

FALL 2020

# FOCUS

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION INTERNATIONAL-USA  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Skanderbeg Square in Tirana is the main plaza in the center of Albania's capital city. With a population of only 0.5% Evangelical Christian, ECMI-USA missionaries serving here seek to meet a vast spiritual need.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We are living and ministering in unprecedented times. And times like these lead us all to ask serious questions. Church leaders across Europe wonder what ministry will look like in the coming generations. How are we to adjust our methodology while maintaining fidelity to the timeless truths of God's Word?

One might expect the chaos of our day would inevitably lead to confusion, frustration, and fear. Candidly, this is precisely the battle we face on any given day. Yet, 2 Timothy 1:7 reminds us God does not give His children the spirit of fear. Similarly, Deuteronomy 31:6-8 urges us to be strong and courageous. To be sure, these words are easy to preach and difficult to practice. This is why we need to encourage one another to maintain faith in these days of uncertainty.

*“Church planting teaches two things more than any other: that God is faithful and that we must learn to depend on that faithful God.”  
-Christine Hoover*

---

ECMI-USA is committed to moving forward, pressing into what we believe will be many new church plants throughout Europe in the years to come. We are believing God for both the faith and enablement to accomplish a task far beyond our capabilities. I invite you to read more about our church planting vision on page 4.



Thank you for encouraging us along the way through your faithful prayers and generous financial support. Your participation makes all the difference.

Reaching the 98%,

**Doug Gotcher**  
[doug.gotcher@ecmi.org](mailto:doug.gotcher@ecmi.org)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS HIGHLIGHT

### Cindy Mefford

Cheyenne, Wyoming

Cindy joined the ECMI-USA Board of Directors in 2018, and currently serves as Treasurer. She and her husband, Ray, are owner/operators of a Chick-fil-A restaurant in Cheyenne. Cindy previously held the position of CFO and Office Manager for New Hope International, an organization focused on Eastern Europe which became part of ECMI-



USA in 2015. Ray and Cindy's two adult children are involved in vocational Christian ministry, one being a missionary to central Asia. The Meffords have a deep love for global missions and are active in their local church.

[cindy.mefford@ecmi.org](mailto:cindy.mefford@ecmi.org)

### Today's Europe:

- 73% of Europeans are urbanites, living in cities or towns.
- Russia is the world's largest country, extending across 9 time zones between the Baltic and the Pacific.
- Immigrant believers are proving to be a key in spreading the gospel in Europe. Presenting the Christian faith as a dynamic global force, they challenge the majority view of Christianity as a relic of the past.

## RECOMMENDED READING

To broaden your perspectives regarding contemporary global missions

Borthwick, Paul. *Western Christians in Global Mission: What's the Role of the North American Church?* Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

*Borthwick calls the Western Church to global mission involvement characterized by mutuality, reciprocity, and humility. This is necessary reading for anyone seeking effective mission participation in this crucial age.*

Livermore, David. *Serving with Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence.* Updated ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013.

*Livermore offers a gift to the North American church by calling it to a more thoughtful, others-centered approach to short-term missions. The author's critique is centered in the hope of future short-term mission efforts realizing their full potential.*

---

*Thank you for your care for our missionaries through your prayers and generous financial support!*

# REACHING THE 98

## Our Vision to Plant 30 Churches

**Europe is in crisis today.** According to *Operation World*, only 2.5% of Europeans identify as evangelical Christian. Pervasive social challenges betray this emptiness:

- 10 of the 13 highest global suicide rates are found in European countries and “Euthanasia tourism” is associated with medical tourism
- Magnificent cathedrals across Europe now sit largely empty
- Secularism has fragmented European family structures



Notre-Dame Cathedral, Paris

These and other indicators reveal a deep internal need across the continent. *As many as 98% of Europeans live apart from hope in Jesus. Evangelical Christians accounting for only 2.5% of Europe’s population is not enough.*

**Transformation will occur through church planting.** We believe planting healthy, adequately resourced, reproducing churches is the key to transformation. Europe desperately needs biblically based, evangelistically dedicated, and holistically focused churches. As ECMI participates in the training, care, and sponsorship of those leading these churches, the likelihood of long-term success dramatically increases. Well-equipped church planters, who are also well-supported, will plant and lead healthy, reproducing churches.

**We believe there is hope for the 98%.**

Scripturally centered churches are vital to holistic transformation among the peoples of Europe. Not only do we see these churches providing spiritual direction, but also being responsive to the wider range of human need. This is how we envision reaching the 98%.

*We are a church planting ministry because the Church is the hope for Europe.*

- Working with our European partners, we identify locations where churches are urgently needed
- From our relational network, we find capable people called by God to plant churches in these areas
- We invest in these church planters by giving them ongoing care, training, and continuing education
- We want to provide start-up funding to aid church planters as they launch their congregations

**Together, we have a bold vision.** A vision to plant 30 new churches in five years. A vision for churches to fill Europe’s spiritual void. This is certainly beyond the scope of anything we have attempted before, but we believe God has led us to dream what seems impossible. We invite you to pray with us for this vision to be accomplished.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”  
– Ephesians 3:20-21

---

## FROM THE FIELD

### Brief updates from some of our workers in Europe



#### **Günther & Mallory Fugger**

*Vienna, Austria*

Günther and Mallory minister in a small international church while he finishes his theological degree. As a native Austrian, Günther is uniquely equipped to serve the church in his homeland. Mallory, a North American, involves herself in ministry to women and seeks to assist believers to better understand their LGBTQ+ neighbors. Pray for this young couple as they reach out to those who may feel marginalized by the church and society. Connect with Günther and Mallory about their ministry at [guenther.fugger@ecmi.org](mailto:guenther.fugger@ecmi.org)/[mallory.fugger@ecmi.org](mailto:mallory.fugger@ecmi.org)



#### **Sharon Graves**

*Madrid, Spain*

Sharon is a key figure within the broader European Christian Mission organization, leading member care and training initiatives in team building, personal development, coaching, and mentoring. She is currently on Home Ministry Assignment in the States where she continues her work remotely, and plans to return to Spain early in 2021. Learn more concerning Sharon's ministries by emailing her at [sharon.graves@ecmi.org](mailto:sharon.graves@ecmi.org)



#### **Lila Groth**

*Krakow, Poland*

A native of Poland, Lila teaches kindergarten through 8th grade Bible in a Christian school. In addition, she participates in Child Evangelism Fellowship by training teachers and developing new materials for children. This past summer, Lila was involved in a number of summer camps for children and young teens. She invites you to pray for the many Polish girls and boys she teaches, that they would find salvation in Jesus. Ask Lila about ministering to children in Poland at [lilagroth62@gmail.com](mailto:lilagroth62@gmail.com)



#### **Octavian & Eugenia Verlan**

*Timisoara, Romania*

Octavian ("Tavi") leads the New Hope Romania ministry, which produces and distributes print resources for Romanian churches, ministry leaders, and families. Most recently, initial copies of the newly completed commentary on *Colossians* were received from the printer and quickly distributed. Tavi requests prayer for increased development of resources and the corresponding capacity to distribute them efficiently. You can reach out to Tavi directly at [tavi.verlan@ecmi.org](mailto:tavi.verlan@ecmi.org)

**For more information** about ECMI–USA's missionaries, contact Brad Pellish at [brad.pellish@ecmi.org](mailto:brad.pellish@ecmi.org)

*“You have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ.”  
– Philippians 1:5*

# EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION INTERNATIONAL-USA



**Doug & Chloe**  
United States



**Brad & Jennifer**  
United States



**Kristy & Kevin**  
United States



**Jarrold & Amelia**  
Home Assignment  
Arizona, United States



**Ron & Brenda**  
Madrid, Spain



**Sharon**  
Madrid, Spain



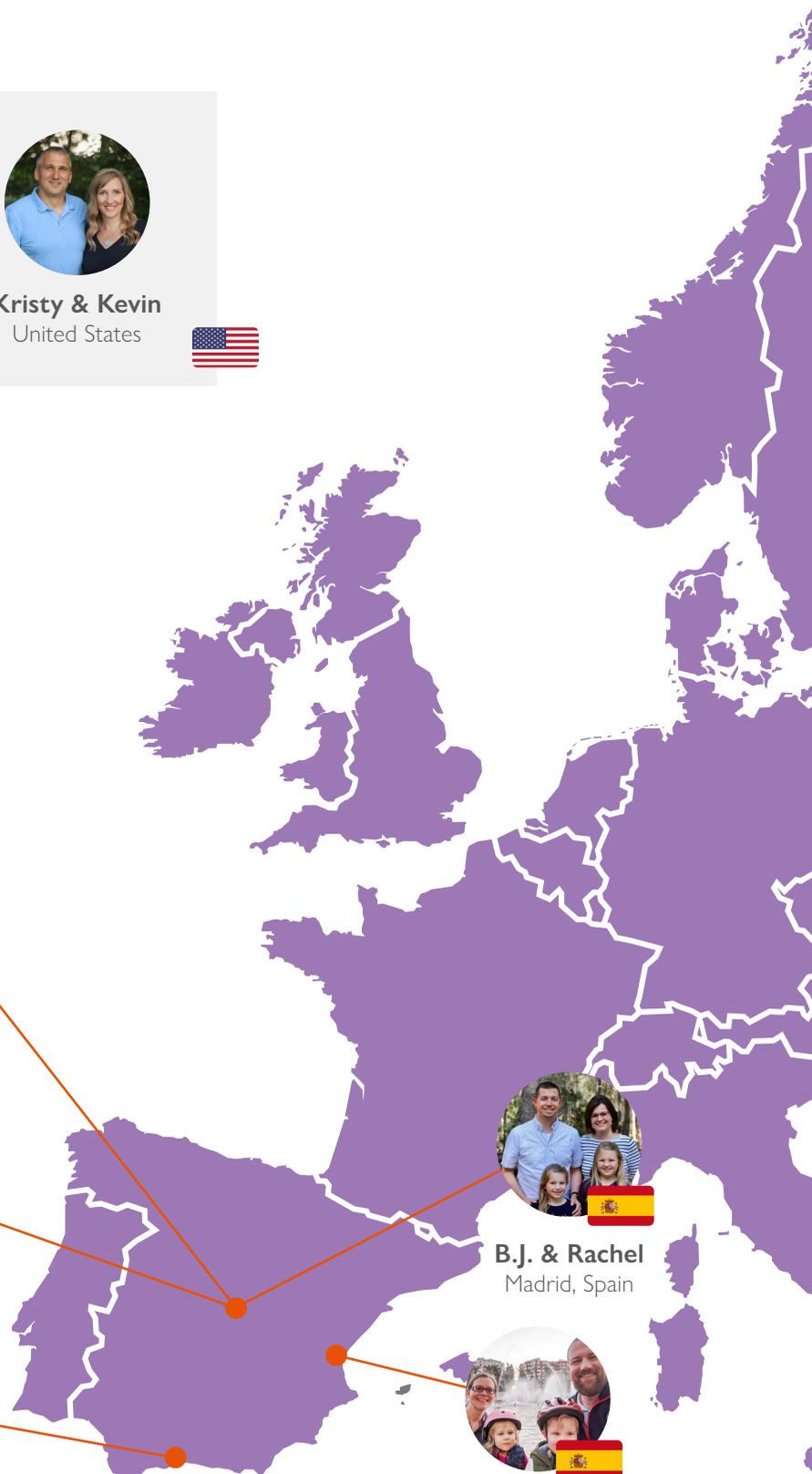
**Hans & Jennifer**  
Malaga, Spain

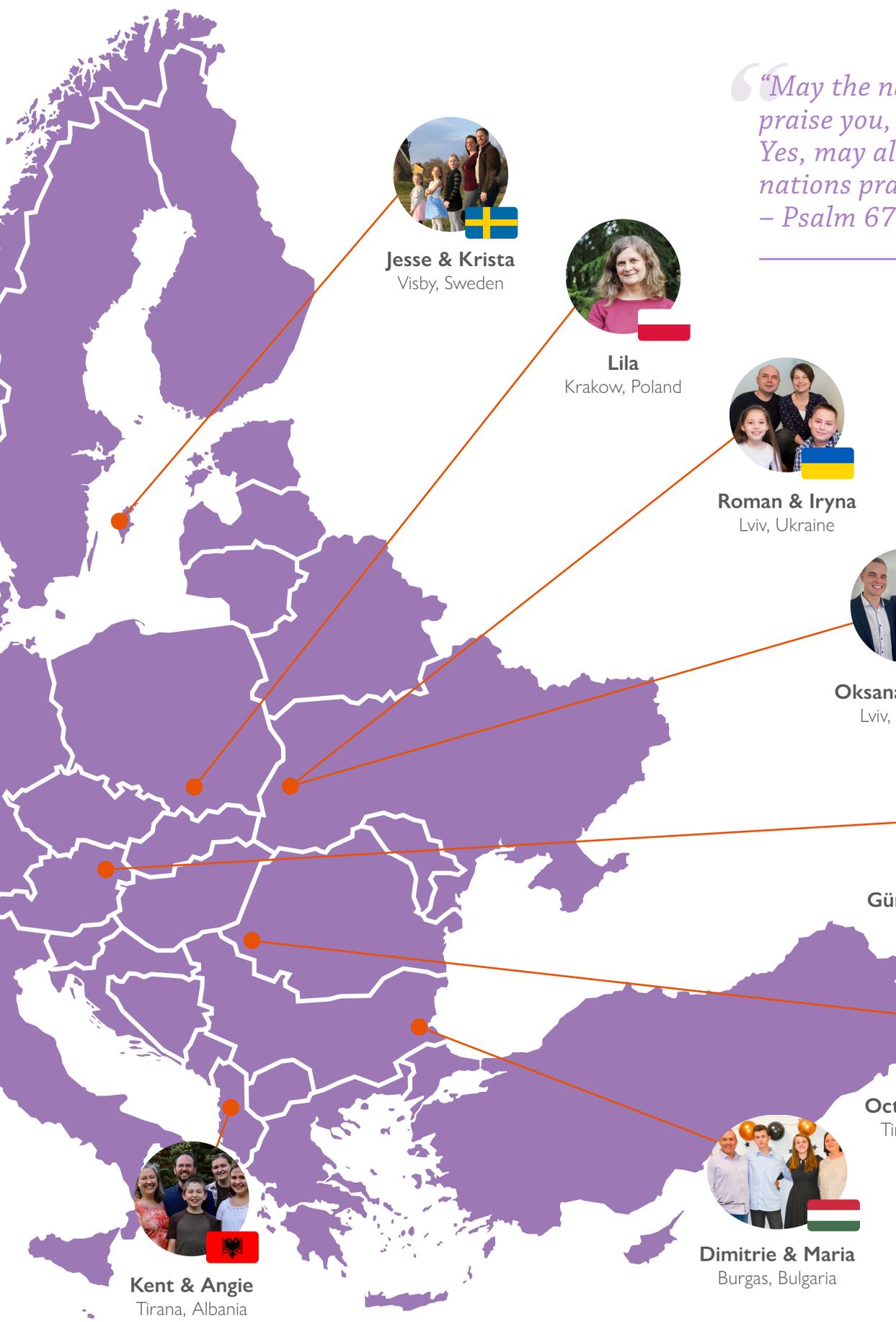


**B.J. & Rachel**  
Madrid, Spain



**Dan & Anna**  
Valencia, Spain





**Jesse & Krista**  
Visby, Sweden



**Lila**  
Krakow, Poland



**Roman & Iryna**  
Lviv, Ukraine



**Oksana & Peter**  
Lviv, Ukraine



**Günther & Mallory**  
Vienna, Austria



**Octavian & Eugenia**  
Timisoara, Romania



**Dimitrie & Maria**  
Burgas, Bulgaria



**Kent & Angie**  
Tirana, Albania

*“May the nations  
praise you, O God.  
Yes, may all the  
nations praise you.”  
– Psalm 67:3*

*Operation World reports 6.9% of Swedes identify as evangelical Christians.*



**Visby, Sweden**

## PARTICIPATING WITH ECMI-USA

European Christian Mission is an interdenominational, evangelical missionary organization planting churches in Europe.

We invite you to invest in our vision of transforming Europe through the establishment of new churches across the continent. Unless otherwise indicated, all donations to ECMI-USA are tax deductible. ECMI-USA is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.



*Thank you for your generous participation in the work of European Christian Mission International-USA!*

- Give online at [ecmi-usa.org/donate-now](https://ecmi-usa.org/donate-now)

- Checks payable to ECMI-USA  
**Please note new donation address as of September 1, 2020**

European Christian Mission Int'l.  
P.O. Box 563  
Wheaton, IL 60187

- Connect with ECMI-USA



@ecmiusa



@ecmi\_usa

- Contact Us

Donation Inquiries:  
[donors@ecmi-usa.org](mailto:donors@ecmi-usa.org) [new]  
1-217-209-5183 [new]

General Questions:  
[ecmi.usa@ecmi-usa.org](mailto:ecmi.usa@ecmi-usa.org)  
1-877-874-3264  
12112 Rancho Vistoso Blvd., Suite 150-112  
Oro Valley, Arizona 85755  
[ecmi-usa.org](https://ecmi-usa.org)

