

onmission

NEWS FROM CHILD EVANGELISM FELLOWSHIP® IN EUROPE



He who calls you is faithful

1 THESS. 5:24 (ESV)

Dear friends,

In recent weeks I have done many things "for the last time". As I write to you from this place "for the last time", I would like to testify above all to God's faithfulness which I have experienced daily in the last 27 years of my CEF ministry. This is especially true of the 12 years in European leadership.

All of you demonstrate God's faithfulness for His work and for His people in your involvement in reaching the children, your encouragements, your prayers, and your support. Thank you so very much for your part in the ministry of CEF Europe.

I have seen God's faithfulness in the staff he has placed at my side. I am thinking, in particular, of our Area and Department Directors. In close, sometimes daily, contact, we have tried to advance the work among the children and to solve problems together. Likewise, the cooperation with our country leaders in East and West and the board of CEF Europa Association has been a source of joy. I was able to visit many countries. The warm welcome and numerous impressions gained are unforgettable to me as well as some of the travel experiences:

special food, cultural characteristics, cancelled and stormy flights, forgotten identity papers ... One could share a lot, but above all this—the Lord is faithful!

When I think of the amount of support our workers needed month after month, of all the challenges the financial one was and still is probably the biggest. We needed many millions of Euros over the last 12 years for our Shortfall programme. I'm glad that nobody told me the total amount beforehand! Looking back, I can only marvel at how the Lord has filled our hands. He who calls you is faithful!

Even though I am officially retiring soon, I am happy to continue involvement as a CMLC teacher and in the leadership team of CEF-Germany.

I am very happy that the Lord has appointed Iulian Mangalagiu as my successor. I have known him and his dear wife Anca for many years and have always appreciated him and the many gifts God has given him. In the last two years we have worked particularly

close together to ensure a smooth transition. I am very confident that under his leadership and the Lord's blessing the work of CEF Europe will continue to grow, indeed grow much more.

Thank you very much again for your faithfulness in praying and supporting the ministry of CEF Europe!

Yours in Him

Gerd-Walter Buskies



A WORD FROM **GERD-WALTER BUSKIES** CEF EUROPEAN DIRECTOR



Christmas TOGETHER

AND WHEN THEY
SAW IT, THEY
MADE KNOWN
THE SAYING
THAT HAD BEEN
TOLD THEM
CONCERNING
THIS CHILD.

LUKE 2:17 (ESV)

This was our motto verse for the last Christmas Together season. Many have prayed and the Lord has answered in a marvellous way!

CEF has always held Christmas clubs. “Christmas Together” puts an emphasis on the training of churches and volunteers. We offered many, many workshops across Europe and motivated those who took the training to hold several clubs and reach as many children as possible from inside and outside their churches.

One grandmother in **North Macedonia** was so excited about what she had learned that the very next day she gathered her grandchildren together with their friends and presented the lesson to them. Her motivation grew and the following day she invited another group of children and presented the lesson a second time.

CEF Europe had taken a lesson from CEF Germany and developed it further. It was called *The Christmas Picture*. This beautiful programme teaches the difference between the picture (the birth of Christ as Saviour) and the frame around it which we so often celebrate today (gifts, candles, cookies, etc.). A volunteer from Romania said: “I saw children really understand that they had been leaving the Lord Jesus out of their

usual Christmas celebrations and now they want to remember Him.”

Even adults were surprised. In **Moldova**, more than 200 meetings were held for children using this lesson. At one of those meetings, the mayor of the city appeared and commented afterwards. “I have been Orthodox all my life and until now I did not understand why we celebrate Christmas. Thank you for explaining to me the true meaning of Christmas.”

CEF workers and volunteers made use of every opportunity and place. Packed meetings were held in churches and big school assembly halls, sometimes only a school corridor during one of the longer breaks was available or we had open air meetings. In Prishtina and Prizren (**Kosovo**) many children came to hear and listen in the open air and also their parents and people who happened



Romania



Moldova



to be walking by. God always finds a way to reach His people!

In **Latvia** because of the virus no meetings were allowed. But that was no hindrance to spread the gospel. Indra, the National Director says: *"In order to implement Christmas Together, we had to look for creative and safe ways to meet the children. This year we organized Christmas walks for families in city parks and squares."* Children had to solve a puzzle and could watch the Christmas lesson on a laptop.

In **Slovakia**, it was not possible to go into the schools, but CEF asked if special packages could be sent to the school. The schoolteachers themselves distributed over 1,800 packets with Gospel literature and sweets!



Each package also contained a link to a special Christmas video that the children could watch.

Many CEF workers and volunteers went the extra mile. One of those faithful ones said: There were days when I taught the Bible lesson 12 times—but it was worth it!

Indeed, as a result over 200,000 children in Europe heard the gospel through Christmas Together, more than even before the pandemic. Unfortunately, there is not enough space to share what the Lord did in the other European countries including some of our sensitive countries. Tolya, from **Russia** speaks for thousands of children when he says: *"Thank you for coming and telling us about the Birth of Jesus Christ!"* May the Lord enable us to go to even more children in the coming Christmas season. Will you pray for this?



EURO NEWS

Jakob Wiebe, with
Igor and Viktoria
at the handing
over ceremony.

With great joy and gratitude to God, we can announce the following new appointments on the European level.

Igor and Viktoria Dragunov have taken up their position as Area Directors for Eastern Europe from Jakob Wiebe on March 1. Jakob and Steffi Wiebe worked with CEF for more than 35 years and led the area with great dedication for the last 15 years. We thank them very much for their years of service in CEF and we wish them God's blessings in the ministry they will continue for the Lord. Igor and his wife Viktoria served as National Directors for CEF in Ukraine since 2005, and for the last 11 years, they also served as Jakob Wiebe's assistant. We pray that God will continue to use them for His glory and expand His



Kingdom in the 11 countries of Eastern Europe, for which they are now responsible.

In September 2021, **Claire Bain**, who serves as a missionary from Northern Ireland to Romania, has taken up the role as Director for the EPM, European Partnership Ministry of CEF Europe. Claire has been part of the EPM team for a long time and has experience in managing finances, reporting, and fundraising projects. One of the biggest projects we have in this department is the Shortfall project, a project to financially assist our workers in need. Currently, 300 workers in Europe receive help through this project.



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