

ECM NEWS

..... SPRING 2023



**ECM'S VALUES
AND THE GREAT COMMISSION P4**

FOCUS ON BULGARIA P8

2022 REPORT P10



European Christian Mission

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION

Europe needs Jesus, now more than ever. A hundred years ago 70% of the world's Christians lived in Europe but it now has the **smallest number of committed Christ followers in the world.**

European Christian Mission's vision is to see the peoples of **Europe transformed in the name of Jesus Christ.** Our workers partner with local believers to **Equip, Connect and Multiply** followers of Jesus through disciple making and church planting across Europe.

Can you partner with us?
Can you Go, Pray or Give?
Visit ecmnewzealand.org.

New Zealand

info@ecmnewzealand.org
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PO Box 10015
The Wood, Nelson 7047

European Christian Mission New Zealand (NZBN 9429042701194) is a charitable trust, registered with the New Zealand Charities Services (CC31898).

ECM News is a quarterly publication produced by ECM New Zealand.

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For information and feedback, email info@ecmnewzealand.org

.... GETTING TO KNOW A

MISSIONARY CANDIDATE



LIZ PREOTESEA-WAGNER

Candidate for Romania

Liz has felt a lifelong calling to the people of România. As she looks back on this, she can see God's hand at work in the people who came into her path, in her church, and even in the languages she learned at high school.

Having served in România for a nearly five-year stint, she and her husband, Alex, moved back to New Zealand for a season of preparation. They are training at Eastwest College of Intercultural Studies and plan, Lord willing, to head to Cernavoda, România in early 2024, with their two children (Caleb and Luka).

Liz has a passion for supporting mothers and babies and is training to become a lactation consultant. Together, Alex and Liz's vision is to be used by God to speak into the lives of young people and families, guiding them away from trafficking and empowering them to have transformed lives.

Interested in serving in Europe?
Please email serve@ecmnewzealand.org



EDITORIAL

A TIME FOR REST

As I write this editorial, I am clearing my desk ready to go on a week-long holiday. Holidays are an essential time for me to rest and rejuvenate, given I often get caught up in the busyness of running ECM NZ. I need to actively plan for and guard my times of rest and recreation.

When God rested on the seventh day, he set a precedent for the importance of taking time to rest and reflect. Jesus also emphasised its importance when he said, "Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

This holiday will be a time to take a break from my busy schedule and reflect on the blessings of life. It will be an opportunity

for me to spend quality time with the Lord, with Murray and some friends; a time to recharge my batteries, while enjoying the beauty of God's creation.

This will be an opportunity to focus on ECM's value of UP—re-orienting my life towards God, and IN—loving and caring for others. It will be a time to appreciate my blessings and connect with God in a new and meaningful way.

In this magazine we reflect on how much God has blessed the growth of ECM NZ, as well as exploring several opportunities for service in Europe. Please take time to dwell on, and pray deeply for the prayer points for our candidates.



Féy Cotter
Editor

ECM'S VALUES AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

Féy Cotter has been the National Director for ECM NZ since 2022 and has also served in Albania for 14 years.



“
The Great Commission is not a call to go it alone...”

The Great Commission is a call to action for all Christians given by Jesus, to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20). This commandment is for every Christian who seeks to follow Jesus. It means sharing the good news of salvation with our families, our neighbours, with the world, to give people the opportunity to know, and have a relationship with God.

At ECM, we believe in the importance of making disciples, and we strive to do this by living it out in our daily lives through our values of UP, IN, OUT, and TOGETHER.

The first value of ECM is UP – oriented to God. This value is expressed through courageous faith, prayer, and a love for God's word, the Bible. The Great Commission is a call to faith and trust in God's power and authority. As Christians, we are called to have the courage to step out in faith and take risks, to do what

God has called us to do. We must be people of prayer, both individually and as a community, as we seek God's guidance and direction. The Bible is our source of wisdom and truth. We must study it, and understand it, because it is through the Bible that we come to know God through his Son Jesus, and then we can model our lives on him.

The second value of ECM is IN – committed to each other. This value is expressed through integrity and mutually respectful and caring relationships. The Great Commission is not a call to go it alone. We are called to be part of a community of believers who support and encourage one another. We strive to be people of integrity, living out our faith in a way that is consistent with our words; being respectful and caring towards one another, and recognising that we are all members of the same body of Christ.

The third value of ECM is OUT – focused on others. The Great

Commission calls us to go out and make disciples of all nations. At ECM, we are focused on reaching out to those who do not yet know Christ, sharing the good news of the gospel with them, and then discipling new believers to establish new communities of Jesus-followers in Europe. Europe is a mission field, with many people who have not yet heard the gospel. We seek to share the love of Christ with those who are far from God, and to establish new communities of believers who can continue to share the good news with others.

The final value of ECM is TOGETHER – committed to partnerships. This value is expressed through working and learning together. At ECM, we are committed to working and learning together



“ The gospel is largely unknown in Europe

with other organisations and churches to achieve our mission. We recognize that we cannot do this work on our own, but that we need the support and collaboration of others to make a lasting impact.

Did you know that despite having a rich Christian heritage, Europe is home to many unreached people groups who have not yet heard the gospel? These groups often come from countries with a strong secular culture and have little exposure to Christianity. Many either have negative perceptions of Christianity or they are completely unaware of the message of the gospel and who Jesus is. In many places the Good News of Jesus is widely unknown, distorted or misunderstood, and the idea of God and faith is often dismissed or ignored. Some of these groups include immigrants and refugees, Roma communities, people living in rural areas or in former communist countries.

By comparison, Nigeria has around four times more Christ followers than Europe, but with about one quarter of the population size.

Europe needs the gospel – to know Jesus. While there are many challenges in sharing the message of Jesus, we want people to know him and to experience his love and grace through our witness. We are motivated by our love for God and for people, and by the desire to see lives transformed by the power of the gospel.

Making disciples requires courage, faith, and perseverance. It requires us to step out of our comfort zones and to reach out to people who may be different from us. It requires us to be patient and to trust in God’s timing.

The good news is, we are not alone in this mission. Jesus promised to be with us always, even to the end of the age. He has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us and to give us the strength we need to fulfil the Great Commission.

How will you respond?


We need people to participate in this mission with us. We believe that everyone has a role to play in fulfilling the Great Commission, whether through giving, going, or

praying. We invite you to consider how you can be a part of this mission, whether by supporting ECM financially, volunteering your time, or committing to pray for our work. Together, we can make a difference in Europe and around the world.

The Great Commission is a call to action for all believers to share the good news of Jesus Christ with the world and make disciples.

At ECM, we are committed to living out this mission through our values of UP, IN, OUT, and TOGETHER. We believe that the saving power of Jesus is unknown in many parts of Europe and that it is essential to share the story of Jesus wisely with those who don’t know about him, and then to carefully disciple those who do choose to follow Jesus.

 <p>UP Godly Life Courageous faith, prayer, the Bible</p>	 <p>IN Loving Relationships Love, integrity, and mutual respect</p>
 <p>OUT Missional Life Contextual, holistic and creative mission</p>	 <p>TOGETHER Effective Partnerships Working with others. within ECM and outside</p>



PLEASE PRAY

- Pray that all ECM missionaries will live by our values of Up, In, Out and Together.
- Pray for more workers for the harvest in Europe.

Pray for

BULGARIA



Located in southeastern Europe, between Romania and Greece, Bulgaria borders the Black Sea. It could be described as a post-Ottoman, post-communist and mostly culturally Orthodox country. There is a lack of trust towards outsiders, and a blindness to racism and discrimination, especially towards the minority Roma and Muslim populations. Within the national churches, real whole-life discipleship is rare.



PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the local church that it would grow and be well-equipped to be effective disciple makers.
- Pray that Bulgarians would be able resist the atheism and superstition at work in the dominant culture, and instead come to know the true Saviour.
- Pray for the Blackwells and Todorovs as they seek to equip, connect and multiply the local church.



KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Faithful mature believers who can walk alongside national workers, discipling them and teaching them to disciple others.



POPULATION
6.69M*



152 births per day



372 deaths per day



-13 migrations per day

The largely ageing Bulgarian population has seen a steady decline as many of the younger generation continue to emigrate.

*Population estimates based on interpolation of data from World Population Prospects.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Five hundred years of Ottoman occupation, and 45 years of communist rule had a substantial impact on both Bulgarian mindset and on the church. The dominant, and still reasonably influential Bulgarian Orthodox church generally views the Protestant church with suspicion.

RELIGION



Orthodox Christian
80%

Only 5% of Orthodox believers attend church regularly.

Christ followers make up only 1.9% of the Bulgarian population

Muslim 12%

Non Religious
8%



Sofia

Burgas

UNREACHED PEOPLE

629,000 (9.4%)

"Unreached" people have no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate resources to evangelise their people group.

CHURCHES



Protestant churches (mostly Pentecostal Roma) are growing, but whilst they appear spiritually fervent, discipleship is limited, and pastors struggle to see transformation in all areas of life. Indeed, real whole-life discipleship is rare in Bulgarian churches. Partnership between Roma and non-Roma churches is almost non-existent.

BELIEFS IN BULGARIA

Belief in God 30%

No belief in God 17%

Belief in hell 41%

Belief in heaven 35%

ECM MINISTRY

ECM has two couples working in the country. Andrew and Kate Blackwell (pictured) and their family serve in the capital, Sofia. They are seeking to walk alongside those they lead, both in the local (international) church and ECM.

Dimitrie and Maria Todorov, Bulgarian nationals, work with New Hope International in Burgas with a particular vision for evangelism, discipleship and social action within Eastern Europe.

Sources: ecmi.org, joshuaproject.net, pewresearch.org, worldpopulationreview.com, cia.gov, operationworld.org, worldometers.info, timesofmalta.com

TO FIND OUT MORE, CONTACT THE ECM OFFICE FOR OUR BULGARIA BROCHURE



ECM IN NEW ZEALAND IN 2022

EQUIP CONNECT MULTIPLY

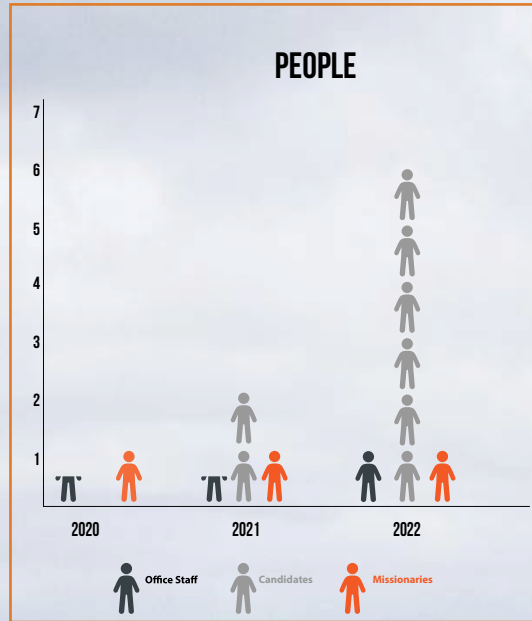
Followers of Jesus through discipleship and church planting across Europe

NZ Mission Education and Advocacy



Workers & Projects in Europe

Missionary & Candidate Recruitment, Support and Care



Thank you!

For the past five years, mission-minded Kiwis have grown in their awareness of the spiritual needs in Europe and have given generously to what God is doing.

We have prayed for fruitfulness, and over the past five years we have:

- Increased in staff hours and candidates preparing to 'go'
- Over 30 new monthly Partners in Prayer
- 75 new donors
- Increased donations by 433%
- Raised funds for projects in Romania, Croatia, Germany, Greece, and Ukraine
- Sent nearly \$30,000 to the Ukraine Crisis Fund

We are so encouraged, and so grateful for your continued support.

MISSION OPS

DO YOU SEEK TO SERVE THE GOSPEL NEEDS OF EUROPE?



VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT NEW ZEALAND

We are looking for someone to volunteer to work alongside the ECM NZ director. Most weeks you will only be asked to help for up to five hours a week, focusing on a variety of administrative tasks. Occasionally there will be busier weeks where more hours may be required. Your support is invaluable to help ECM grow in NZ. With sufficient growth in the organisation, this could likely become a paid position.

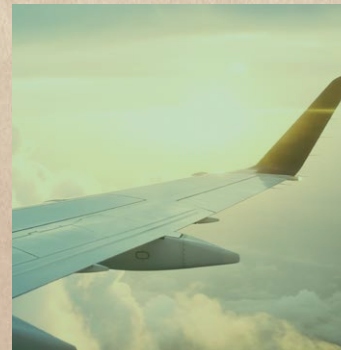
ecmnewzealand.org/admin-support-volunteer



MAINTENANCE WORKER POZOBLANCO, SPAIN

ECM is looking for pioneering people who are highly relational and have skills and experience in building friendships, evangelism and discipleship. Relevant theological education is required for this role along with the ability to work within a transcultural team, with the aim of reaching the younger generation in Spain who have lost connection with their Christian heritage. Spanish fluency is required or a willingness to learn the language.

ecmnewzealand.org/maintenance-worker-at-rehabilitation-centre



ARE YOU PLANNING A TRIP TO EUROPE?

Why not take the opportunity to connect with local missionaries during your travels? Spending time with a missionary host for 2-3 nights is a unique and fulfilling experience that will allow you to gain a deeper understanding of their work, culture, and faith. You'll have the chance to see a corner of Europe through the eyes of someone who has dedicated their life to serving others and you will learn about their experiences and challenges.

Email us with your trip details to submit an expression of interest at info@ecmnewzealand.org

To find out more about any of these opportunities, please email us at serve@ecmnewzealand.org



**ROSS AND SHONA
MCGAUGHRAN**
CANDIDATES FOR AUSTRIA

We are settling into life as a family of 4, and have enjoyed a few months in the same place, partnering with Levin Baptist church and a few churches in Palmerston North. In October we will begin one last three-month partnership whirlwind to Auckland, Dubbo and Sydney, with the aim that at the beginning of December we can book flights to Austria for late-January. Please join with us in seeking God's full provision of partnership; relationally, prayerfully and financially in order to go to the unreached people of Europe in 2024.

Please pray:

- Pray for us as we enjoy the new life of Bub and all that brings, and that we might parent both our children wisely and faithfully.
- Pray for God's security and stability amidst another period of transitions.
- Pray we would know our home is in Heaven, and we are just travelers wandering through with the best news ever.



**ALEX AND LIZ
PREOTESEA-WAGNER**
CANDIDATES FOR ROMANIA

We are grateful for God's guidance during this time at Eastwest College, and how he is teaching and shaping us. We have been reminded lately of the privilege it is to have been called into God's story of redemption. As we prepare to return to Romania (in early 2024), there are some big jobs that we need to do, but also we need soft hearts to see God's transforming work in our own lives.

We'd appreciate prayer for:

- These final few months as many things need to come together.
- Our children's (Luca, 2 and Caleb, 6) hearts and minds as they prepare for big life changes.
- Our course load of final assignments, leading up to graduation early December.



CAREN L
PREPARING TO RETURN TO GERMANY

I have started studying for my specialty exams in emergency medicine. The exams are next year in May, then more in August. The workload on top of full time work is hard.

Please pray:

- Pray for God's inspiration, preparation and support as I study, and that God would help me carry the burden and see the finish line.
- Pray for guidance as I seek to return to Europe in some capacity.
- Pray for me as I recover from thyroid surgery and that I wouldn't need Thyroid replacement medications.



ECM NEW ZEALAND

The growth in ECM NZ over the past five years is a cause for celebration. We have prayed for an increase in personnel on the field (and preparing to go) people committed to pray and finances for personnel and projects. Please celebrate with us as we reflect on what God has done over the past five years.

Please pray for:

- To live lives oriented to God: courageous faith, prayer and the Bible.
- To be committed to each other: integrity and mutually respectful and caring.
- To focus on others: establishing new communities of Jesus followers.
- To work together with other partners: working and learning together.



WHAT'S ON MATT'S MIND?

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Matt.9:37-38)

We are on a mission to answer the problem Jesus commanded us to pray about, first of all—that there is a great harvest with few harvest workers. In dependence on the Lord of the harvest, ECM obviously wants to multiply the number of Christ-followers working in the European harvest field, wherever they might come from.

To reach the continent of Europe, we need to think about the practical problem of how to reach out to literally hundreds of millions of people who have some allegiance to, or familiarity with, Christianity but do not understand its heart—the person and work of Jesus. Yet we must also increasingly consider how we also reach the growing numbers of non-religious and Muslims.

How do Europe's churches and believers, supported by missionary organisations like ECM, do that?

First, we must be committed to sending more cross-cultural workers. We are therefore praying for an annual increase in people from New Zealand who are willing to join the harvest field in Europe. We need God's wisdom and blessing to be an effective sending organisation.

"Reaching out to the millions of people who do not understand the person and work of Jesus."

But this is only part of the picture.

ECM is increasingly realising that we need to complement the traditional missionary by also multiplying the number of national or 'first culture' workers as well. Through ECM, other agencies, and the national church working together, we are praying for a multiplication of Europeans reaching Europeans. ECM is praying for an additional 100 first culture workers by 2030.

The clear implication of Jesus' words in the verse above is

that to multiply followers of Jesus in Europe, we first need to multiply workers for him. This is why the mathematical term 'multiply' has made it into ECM's mission statement! There are simply not enough Christ followers in Europe at present to effectively reach the entire continent.

We count on your partnership. How might you partner with us to multiply followers and harvest workers for Europe? Would you start by praying faithfully for more cross-cultural and first culture workers for Europe?



Matt George
Trustee for ECM NZ

QUICK SNIPPETS



■ WELCOME TO THE WORLD!

Ross and Shona welcomed their new daughter to the world on the 18th July after an emergency cesarean. Mum and baby K are doing well.

■ ALBUM PROJECT | BERLIN

Bringing the gospel to the arts scene in Berlin.



Whom have I in heaven but you? is an album project by Ali and Rich, pastors and musicians seeking to bring the gospel to people in the city of Berlin. The songs are mostly modern, jazz inspired interpretations of the Psalms, sung in both English and German.

Their desire is that the beauty and power of God's word be heard by many and that some may hear the gospel and come to faith.

They hope to raise €8,255 which will cover musicians fees, recording studio fees, mixing, mastering and promotion.

For **more information** or **to give** to this project head to ecmnewzealand.org/albumprojectberlin or scan the QR code.



YES, I want to be part of changing EUROPE

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Postcode: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

I/We would like to:

Receive **news and updates** from ECM:

Email Post

Become a **Partner in Prayer** and receive monthly prayer fuel by email

Receive information about **including ECM in my will**

Talk to a **mobiliser** about serving in Europe

Support by **financially** giving \$ _____

Fortnightly Monthly Quarterly Yearly One-off

Designate my gift to:

Specific worker/project: _____

General Funds Where Most Needed

Please acknowledge my gift:

Receipt (email only) Annual Statement via Email Post

No thanks

I have given by **Direct Deposit**:

Direct Deposit

European Christian Mission
 New Zealand: 01-0288-0005475-00

Please include your initial, surname and the name of the missionary/project you are donating to.

I/we would like to give by **Credit card**:

Credit card Visa/Mastercard

Name on card: _____

Card number:

Expiry: / CVV:

I authorise ECM to debit my nominated credit card for the above amount and frequency.

Signature: _____

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT

ecm

Here are some ways you
can partner with us in
Christ's mission
in Europe!



Pray for

ALBANIA

Tuesday 12th September
8PM NZST

→ ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-Albania



Pray for

AUSTRIA

Tuesday 17th October
8PM NZDT

→ ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-Austria



Pray for

SPAIN

Tuesday 14th November
8PM NZDT

→ ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-Spain

For more information please head to ecmnewzealand.org
or contact us on 022 303 9667