miriam Anderson with May Green & Christina Clydesdale

We see a different family!!

**'Szczepan tells
of changed
lives through
Bible studies in
Portadown.'**

Her dad died when SHE was 7 months old. For years SHE would wake up every night at exactly 3 am. 'This is the hour of the devil', her mother, a practising witch, told her. Their relationship is far from normal.

At the age of 18, SHE was told by a fortune teller that she would only have one child, so pregnant for the second time; SHE was convinced that she would miscarry, just like before. During one of the scans the doctor told her that the baby's heart was not beating and that it was dead... She flew to Poland to have a womb cleansing procedure carried out. She wasn't what we call born again, but she prayed to a God she did not know, for help.

In Poland a surprised doctor said the baby was in great shape and today Gabi is a beautiful, intelligent 4 year old princess. She is in love too with Noah (Szczepan's little son.)



HE was 4 when he was in a car accident. His mother was killed. HE had half of his face burned and suffered difficulty walking.

When we first met them at a Bible study in Portadown, relationships were a mess. The couple were quiet, but devoured every word about God. Within one year they have both given total control of their lives over to Jesus.

We are blessed to see how the Holy Spirit has been changing their lives. Their relationships are straightening out. For the first time in years SHE sleeps through the night. In July they started fostering a deaf, mute relative, a half-orphan and half abandoned girl. Their passion for Jesus is beautiful.

Give glory to God for Aga and Waldek - they need your prayers too.

TEAM VISIT TO ALBANIA

A joint Prospects/ECM Team visited Albania from 2nd-10th Nov to work with people with a Learning Disability. Prospects – the leading Christian organization in the UK seek to provide quality support enabling these people and their carers to live life to the full.



Diagnosed with severe autism this child's parents who love him dearly were told *'it is just a waste of time trying to teach him.'* Like many others they are frustrated that nothing was being done to help their child and they are worried for his future. Who will look after him?



This is why the team of 7 along with Stuart Rowell spent time with Will Niven in Fier and Berti Dosti in Lushnje, providing advice, training, specialist help, and practical demonstrations in a government run centre, and churches.

On Saturday a seminar was held for church leaders in Tirana introducing them to the possibilities of working with those who have a learning disability. The team was encouraged by their visit. Pray for wisdom as we try to help.





ECM NEWS



The Forjan family

Last Christmas (Dec '12) we told everyone we were perfectly content having two boys but when we least expected it there was a pleasant surprise from our heavenly Father. Izak was born in Oct

2013. He and Gloria are feeling great and we are full of the joy of this new life. We feel privileged to raise three boys in Slovenia where there is a lack of male leaders in churches and a need for godly men.



Meet our newest ECM Ireland Council Member

My name is Audrey McIvor and I am married to Tom. We have two children, who are both married, and one grandchild. I have been involved for a number of years in teaching and in fostering. A member of Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church, Bangor I am excited to have the opportunity to serve with ECM and to be involved in what God is doing in Europe today.



The Nelsons in Carryduff

David and Besiana have settled back into life in Carryduff where they are attending and contributing to worship in Carryduff Presbyterian. Besiana is working as a classroom assistant in Cairnshill Primary School which she is really enjoying. David is working for support services in intensive care at the Royal Victoria Hospital and is also studying towards a BA in Theology on a part time basis at Belfast Bible College. The girls are doing well and as a family they are well settled into the area once again.



PRAYER ~ PULL OUT

Sasko - Poland

- That my relationships would bear fruit for the Kingdom, among the 75 students at Graceland English School, this year.
- That God will reveal His vision for my long-term commitment here in Poland.
- For spiritual revival in Poland and in the city of Krakow.
- For people to partner with me practically in ministry as well as prayerfully, as my support has dropped by 200 euros recently.

Szczepan - Polish Outreach, Northern Ireland

- Organizing teams- Summer 2014
- Preaching regularly in PMC. and Bible studies -Need grace, wisdom and anointing.
- English classes – many opportunities with non-Christian Poles.
- Support is only till end of 2014. What then?
- Marriage course starting in January
- Kamila suffering hormonal imbalance. Pray for healing.
- Good health for kids (a great blessing!)
- Pray that God leads us into the right place at the right time (should our support end, or any other developments occur).

Alen & Lila Kerčmar - Slovenia

Please pray:

- For the Lord's protection and guidance for our children in their daily walk with Him. We do appreciate your support for them.
- That the Lord speaks to church members individually about the need for constant renewal in our personal and collective walk with the Lord.
- For wisdom encouraging people to get involved in ministry; for clarity in presenting Gospel truth, and Christ's love to be demonstrated in all we do.
- For the Lord's wisdom and guidance we explore employment options.

Colin & Ally Holmes - Waterford, Ireland

- Give thanks with us for our family and pray for Ally as she gets back into Kids' Club again.
- Give thanks for the Pulse youth and pray that more will come and have the courage to commit to Jesus.
- We need time to build relationships and wisdom to be a strong witness in our community.
- Pray for positivity, patience and perseverance for the team who are quite stretched and that God will provide two more workers.
- Pray for opportunities at Christmas to share the hope of the gospel,
- Pray for a planned Christianity Explored course in 2014

Charis Tully - Tramore, Ireland

- Pray for Tramore Bible Church as we continue to get used to the new leadership (Ian and Daniel) and for many who are going through tough times at the moment.
- Pray for wisdom for me as I run King's Kids club, and that the Holy Spirit will use what the kids hear to impact their hearts and lives.
- Pray for a good balance between work, play and everything else.
- Pray for new ministry opportunities in schools and other places.



Sebastian & Gloria Forjan - Radovljica, Slovenia

- Pray for the Church in Radovljica- for God's protection, growth in Christ, leadership and a desire to serve.
- Pray for the LOVE & RESPECT marital course (January 2014)
- Pray for a Church Planters National Conference in February 2014 to plan and pray for the church in Slovenia. This is exciting!
- Pray about another aneurysm (2mm) which Sebastian's doctors are monitoring. Pray for healing.
- Pray for Patrik (4 1/2) , Samuel (3) and Izak (newborn) – protection over their lives and that they might know Jesus and for wisdom for us as parents.

Charlie and Tania Deering - Madrid, Spain

- Give thanks the centre is used for training, meetings and people passing through. Feedback is positive.
- Tania and Gale as they encourage the ladies each Tues in personal Bible study.
- That God will use our English clubs to plant His seeds in hearts of all who come.
- That Tania and I will: know the joy of our salvation, have a growing compassion for people, a faith that remains, and are able to make the most of the opportunities God gives.

Peter and Anna Crawford - Lisbon, Portugal

Praying into 2014

- Praise that Peter's recent bout with skin cancer has opened opportunities to share openly about God's grace.
- Please pray for Anna's role in connecting with other member care facilitators regularly. It is great when she can encourage those facing difficulties.
- Please pray for Peter as Field Ministries Coordinator - for relationships with individual Field Leaders and as a part of the International Leadership Team.
- In a small Bairro Alto bar Manuel Rainho has begun Bible study groups. Pray for the amazing openings to witness, for extra finances so that Manuel can live in the area, and for his wife Vera's health.



Jonathan & Nicola McCracken - Claremorris, Ireland

- Pray for Jonathan and another local Christian worker every Thursday on the doors in Claremorris as they visit people and share the gospel..
- Pray for a dvd to be ready before Christmas for the Claremorris kids who attended summer clubs, and also something for those who had bible studies here in the past. Pray as we build on these works and plan for the year ahead.
- Pray for co-workers to work alongside us.
- Pray for a start up fund for the ministry here and for projects requiring funds such as Bibles, literature and renting halls etc.

Stuart Rowell: 2013 - a year of multiple opportunities

Praise:

- for the privilege to serve God's Kingdom in the Balkans and beyond.
- for being prayed for over many long journeys and a reliable car.
- for the mobilisation of national missionaries in Central Europe

Prayer:

- Planning for 2014 and getting priorities organised. Preparing for the Pastors to Pastors conference in Slovenia (May/June). Wisdom in mentoring/coaching relationships. Travel in February; the European Member Care Consultation (23-27 March); Albanian Bible Institute board meetings (31 March).

Dan and Primrose – Kamenica, Kosova

- We spent Sept/Oct visiting family, friends and supporting churches in Ireland and the US, returning to Kosova in November. We thank God for all who support us.
- Praise God for the first year of the Rilindja Church (Kamenica) celebrated on October 20 by an anniversary service where about 10 visitors from the community came in. Pray God will grow this fellowship.
- We have been evaluating things we were involved in last year and making decisions about how to spend our time in the coming year. Pray we will understand God's guidance and make wise decisions.



Vimal and Louise - Germany

- Please make the Farsi Worker Project (which is ECM's Christmas Appeal) a priority. We hope to employ someone who can share the gospel with our dear brothers and sisters in the Iranian language.
- Christmas is a good time to share the love of Christ through special events - pray that those we have contact with will experience Jesus love.
- Please continue to pray for us as we juggle family life and all the different ministries we are involved in. We do want to glorify God in all these areas.

Novica and Tamara Srbulovic - Serbia

- Spiritual growth and physical health for the believers in all the Churches where we help out.
- For a suitable building in which to meet rather than our home.
- For God's guidance as we plan and organize the Camp work needing done before winter and for the work teams and camps planned in 2014.
- For God's guidance, and personal encouragement in our Ministry
- That a new International Community Bible Study will be helpful to all involved.
- We thank the Lord for our family. Pray we will be good, wise parents instructing Martha and Jacob in the way of God.

Charlie & Office

- Praise God for his continued help and faithfulness throughout this year.
- Pray we will take wise decisions in ECM Ireland as we make plans for 2014.
- Pray for new workers.
- Pray for the necessary finances to come in.

Bringing Europe to Life

MISSIONARY DISCOVERY DAY

Saturday 7th September, 2:00 - 5:00pm

Portadown Baptist Church Hall, Tavanagh Avenue
All young people from Primary 3 upwards welcome!



Discover Ireland!

St Patrick? In Ireland? In 2013? Well Yes Actually!!

There was a buzz in the halls of Thomas Street Baptist in Portadown! At 1.45pm it was all systems go - helpers at their tables ready to start colouring maps of Ireland with the children, and mark on major cities - Missionary Discoverer's Day Ireland 2013 with ECM's Charis Tully at the helm had begun.

The afternoon flew through as St Patrick, the first missionary to bring the gospel to Ireland called in for a chat and Charis brought us bang up to date as she told about her work as a missionary to the children of Tramore now, how children can be taught about Jesus in good news and homework clubs, in schools and through camps.

Then we met the Malschaert children from Holland whose parents are missionaries in Tramore and saw how life is different with the euro, speaking Irish and so few Christians to have as friends.

As St. Brigid used a cross of woven straw to remind a sick man about the Lord Jesus who died for him, the children made a cross from pipe cleaners to take home. After songs, word searches, burgers, hot dogs and ice-cream, the children gathered their St Patrick books, hand craft, rock from Tramore, a few other goodies from the church, and headed home.

ECM would like to thank Portadown Baptist Church, for the invitation to introduce children to 'Mission' and Charis, for all her hard work on the day! If you would like to have a Missionary Discoverer's event contact Charlie or Miriam at the ECM office on 028 92666044



INTRODUCING SASZKO

In modern Poland, young people are shaking off the traditions of the past and looking afresh at God.

“At a recent evangelistic summer camp organized by the Evangelical Church in Rabka, a group of teenagers – atheists, Catholics and Buddhists heard and discussed the message of the gospel for the first time in their lives,” says Saszko Nezamutdinov who has recently become a Partner in Ministry with ECM Ireland.

“A few did not have Bibles and had never read God’s Word before, which is rare in Poland and we gave them a copy,” he explains. “We pray that the seeds planted would sprout and bear fruit.”

Through ECM, God has made it possible for Saszko to spend the last three years

ministering with the church in Rabka, which is led by ECM workers Doug and Lila Groth. The 25-year-old from Ukraine speaks Polish as his second language (Russian as his third and English as his fourth!!)

As far as we know he is the first Ukrainian missionary to go to Poland since the Second World War.

“A reason why missionaries do not want to come to Poland is the fact that there will be no quick results and revival is not going to happen quickly here,” Saszko says. “It is challenging and the dynamics of mission work are extremely slow. Bearing that in mind you have to work hard to change this situation and influence the

WHO IS SASZKO?



lives of people who live in such a strong Catholic place.”

“Being Catholic in Poland is part of the national identity so changing your confession or starting to believe something else is equal to betrayal,” says Saszko, “but we try to talk to people as much as possible sharing the gospel with them through different means.”

Main picture: Saszko (far left) with teenagers at an evangelistic summer camp in Poland this summer.

Saszko has recently become a Partner in Ministry with ECM Ireland. A few years ago Stuart Rowell met a very bright, capable young Ukrainian with a desire to reach out to people around him with the Gospel. For the past 3 years he has been working with the ECM Team in Rabka (Poland) but now Saszko is entering a time of transition from short-term mission to a longer-term involvement. He recently moved to Krakow, joining the ministry of a Christian language school ‘Graceland,’ as the school’s administrator. He is also involved in ECM’s Balkan Project which seeks to send groups of Brazilian and Ukrainian missionaries to help plant churches in former Yugoslavia. In Eastern Europe, European nationals like Saszko have a unique opportunity to shine the light of Jesus into dark corners – difficult as that is.

ECM aims to invest in young Europeans like Saszko, training and empowering them in ministry. Stuart Rowell will continue to mentor and encourage Saszko but we are also looking for others to partner with him in prayer and practical support. If you are interested please contact us at the office 02892 666044.



Cricket Cake & Christ

IN: Karlsruhe Germany, at a small inner city Primary School

THE EXPERIMENT: Refugee Sports Camp

TIMESCALE: 5 days

WEATHER FORECAST: Sunny no showers

PLANNING: 1 year+

AIM: Getting Karlsruhe Churches to work together in Migrant Ministry

COST: Do as much as possible for as little as possible

ACTION PLAN.

Team Time: simply getting to know each other.

Organise/Set-up sports activities at the school: Cricket, Football, Basketball, Badminton, Wall Climbing, Rodeo Bull Machine

Transport refugees and community young people to venue.

Kitchen team to feed church teams, and cater for all young people and refugees who participate, to include drinks, snacks and cakes after each session.

Worship Band to play good contemporary songs at end of sports session

Evening speakers' themes - the 'I AM's of Christ'.

Friday Evening Grand Finish- Vimal to preach on 'Jesus said I am the Way, the Truth and the Life'.

RESULTS?

People attended from over 20 different nations - Middle East, Balkans, Asia, Africa Former USSR, Europe.

Refreshment breaks gave the chance for great conversations- some stories were heart wrenching.

Some folk attended our monthly International Service where Vimal preached - what an opportunity to introduce these new refugees to the church.

Some Persians asked for prayer, some wanted to know more of what Christianity is about, and others wanted to meet Jesus and be converted.

Vimal's sermon on the 'I AM's of Christ' shared with a majority Muslim audience.

Amazing!

FOLLOW UP AND PRAYER NEEDS?

Tamils and Persians are coming in bigger groups for a meal in our home -an opportunity to chat further with them.

Please pray for these refugees, they will transfer soon to other refugee camps away from here.

Pray that those who have been challenged by the gospel messages will find their way to churches, and find community, fellowship and God as their refuge in the midst of their struggles.

**See our Christmas Project leaflet to find out how
you can help the refugees**



In July at New Horizon ECM began promoting a cool, new prayer tool for young people called:
@PrayForEurope.

WHY IT IS NECESSARY:

We want young people to pray and to be pray-ers, so we're trying to meet them where they're at, communicating prayer needs through their accepted media methods and

giving them the ammo, so that they can join the battle to Bring Europe to Life.

WHAT IT IS:

@PrayForEurope is a Twitter feed which serves three purposes:

1. Gives young people an ongoing, broad awareness of the situation in various mission fields in Europe
2. Helps them pray effectively for Europe
3. Gives the missionaries and mission agencies access to prayer partners all across Europe

To date we have gathered around 220 followers.

HOW IT WORKS:

Followers:

Anybody who follows this feed will receive up to 2 prayer requests every day, from various countries and mission fields. (You need to be a Twitter user, and ideally have a Twitter app on your mobile device).

On receiving the feed each follower is asked to stop whatever they are doing and pray for 30 seconds interceding about the given situation or praising God for something mentioned. If people go on longer, great!

The 'bird' at New Horizon getting ready to give away wristbands, and explain to young Twitter users about the importance of united prayer for Europe.



An Update from the Kercmars in Slovenia

Life has been busy since our return in July but thankfully the children have settled fairly easily back into life in Slovenia. Rebeka is in the same year 7 class as most of her friends from before we went to NI. She still keeps in contact with her friends from Bangor and hopes to visit in the summer of 2014. Benjamin is year 3 and has had more difficulties adjusting to school here. He seemed a bit overwhelmed with the workload and still misses his class and the encouraging approach of teachers; however, he is slowly building confidence. Jakob is doing well, he still isn't too sure about speaking in Slovene, but loves being with other children.

There has been opposition to the continued work of reviving the Church in Murska Sobota from within, however your prayer support has made a big difference and the Lord has again been faithful. We are encouraged that the Presbytery meeting was held recently and they were re-introduced to the church's calling and the members are on board for the plans for this year. We are also encouraged by the arrival and zeal of another young couple, theology students from Budapest, who are doing their year of internship in church.

Prayer Points

Alen is responsible for the Men's Bible study group, a post-confirmation group and helping with the confirmation group and the catechism classes. 'Sunday Different' is also scheduled once a month. Along with the Minister, Leon Novak, Alen will be involved in pastoral care and sharing the Word of God. Lila is responsible for the Women's Bible study group and the children's work. We are both involved in ministries intended for couples and young families and are also exploring possibilities of teaching English.

In September we were invited to join the Slovenian IFES (Zves) training weekend which was very encouraging. The children got to spend the weekend with a group of children from other Christian families. They thoroughly enjoyed it. We pray for other possibilities of providing Christian influence for our children from their peer group. We were asked by Zves to help with the translation of John Lennox's 'God's Undertaker' into Slovene. John Lennox was also in Slovenia in October - pray that God will continue to use his lectures in Ljubljana.

**ECM BELIEVES
THAT CHURCH
PLANTING
IS THE BEST
STRATEGY
FOR REACH-
ING EUROPE
TODAY. WE
ARE WORK-
ING TOWARDS
PLANTING
FLOURISH-
ING, LOVING
FELLOWSHIPS
WHICH CAN
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GOSPEL WITH
WORDS AND
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EUROPE CAN
CHANGE**



ECM BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

UMAG CROATIA

5TH - 12TH APRIL 2014

The ECM Biennial Conference 2014 will be an opportunity for the whole ECM family of missionaries, partners, families, churches, sending sections and supporters to come together for an exciting programme of ministry and fellowship together.

Contact the office for further details or to confirm your place.

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