ECM LIFE

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION IRELAND
NEWSLETTER



ECM IRELAND

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION IRELAND
IS AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL, EVANGELICAL, MISSIONARY
ORGANISATION WORKING IN EUROPE.

ECM'S MISSION IS TO



EQUIP, CONNECT AND MULTIPLY FOLLOWERS OF JESUS



THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP AND



CHURCH PLANTING ACROSS EUROPE

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

LINDSAY MOORHEAD

Dear friends,

As a supporter of ECM, you'll be aware that our new mission statement is to 'Equip, connect and multiply followers of Jesus through discipleship and church planting across Europe.' In this Spring edition of ECM Life, we will read about how our missionaries and national workers are working this mission statement out in the communities that God has called them to.

Of course, this mission statement cannot be worked out without full reliance on God. God's Word, time and again, talks about how God equips His people, connects with believers and enables believers to connect with others, and multiplies His church. Let's look at each of these in turn:



Ballymacoss Avenue, Lisburn, BT28 2GX, Northern Ireland tel. +44 (0) 28 92 666 044 email. ecm.ni@ecmi.org web. www.ecmireland.org

CM Ireland is a registered charity



Equip:

I have been with ECM for nearly three years and over that period

there have been many times where I have felt insufficient for the role God has placed me in. There may have been times in your life when you have also felt the same. whether as a parent, a friend, an employee or a volunteer. In those times. God has clearly reminded me, through the Bible, that it's through my weakness that God's strength is displayed and that He is the only one who can equip us for the tasks He has called us to do - whatever that is, Just like God equipped Moses, to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, or gave Esther the courage to go before the King or gave Nehemiah the skills to lead the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. He has also promised to equip and strengthen us and the members of our missions family for the task He has called each of us to do.

One of our members, Gloria Forjan, recently completed a counselling course so that she is better equipped to disciple and care for others (read more on page 12). Praise God for people like Gloria who are helping others in this way.



Connect:

We were created for relationship not isolation (and in varying ways,

we've all experienced aspects of the latter over the past year). In fact, one of the first things God says in Genesis is, 'It is not good for man to be alone'. We were made for connection because we were created in the image of God, who is a God of relationship, of connection. Many of us haven't been able to meet face to face with our friends, family and church over the past year, and yet in spite

of this, God has been opening doors for our workers across Europe to connect with people online. For example, in Slovenia, Alen and Lila Kercmar share on page 6 about how God has been connecting with people through the Christianity Explored course that is being aired on a few different local TV stations. Please pray that many people would connect to God through this ministry and through the other innovative ways our missions family are striving to engage with others.



Multiply:

God is the one who equips, He is the one to build the connections

and in light of this, He is the one who multiplies followers of Jesus.

On page 4 we read about the work God is doing through the Gilkinson family in Spain. Give thanks, that even with all the current limitations, God is doing a work in the lives of the young people who live there and as a result, they are seeing the church multiply as young people turn to Christ.

Give thanks for George Christoforides, who is helping the Greek Bible College set up a reliable internet network so that the students can connect together and continue their studies online. This project is all about equipping the students so that they can go out and disciple others with God's Word and thus multiply the church. To find out more about how you can support this project go to page 17.

There has been much to be discouraged about in the last year but, as you read stories of our members equipping, connecting and multiplying, I pray that you will be encouraged. **Lindsay**



David, Samantha, Maria and Luca Gilkinson are from Northern Ireland but have been living in Spain for the last 2 years.

We spent just over a year in Castellón in the Valencia region, adapting to living in Spain and learning Spanish, before moving in May 2020 to work with Salou Evangelical Church in the Tarragona region. Currently, David serves as the Associate Pastor, with the desire to disciple young people in the church. In light of ECM's new mission statement, we have seen God working in these ways...



Equip

Although the life change and move to Spain was daunting,

we can see how God has **EQUIPPED** us in many ways for our time here, especially having been involved in short term mission teams for over ten years. In the years prior to moving, God was working within us to see the need for more gospel workers in Spain. God **EQUIPPED** us with opportunities to develop skills useful for pastoring young people. This was especially true for David's work in churches and with a youth discipleship organisation in Northern Ireland, being trained and learning from others along the way.



Connect

CONNECTING with many people, churches and organisations

in Northern Ireland, was a great source of support and encouragement as we moved to Spain. We have now found great encouragement from partnering with other churches and organisations in Spain. Most notably, taking a group of 14 young people



to a 'Word of Life' camp in central Spain last summer. This **CONNECTING** and partnering provided a superb experience for the young people, especially during a year of real challenge for them. It also resulted in young people responding to being transformed by God, with six giving their lives to Jesus for the first time. We desire to keep connecting and partnering with others in the gospel, especially in the form of summer mission teams to and from Northern Ireland.

ر ش ش

Multiply

Settling into life here, building relationships and beginning

ministry, during a global pandemic has been challenging, But, God has been our help and He has continued to work. Much of the youth ministry taking place has been via Zoom, which is not ideal. However, there has still been growth within the group, as they study an overview of the Bible together and find some support within this community. When restrictions have permitted, the group has been able to meet in person and it has had record numbers of more than 30 young people. This is a real celebration point, especially for a church in Spain. The development of young leaders has been happening too, with the creation of a youth worship group and more participation and

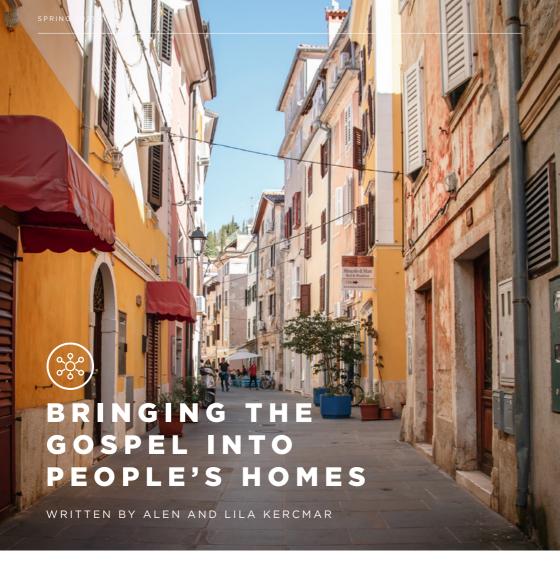
responsibility from them within meetings. It's been our joy to see them grow and grow.

Praise God that despite the challenges of this current time, our inadequacies as new missionaries, new Spanish speakers and the busyness of having a young family, God has been working within the church here and within these special young people's lives. Our prayer is that God will continue to **EQUIP** us, **CONNECT** us and that we will see **MULTIPLICATION** in every way, in this part of Spain.



More news from Spain

Congratulations to Aislinn Duffy on her recent engagement. Aislinn met her fiancé Berni while doing student ministry in Spain. They plan to get married later this year. Thank God for bringing these two together and pray for their future marriage and ministry.





Alen and Lila Kercmar have been working in Slovenia for a number of years. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, God has opened many new doors for the gospel.





"Pray for openness and working out of details with other potential TV stations."

We love to **CONNECT.** We work towards building networks, so that God's resources in one place can extend His kingdom in another. We encourage people to work in teams so that their ministries can have a greater impact. Lastly, we collaborate and partner, as an expression of the church's unity in Christ.

We are very thankful for the many opportunities that have come about, even through this time of social distancing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the start, it might have seemed that this was an obstacle, however the Lord is at work and opening doors so that the gospel might go forward. Praise the Lord!

One door has opened through the generous response from Christianity Explored Ministries, who have given us the rights to use the texts from the 10-week Christianity Explored (CE) video course. We have divided the course into 27 shorter talks. The talks have been filmed in different locations throughout the region of Prekmurje, with different people re-telling the content of

the CE videos. Representatives from the Lutheran Church, the Pentecostal Church and the Evangelical Union in Slovenia were involved in recording the talks, which is in itself an expression of the church's unity in Christ and partnership in the gospel. The videos were successfully launched during the second week of February.

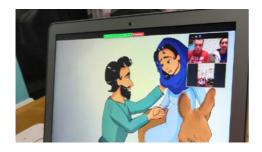
Two local television companies in the Prekmurje region (north-eastern part of Slovenia), are broadcasting the course; one in the morning and one in the evening time (covering nearly 115,000 people). Another local TV station in the central part of Slovenia (Gorenjska region, which has over 200,000 people living there) has expressed an interest to broadcast. Pray for people to hear and respond to the gospel. Pray for openness and working out of details with other potential TV stations.

Give thanks that the gospel is being brought into people's homes because God's people are **CONNECTING** and coming together to bring impact for His glory.





Jonathan and Nicola McCracken continue to work in the heart of the west of Ireland, Claremorris.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much has changed over the past year for all of us. Government restrictions, amongst other things, has meant that being close to people feels like something we used to do, but can't do anymore. When will things change? No one can say for sure.

In the Old Testament book that bears his name, Habakkuk is wondering why God doesn't do something in the midst of His people's increasing waywardness from Him. "How long, O Lord, must I call for help?" Habakkuk isn't stuck in the middle of a world-wide virus, like we are now, but in a similar way, he wants to see things changed for the better. He wants the injustice in his land to stop, along with the ungodliness and idolatry.

As church-planters in Claremorris in Co. Mayo, we often pray these days for an end to the virus but, even more importantly, for a spiritual change in the nation and for lives to be transformed by the power of God. When will that happen? We cannot say, but that doesn't mean we have no answer or hope.

In the book of Habakkuk, the Lord answered the prophet by saying that an answer would come but, in the meantime, "the righteous will live by his faith...." (2:4).

Our faith in Claremorris tells us to keep **CONNECTING** with people by sharing His Word. It is a blessing these days to have a wealth of technology available to be able to keep our church meetings going, although, we certainly miss the personal contact with each other.

God's answer to Habakkuk reminds us to keep living by our faith and leave the answers to Him.

Just recently, Andy and Rachel Millar have been doing Friday night Zoom meetings with the two little sisters who come to our church. For around thirty minutes, the girls hear a Bible message and sing fun songs. On Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, we have also been able to meet together to encourage one another in day to day life, share from a Bible passage and pray for one another. Thankfully, local radio enables weekly Bible reflections to be broadcast and the internet enables **CONNECTIONS** with people via Facebook and YouTube videos. These broadcasts and videos have been listened to and watched by people from different parts of Ireland and beyond.

As we seek to make disciples in the West of Ireland, God's answer to Habakkuk reminds us to keep living by our faith and leave the answers to Him. This is an encouragement in days when we live at a distance to others, yet can live closely with God, wherever we are.





Several people want to be baptised

Austria

Three of the youth group joined ECM, another took over the regional youth ministry and another is a missionary in South America.

Spain

Six young people decided to follow Jesus at camp

God is still in the process of transforming lives throughout Europe. He is doing this through many people, in many ways.

Serbia

Through sickness in hospital, a missionary was able to witness and give Christian literature to patients and medical staff



An Alpha course sowed the seed in someone's heart that led to a conviction of sin, a following of Christ, resulting in a new church member.

God is still calling people to serve Him in Europe. The harvest is plentiful, and the labourers are few, but praise God that people are being sent to this mission field.



A lady who wouldn't ever go to church is now reading the Bible and asking questions

Ukraine

The Internet Evangelism ministry is helping many people come closer to God



Bosnia & Herzegovina

Ten young parents are attending an Alpha Course where God is working

What is God doing in your heart now? Could He be calling you to serve Him in Europe? Or could He be calling you to shine for Him where you are? "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" Matthew 5:16



A DECADE OF FAITHFULNESS

WRITTEN BY SEBASTIAN AND GLORIA FORJAN





Sebastian and Gloria Forjan are approaching their 10th Church Anniversary in Slovenia in January 2022.

We have experienced 10 years of God's faithfulness, His redemptive work, and His goodness to us. There are so many stories that we could share; stories of individuals from our church hearing and responding to the Lord, our many outreach events, Bible study groups and having various guests in our home. We are thankful to God for His calling on our lives and making it possible for our family to fully devote our time to ministry in Radovljica. We are thankful

for the people who faithfully give of their finances, time and support us through prayer, as we continue to minister here.

At the end of last year, Gloria completed a counselling course which was run by the American Bible Society, called 'Healing the Wounds of Trauma'. As a result of this, Gloria became a trained facilitator which has led to new opportunities in discipleship and reaching out to **CONNECT** with people



within our region. Acts 20:28 encourages the church to help those who are suffering, as well as being salt and light in the world (Matthew 5).

Many passages in the Bible talk about how God's people will suffer. The course is helpful in **EQUIPPING** church leaders to better help people who have experienced difficult circumstances and have been wounded by various things in their lives. The Bible reminds us that God cares for people and can heal the wounds of our hearts. It isn't always about changing our circumstances so that we might live comfortable, happy lives, but rather, inviting the Lord into our circumstances and finding peace and joy in Him. When we experience God's comfort. it enables us to comfort others, with the same comfort that we have received (2 Corinthians 1:4).

We may not know what the future holds and many people, even from within the church, have felt the stress this brings. Gloria felt called by the Lord to invite ladies from within and outside the church, to take part in the course with her. It has been really



encouraging that many have responded and engage weekly through Google Meet sessions, where they work through the lessons together. The response has been fantastic, with many saving how it has helped them to understand suffering in a new way. This has opened up opportunities for some to share more of their troubles. with Gloria and given her an opportunity to speak truth into their lives. We have a dear friend, who would never have walked into a church building, but she has committed to do this course. Through this, she has been reading the Bible for the first time and asking great guestions about God, the meaning of life and the end times.

Gloria is **EQUIPPING** two ladies who are interested in trauma training, so that they can **MULTIPLY** the work in their own communities. We want to be skilled at helping people who are suffering and are very thankful for this opportunity.

Praise God with us for all the opportunities this has already brought and pray for more doors to open.



PRAYING OUR WAY IN ATHENS

WRITTEN BY PETER AND ANNA CRAWFORD



Peter and Anna Crawford worked in Lisbon, Portugal for 13 years and in July 2020, they moved to Athens, Greece.

When we first arrived in Lisbon to be part of a new church plant, we planned a prayer walk around the area we were living in, and invited friends to join us. We decided that we should do the same for our new local area in Greece. Come along with us...

1. Step out of Cholargos Metro station (20 mins from Athens centre) into the commercial bustle of Mesageion Avenue, one of the main arteries out of the city toward the Airport and the Aegean coast.

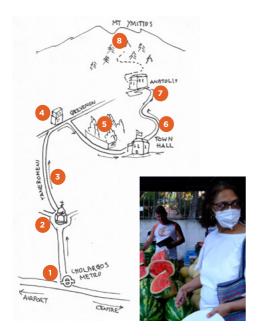
Pray for the economy of our city, having just recovered from the economic crisis, and now reeling from the effects of the pandemic.

2. Walk up Faneromeni into the suburb of Cholargos, stopping next at the impressive Greek Orthodox Church, set in the middle of a large roundabout. In an increasingly secular Greece, the church still dominates the life and culture of the community.





Pray for our engagement with local residents and openings in conversations to talk about Jesus.



3. Faneromeni hosts the weekly "Laiki" (country market, which is typically found all over Greece). Coming here on Mondays. we have had our first interactions in Greek - 'how much?' 'what are those called?' all while trying to remember our numbers.



Pray that our communication in Greek would improve.

4. 10 minutes up the hill brings us to George and Luciana's apartment on Grevenon. This is where it all began for us, three years ago. when we were invited to stav with them on occasional visits to Greece.



Pray for our ECM team and the small community of believers who live in this area. Pray for Luciana's ministry

with a Roma community and George's as he provides wifi and internet services to a wide range of Christian ministries.

5. We go through a park, which is closed up and empty, with just a few groups of teenagers trying to socialise now that their schooling is online, until we reach Cholargos Town Hall.



Pray for local authorities and for opportunities to bless our local area in practical ways.

6. One of the main schools for this district is found beside it. Probably among the laughing crowd in the playground are David and Sarah's two kids. They are a Christian family in the area we have come to know.



Pray for young Christian families. that we would find ways to support and encourage them. (Peter

currently meets with David weekly for Greek conversation.)

7. On the way to our own apartment, we pass the 'safe house', though (for obvious reasons) we don't know exactly where it is.



Pray for those whose lives have been impacted by the refugee crisis in Greece, especially for the women cared for here, having been rescued from sex traffickers in the city.

8. Finally we reach Anatolis 85, where we live, but before we go inside, let's take a quick walk further up the hill to get an amazing view of this great city of 3 million people, reaching right down to the hill of the Acropolis and on to the sea at Piraeus.



Pray for God's blessing on this place we now call home.

UPDATE FROM OUR
WORKERS IN KOSOVO

JOY AT CHRISTMAS

Thank you to everyone who prayed and donated towards the Kosovo Christmas Appeal.

In a society where Christmas is only celebrated by a few, it's always a special time of year to be able to share the gospel story with our friends. It's a public holiday where schools and institutions are closed, but in general, it's just another day. People are often aware of the trappings of Christmas, but most people are unaware of why it brings us so much joy to celebrate this day and why we want to share this joy with others.

Last September, when we started thinking about Christmas, we tried to anticipate what Covid-19 restrictions might be in place by then. We realised that only the extreme lockdown of last spring, would prevent us from at least knocking on the garden gates of our friends, to hand over a plate of Christmas treats and small gifts for their children. So, the ECM Ireland Christmas Appeal was launched, a dream of being able to buy gifts for 80-90 children who we know personally and the opportunity to speak of God's greatest gift to us.

The response to this appeal was much greater than we had anticipated, so much



so that 157 Albanian, Roma, and Serb children received gifts and over 90 of them attended parties in groups of 10-12. The 90-minute parties flew by, with socially-distanced games and challenges, carefully prepared crafts, paper bags of snacks, the Christmas story of hope for a hurting world, and finally a personalised gift bag to take home for each child and any younger siblings at home. We brought the rest of the gifts to the homes of friends around the community, stopping for a short time at each door to have a chat and explain why we were there.

The gifts themselves may not last long, nor carry any specific meaning of Christmas, but our prayer is that the love and generosity of those who gave financially to buy the gifts will have been significant, and that the spoken message of Christmas that accompanied the gifts will be life-changing in this town. We are thankful for each person who contributed, and to all who prayed for us over the Christmas period, allowing us to bring smiles behind the face-masks and joy to the hearts of young people in our town.



PROJECT

THE GREEK BIBLE COLLEGE

The Greek Bible College is based in Athens and is a theological institution serving Greek evangelical churches. Their aim is to educate and equip students through a high level of academic teaching, practical ministry opportunities and dynamic character formation within a Christian student-teacher community.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, all educational institutions have been forced to conduct teaching remotely, making all students totally reliant on internet access. However, at the Greek Bible College, online teaching has not been possible because their internet network has depreciated and is unreliable. George Christoforides, one of our Associate Members working in Greece, studied at the college from 2013-2014, and he has offered to use his IT skills to help redesign the network from the ground up, from Wi-Fi access points to wiring and structured cabling. Whilst the college

would love to be able to fund all of this project, they are only in the position to fund a quarter of it at this stage, with George doing some of the less costly tasks until they reach their funding target of £6320.

This project will make a huge difference in helping students to attend their classes online, aiding international students to connect with family, allowing classes to be taught virtually and enabling staff to function more efficiently. It also supports ECM Greece's strategic aim which is to help develop the next generation of leaders for evangelical churches in Greece.

If you would like to partner with us and donate towards this project, please fill out the form at the back of the magazine and post it to the ECM Ireland office or you can donate online by going to

give.net/GreekBibleCollegeProject

Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'



SHARE CHRIST'S LOVE

Europe desperately needs to know the love of God. As Charles Swindoll said: "Whatever we do, we must not treat the Great Commission like it's the Great Suggestion." So what can you do to 'Equip, Connect and Multiply followers of Jesus' in the challenging mission field of Europe? Despite many cynical minds and hearts having hardened to the gospel, there is still hope. God can use everything from your heartfelt prayer to your obedience to His call into service.



Pray

Pray for all of our missionaries and ministries in Europe. Two of our prayer groups are currently meeting on Zoom, so if you would like to join in, please get in touch.



Give

Maybe as you've read through ECM Life, you've been challenged to give to a missionary or a project. You can do this using the form on the back pages or online at ecmireland.org/give



Go

Europe needs Jesus and people willing to be His vessels that bring the hope of the gospel. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of service with ECM, please get in touch with us via social media or email.

LEAVING A LEGACY



If you are willing to leave a gift to ECM in your will, there are three main ways to do so:

1. Residuary gift:

a share (or all) of what remains of the value of your estate once your family and friends have been dealt with. This has the advantage of staying the same over time and therefore your will won't need to change to keep up with inflation.

2. Pecuniary gift:

a specific amount of money.

3. Specific gift:

a named item such as a piece of art or jewellery.

If you want to leave a gift to ECM, or want to know more about doing so, please tick the appropriate box on the response form.

Thank you for investing in ongoing ministry in Europe!

GIVING TO ECM IRELAND

Name:		
Address:		
Postcode:		
Telephone:		
•		
Email:		
Please send me:		
☐ ECM Life (twice yearly)		□ email
☐ ECM's monthly prayer diary		□ email
☐ Eurolink (ECM Ireland monthly prayer resource)	⊔ post	□ email
Signature:		
SINGLE GIFT DONAT	ION	
□ £5 □ £15 □ £30 □ £50 Other £		
□ Euros Amount €		
☐ For use where most needed:		
☐ Towards the work of:		
☐ Greek Bible College Project		
☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to ECM Ireland		
□ I do not require an acknowledgment.		
You can also donate on line		
www.ecmireland.org/giv	'e	
	aite	taid it
GIFT AID DECLARATION I wish to gift aid to ECM this and any gift I have giv		
until further notice. I confirm I have paid or will pay an and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 1	amount of I	ncome Tax
equal to the amount of tax that all the charities that I		
my gifts for that tax year.		
Full name:		
Signature:	Date:	

REGULAR GIVING \square For use where most needed: ☐ Towards the work of: STANDING ORDER DETAILS Bank name: Bank address: Postcode: Account holder: Account no: Sort code: Please deduct (amount in words) pounds from my account on | | / | | / | and then each ☐ Month ☐ Quarter ☐ Year (tick one) until further notice. This standing order (tick as appropiate)... ☐ Replaces ☐ Does not replace an existing standing order to ECM Pay this sum to: European Christian Mission Ireland A/C: 40615008 Sort Code: 98 09 60 Ballymacoss Avenue, Lisburn BT28 2GX Signature: Date: For bank use only: Paying bank please ensure all backdated payments are made and the following reference number is quoted with all payments. Reference No. LEGACY GIVING ☐ I have included ECM in my will. ☐ I would like to consider including ECM in my will. giftaid it GIFT AID DECLARATION I wish to gift aid to ECM this and any gift I have given in the last four years. until further notice. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. Full name: Signature: Date:

PRAYER



Thank God for:

- How He is continuing to work, in the midst of COVID-19
- New innovative ways of sharing the gospel
- Opportunities to equip, connect and multiply

Pray for:

- New candidates who are interested in serving with ECM
- The health of field workers
- The Greek Bible College project to be completed soon and be a blessing to many



ECM Ireland

Ballymacoss Avenue, Lisburn, BT28 2GX, Northern Ireland

tel. +44 (0) 28 92 666 044 email. ecm.ni@ecmi.org web. www.ecmireland.org Charity no. 102665