

ECM in Austria

We now have a vibrant, motivated team of 13 members.

David James is Field Leader and he believes that God is calling more workers into ministry in Austria. Another couple from Scotland will be joining the team in Linz in the summer of 2007.

- Our Vision is to see second generation churches planted in Austria with significant Austrian leadership and autonomy.
- Our emphasis is on identifying, training and mobilising Christians for ministry in Austria. Church planting in Linz

Dietmar and Brigitte Jowanka have planted a multi-cultural church in Linz. Following a period of evangelism and preparation, the Grace International Fellowship started weekly services in German and English in 2005. The church has now grown to around 30-40 adults and has an exciting program. As well as Austrians the church is made up of Africans, people from the Balkans and some Asians. The church now meets close to the university and is now looking to develop a stronger student work. Church development in Carinthia

Many of ECMs missionaries in the southern province of Carinthia are involved in church development. In particular this means teaching in the churches and training and discipling leaders and potential leaders. Plans for a new church plant in central Carinthia

Together with the Klagenfurt church where the Neumanns and Harrisons are based, ECM has identified a new church plant project 10 kilometres to the west in Krumpendorf and Portschach. For this project we need to expand the team; we need people with experience of church planting and gifting in evangelism. (We already have a couple interested in this ministry.) Initially the few Christians who live in these towns will need support and encouragement in contact building, running evangelistic house groups and children's clubs.

Christian bookshops in Carinthia

Additionally three of the Carinthian team work in local Christian bookshops providing an important service for the churches, a witness in the towns of Klagenfurt and Villach and opportunities to share God's Word with visitors. Youth work in Carinthia

Youth work is vital in Austria and a significant ministry for Jacqueline Stolk and David & Linda James. The up-and-coming generation largely wants nothing to do with the Roman Catholic Church but is seeking after meaning – evangelism is important for this impressionable group. Within the evangelical church we are discipling young Christians and encouraging them to discover their gifting and calling. Where there is a sense of God's call on people's lives we are helping people gain appropriate training and move into that ministry. Teebus in Villach

One key area of youth outreach is the "teebus" project. Together with a group of up to 20 volunteers Jacqueline, David and Linda take a bus (tastefully converted into a tea and coffee bar) into the town centre on Saturday nights. Young people are then invited in for coffee and a chat. Typically between 60 and 120 people come into the bus which is now established as a popular meeting place (some youth even saying it is the best meeting place!) The bus is variously known as the Jesus bus or the God bus (even the sect bus – but the team does their best to dismantle false prejudices!) The young people know that the team is concerned about them, their lifestyle and their problems. In conversation the team communicate God's love to the majority of the visitors. Missionary Principles

- We are committed to full co-operation with the national church, believing that this honours God and is effective.
- The BEGÖ is our chosen strategic partner in Austria and can provide direction to our churches.
- We believe in working through dynamic teams. We do not want to work in isolation. We are currently focusing our resources in the city of Linz and region of Carinthia.
- We recognise the strategic importance of Austrians taking a lead in church planting. Our goal would be to have Austrians sharing in leadership within 3 years after starting a church plant and to have a local leadership team in place before we leave a church.
- It is vital that we identify and motivate those Christians with the necessary gifts and qualities (or potential gifts and qualities) for ministry and leadership.
- Providing a range of flexible training interventions to equip those in ministry (or those moving into ministry) is key.
- Mobilizing Christians for ministry requires sensitivity and cultural understanding. Attitudes to ministry and in particular leadership will need to be developed.
- Mobilizing Austrians in the area of evangelism will be vital for the vision of seeing second generation churches planted. Here leading-by-example will be very important.

