

# Missionary Update—*European Missions*

## EMS Board Meets in Paris

**On June 11**, the European Missions Society held its second board meeting of 2016 in the “City of Light”—Paris, France. It was a beautiful week, and our meeting coincided with hundreds of thousands of visitors who were also in that metropolis to watch the European Cup, hosted by France. Along with the board members, many spouses attended the gathering in addition to about 20 campus students from the U.S. participating in an intern program with several of the European churches this summer.

The week began with a series of smaller meetings whose intent was to analyze and create several evangelistic strategies that use EMS resources. The Eastern European, Central European and Western European Task forces spent time together discussing many of the ongoing and potential scenarios at work in their specific geographic areas. Such talks often hone in on future missionaries, the strengthening of existing churches, and finding the right timing for each strategy. The European brothers and sisters inform EMS decisions by helping the board to understand the needs of all our large and small churches.

There was, of course, abundant fellowship. During the week a lot of thoughtful discourse and heartfelt interaction took place as friends were briefly reunited and new relationships were forged across impossibly long distances. For many of the European church leaders, the time spent together recharged and refreshed the heart and mind toward the hard work ahead.

The week led up to the board meeting on Saturday, June 11th. As is EMS custom, this second board meeting focused upon the subject of “operations”. Every strategy to evangelize

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Europe was analyzed and evaluated to determine if they are being enacted to the highest possible standard. The Communications, Human Resources and Finance subcommittees each gave a report on their side of operations. Additionally, several new policies (mostly regarding the care of missionaries) were discussed and voted upon. These operational pieces describe how we get EMS work done efficiently, successfully and spiritually. One may compare this meeting to the book of Numbers in the Old Testament. How we get things accomplished matters.

The week ended with most of the board worshipping with the Paris Church on Sunday. The Paris church has provided the EMS with so much good news and joy over the last couple of years, and it was inspiring to see all that is being built in that great fellowship on Sunday morning. Please be watching near the end of summer for a video that is being produced which was shot during the Paris meetings. This video will recount how the EMS is reaching people across all of Europe!



EMS Board Meeting in Paris, France

## Two Baptisms on the Same Day in Budapest

**Peti Szabad, Budapest, Hungary**

*When the LORD brought back the captives to Zion, we were like men who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them." Psalm 126:1-2*

The last few years have been full of challenges and hard times in the life of the Budapest church. Included among these have been a transition in leadership and a reevaluation of what we do, why we do it, and how should we do it. There were only a handful of baptisms in these years. But God is faithful and provided us with the joy of salvation on February 22nd as we witnessed two baptisms on the same day!

Patrik is a 14 year-old young man with curly red hair who grew up in the church. He has been part of our Youth and Family Ministry and has brought a great amount of joy with his vivacious character. He had also gone through



**Teen baptism in Hungary: Patrik with Robi Szabad**

some testing a couple of years ago when his parents were divorced. Patrik's mom remained faithful, setting her son a great example. The congregation has shown the love of Christ to both Patrik and his mom, and that made a huge difference during this hard time—it does take a village to raise a child! As we studied about the cross of Jesus, Patrik shared how he didn't want Jesus' sacrifice to be in vain and decided to commit his life to Jesus. Now we have four baptized teenagers in the congregation.



**The Helsinki church joining us on Skype for the baptism**

from the Ministry-In-Training (MIT) program of the Midwest churches. They studied the Bible with Bernát, then they left and we continued. Bernát moved to Finland for a

semester and the brothers in the Helsinki church studied with him. Then he moved back to Hungary and he studied some more. I am very proud of the perseverance of this young man—he was very religious from a young age; he had to overcome both religious pride and prejudice toward our congregation, but he always had a deep desire to truly follow God. It was great to have the Helsinki church join us to celebrate over Skype.

God brought these two young men to the waters of baptism on the same day, and our hearts were filled with joy! **Please continue to pray for the evangelization of Hungary!**

## The Heart of the Gospel Message

Global missions have always been at the heart of the gospel message. Decades ago, a plan was hatched that would send thousands of missionaries all over the world to plant churches in virtually every country. The heart, strategy, and sacrifice for missions that was demonstrated at that time in our family of churches is now being passed on to a new generation.

The month of June saw young men and women from Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Massachusetts, and Connecticut sacrifice time and money to go to the front lines of the European mission field and sow seeds of faith. The good news, convictions, and desire to reach the world has been entrusted to a new generation of missionaries, who came together in Paris for a weekend of training and connection. Full-time European missionaries Steve Schnell and Jon and Rachel Buchholz spoke to this inspiring and spiritually ambitious group of 25 disciples, sharing their convictions about what it takes to be a missionary. The tears and profound words shared in response were evidence enough that a new generation of missionaries is being raised up among our churches.

Thierry Fender, the evangelist of the Geneva church and missionary from France, his neighboring country, shared about the incredible things God has done before his very eyes in Paris and Geneva over his years of spreading the gospel. Kevin Miller, the evangelist of the Downtown region in the Boston church, shared his convictions about the power of the Word of God and our role in bringing it to the world. Outside of these times of sharing and teaching, the students boldly shared their faith at Parisian Universities, organized events and gatherings to share the gospel, and studied the bible with Parisian students and young people.