

SUMMER 2023

# ECM LIFE

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION BRITAIN  
NEWSLETTER



EQUIPPED  
TO CHANGE EUROPE

# ECM BRITAIN

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION BRITAIN  
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**

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## DIRECTOR'S LETTER

KENT ANDERSON

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up”  
**Ephesians 4.11-12**



That's why EQUIPPING is so important to ECM (you'll see it in our mission statement on the previous page). We do it so that a strong church can grow in Europe. A church that knows the truth, will pass it on to others and love those in need.

This issue of ECM LIFE is full of examples of how ECM workers are equipping people across Europe. But they can only do that because people like you are praying and giving. Thank you!

Jesus wants His people to grow. That's why He spent three years developing His disciples into apostles who would change the world. And since that day, generation after generation of pastors, teachers and evangelists have laboured to build up new followers of Christ.

It is because of their ministry that we are here today. An ongoing chain of faithful Christians has passed the faith down to us through the ages.

As you read these stories, think about the opportunities around you for equipping others. You could mentor a youth, lead a small group, tell your grandchildren about Jesus, work at a Christian food bank... There are so many options!

I pray that you will continue to grow in Jesus even as you help others to grow in Him.

# EQUIPPING ACROSS EUROPE



We asked ECM Britain workers how they are equipping the people around them. Here are some of their answers.



## Equipped to use the Bible

Andy and Andrea Warner, Spain

Over the past few years we've spent time equipping others to get into the Bible for themselves and hear what God is saying. But rather than 'feeding people fish', we're continuing to help others to 'fish for themselves' through leading, hosting and gathering others to do discovery Bible studies, using whatever method works best in their context. It's been brilliant to see people being and making disciples as they read the Bible and listen and learn from each other and the Holy Spirit.

As we prepare to move to a new ministry location, we're excited as we know we are leaving behind others (a small, growing group of believers and non-believers in a village near our current city) who are equipped and passionate to develop this ministry and see more of God's kingdom come.



## Equipped to address modern issues

Linda and David James, Austria

Linda leads the International group at church. We have been doing a series on apologetics, especially for techies — many of the group work in the semiconductor industry and are either studying for, or have PhDs in that area. Some of our neighbours with whom we regularly meet also work in this field.

We started with some of John Lennox's videos on science and faith (they are brilliant). About a month ago we decided to tackle artificial intelligence, setting the date for early May. Three days before we met, Geoffrey Hinton, nicknamed the "godfather of AI," resigned as Google VP and engineering fellow to freely warn of the risks associated with the technology. In the week since there have been three other headline stories about AI — the latest being

Steve Wozniak warning that programmes like ChatGPT will make scams harder to spot. We believe the Lord has been equipping us and our group members to engage in this important conversation.



## Equipped to worship

Sarah and Jack Winterburn, France

Yannick (one of my best friends here in the church in Tours Nord) told me last year that she has a passion for songwriting. I told her I'd be delighted to help her write songs to be used in church. In France, as in many other countries, we use lots of songs translated from English. Some of these don't really keep the richness

of the meaning, so the prospect of helping write some original language French songs was exciting to me!

A few months later she invited me and Nadine (another musical friend of hers from another town) to her house. Yannick shared with us some lyrics she'd written for four Christmas songs. Nadine put melodies to choruses, and I put melodies to verses to compliment her melodies. We edited some lyrics and tweaked melodies. Later, others from Yannick's family got involved with harmonies and instrumental accompaniment. We spent a weekend together in Chateauroux recording in September.

I talked to the pastor here in Tours Nord and he was keen to use the songs in December. I shared the songs with the main worship leader of the church who picked out one in particular he appreciated. We sang two of the songs during Advent and then both again during the carol service the week before Christmas, with Yannick and I leading together. They were well appreciated by the church and have now entered the repertoire of Christmas songs for the church here. Praise God for a wonderful chance to equip and develop others in ministry.

Next step, French language children's worship songs...

*(Editor's note: you can listen to 'Noël Noël' at <https://youtu.be/IRcZDuR6l4E>)*





**Equipped to make disciples**  
Gary and Ioana Stoll, Romania

As much as we would love to be able to walk into local schools and preach the gospel, we are not allowed. But we have young people in our church who do have access into schools and can speak to their friends about Jesus. We have found this to be the most effective way of reaching the lost, by peer-to-peer evangelism. So as missionaries, a huge part of our work involves equipping young people to be disciples and to make disciples.

This requires a significant amount of time and prayer. It means that we need to cut back on other activities that might be considered more evangelistic. Evangelism is important of course, but discipleship is more than evangelism, since it involves teaching people to obey everything Jesus has commanded us (Matthew 28:20). Well-equipped disciples go out and evangelise and make disciples. This is something many of our young people are actively doing in schools.

Once a month we run a meeting called Team Training where a dozen or so young people come along. We usually eat together before exploring what the Bible has to say about discipleship, mission, and sharing the gospel. Participants are asked to present a short evangelistic talk and receive feedback. This work has not only helped young people become better disciples but has equipped more leaders who are actively serving on the mission field.

Jesus is the greatest leader, for He made disciples that made disciples.



**Equipped to thrive**  
Roland and Carolien Smith, Netherlands

In September last year, Carolien and I moved up from Maastricht to Renkum (in the centre of the country) where we've joined a lively church with several young families. Our new neighbours too have young children. We are enjoying getting to know them and visiting them or having them over for meals. Some are coping well, and some are managing fine, while others are struggling because of the huge pressures upon them — financial, cross-cultural, health-wise, or just because of living in a world of change and uncertainty.

It's really good that we can be available to listen, encourage and support. We want to help equip families to develop resilience, and find their resources in one another, in the church communities here, and in our loving, caring and compassionate God. We'd like them to experience that God's goodness and grace are always more than our darkness and anxiety. Living in the light of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can share our confidence in the victory of Jesus over death and His power to help not just to survive, but to thrive.

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*giftaid it*

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**If God has been guiding you to consider serving Him in Europe, please get in touch!**

Explore where we work and the opportunities available at:

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### Equipped to live in freedom

Jules Mercer-Wilson, Spain

I live in a small retreat centre where we equip believers to have a greater awareness of themselves (their behaviours, emotions, core needs, and deep hurts) and of God's presence. We provide time, space, direction and companionship as they encounter Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. Our goal is to equip them to live out their true identity in Christ.

That means that we get to see Jesus shine His light into people's current situations and identify the lies they've been believing. We see them encounter Christ and receive His words of truth — then The Truth sets them free! Free to see the truth. Free from our cycles of anxiety or perfectionism or control. Free to really love and serve others without needing anything in return. Free to make disciples that know Christ and His presence. Free to use these same tools to help others have encounters with the true and living God.



### Equipped to grow together

Rita and Vidas Rimkus, England

A small group of people is meeting in our home who feel the need to grow deeper in their relationships with Jesus. We are seeking to transform each other into people who freely speak of Jesus' life, death and resurrection in our everyday lives. We are equipping each other through understanding the Word, exploring spiritual practices, speaking into each others' lives and extending the invitation to our unbelieving friends.

God has truly been present through the changes in people's spirituality and by bringing a new person into our midst. At one gathering there was a knock at the door. A lady came saying she felt strongly that she needed to be here. We were very encouraged that when we read the Bible she understood it and applied the text to her life. We pray for God's faithfulness to bring more people to us and to Himself.





## Equipped to be like Christ

Jane and Edgar Alvarez, Spain

As I consider how Christ has called me to be involved in equipping others, I usually try to focus on how Christ equipped others. After all, Christ knew His purpose and went confidently forward knowing that He was pleasing God, not men.

But I sometimes find myself asking whether the religious leaders of His day considered Jesus a “round peg in a square hole”. Why did He heal on the sabbath, or eat with undesirables or so deeply empathise with the people on the margins? I find myself identifying with Christ when He was misunderstood because I often see things from a different perspective than those around me.

But being different is fine, because Christ has special work that only each of us can do. You may be the only one who notices a small kindness that someone else needs. Lean into who Christ has made you and step out in boldness and trust for what He puts on your heart.

I once complained to a senior manager, “Why doesn’t management think of giving flowers to colleagues who have been off sick on long term illness?” To which they responded, “It doesn’t matter — because you do it.”

Many years ago I was told that my role as a missionary wife was to be at Edgar’s side. But since then I have found that God seems to have instead called us to be at each other’s sides — with both of us at Jesus’ feet.

*“Now may the God of peace... equip you with all you need for doing his will.”*

Hebrews 13.20-21 (NLT)



## Equipped to mentor young people

Steve and Lydia Cockram, Portugal

We’ve recently officially launched a 1-to-1 mentoring programme within our local church. We’re very excited to have gathered a team of 10 of us who will be meeting and discipling the teenagers and young people here.

When we arrived in Portugal, it was our dream, vision and hope to see young people being equipped to spearhead the growth of the Portuguese church. We’ve enjoyed meeting with the young people we’re individually responsible for. But seeing people who already have the Godly wisdom to do this, with some encouragement and support, start intentionally discipling these young and exciting people has brought us a lot of joy. We pray that this initiative will continue, and the long-term fruit of it will be felt by this nation for a long time.



We take the equipping of our workers very seriously. Here are a few of the many things that ECM does to support people throughout their ministry careers.



### Before they even begin, we:

- get to know them because relationships are key!
- help them identify training needs and opportunities
- engage with their church so we can partner together well
- encourage a visit to where they might serve
- provide input on fundraising, supporter relations, self-care...
- engage regularly about their personal life and ministry
- ensure they receive adequate member care
- offer them mentoring and coaching opportunities
- invite them to national and international events



### While in ministry, we:

- offer orientation to their new location, team and ministry
- suggest language learning options
- provide training in areas such as leadership and discipleship



### When they finish their time of ministry, we:

- interact with them about what’s next
- provide ongoing member care, because we will still care!

*“Member Care is the ongoing investment of resources by mission agencies, churches, and other mission organisations for the nurture and development of missionary personnel. It focuses on everyone in missions (missionaries, support staff, children, and families) and does so over the course of the missionary life cycle, from recruitment through retirement.”*

Kelly O'Donnell (Doing Member Care Well 2002)

# EQUIPPED TO BRING HEALING



BY GLORIA FORJAN



In Slovenia, many have experienced war, domestic abuse, car accidents, mental health issues or crime. Some experiences in life are so painful that they cause deep and lasting suffering. That suffering is “trauma”; a deep wound of the heart and mind that takes a long time to heal. It damages our relationships, bodies, thoughts, and our faith.

In 2014, I experienced burnout, and depression followed. I began my healing journey with God and His Word. At the time, there was little help the church could offer and I was committed to finding answers using the internet for information. After recovery, I was invited to join a programme created by a Bible society called Trauma Healing. Their material helps church leaders know how to assist their people after difficult events. I initially attended out of duty as a church leader, but little did I know God had plans to use me to care for the traumatised. I started as a facilitator and have loved every minute! It has given me an opportunity to discover gifts from God, and I began facilitating small groups, as well as training other facilitators.

Our unique method of trauma healing unites mental health practices and engagement with God through the Bible. Many Bible passages reference suffering and they tell us who God is, how He cares, and this can help us heal from the wounds of our hearts.



Ladies who attend have an opportunity to tell their story of pain and grief, and bring their laments to God. They experience Christ’s love by taking their pain to the cross. They experience healing, restoration, and reconciliation with God, self, and neighbour. They then help the church become a place of healing for others.

I have used this tool as an evangelistic opportunity. I’ve had non-believers join the groups and they have enjoyed learning about God as we journeyed through lessons. I’ve received many encouraging messages about how it has been a blessing for many to be in the group. God has been so good and faithful, and I am glad to be used by Him to train churches how to be of help to those around them who are hurting. He helps us in all our troubles, so that we can help others who have all kinds of troubles, using the same help that we ourselves have received from God (2 Cor 1:4).



# THANK YOU!

Thank You!

Danke

Dziękuję

Дякую

Merci

Mulțumesc

Gracias

Obrigado

Grazie

Σας ευχαριστώ

Your faithful prayers and donations mean that we can continue to share the love of Jesus across Europe.



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