Consider the sower who went out to sow. As he was sowing...
Consider the sower who went out to sow. As he was sowing, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on rocky ground, where there wasn’t much soil, and they sprang up quickly since the soil wasn’t deep. But when the sun came up they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them. Still others fell on good ground and produced a crop: some 100, some 60, and some 30 times what was sown.

Matthew 13:3-8 HCSB

The secret to a bountiful harvest is sowing seed abundantly. Many seeds that are planted will never grow and bear fruit. Some are snatched away before they can even take root, while others begin to grow but never reach maturity. Only a small portion of the seeds that are sown actually yields fruit. Members of the European Affinity are keenly aware of this predicament. Much of European “soil” is not fertile, and thus, many of the seeds that are planted will never yield a crop. As you read the stories in this prayer guide, you will learn of various methods that our affinity personnel are employing to sow the gospel abundantly in order to expand God’s Kingdom. Reaching the multitudes of Europeans who don’t know Christ is an impossible task for the less than 500 IMB missionaries serving with the European Affinity to accomplish on their own. Your prayers and partnership are vital to this work. If you would like to be more involved in the efforts to reach the 99 percent of Europeans who do not have a personal relationship with Christ, please contact us.

Blessings,
Wendy Meador
European Affinity Group Prayer Strategist
prayersforeurope@gmail.com
Euro South Cluster

Balkan Sub-Cluster:
Albania, Bosnia/Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

Black Sea Orthodox Sub-Cluster:
Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine
**Balkan Sub-Cluster**

**Street evangelism in Belgrade**

For four years, Team Belgrade tried event-driven evangelism techniques such as concerts, picnics and Bible distribution, all of which served to get the gospel out; but the team felt something was missing. Although many people were hearing the gospel, they were getting very few, if any, follow-up contacts.

In January 2015, the team decided to be more intentional in their gospel presentations and to specifically focus on sharing the gospel with people in ways that could lead to continued relationships. In February, they started going out in pairs to populated areas such as parks, university campuses and pedestrian zones, approaching small groups of people and beginning a spiritual discussion. Young people and university students seemed the most open to engaging in conversation. The pair would ask, “Could you tell me about religion here?” or “How do you view God and how He interacts with people?” After hearing the responses, they would ask, “Can I tell you what I believe?” and then share a short gospel presentation. This practice has led to over 1,000 face to face personal gospel presentations in six months. Out of that 1,000, around 40 people have sat down and read Scripture with members of the team. They are praying these people will begin formal Bible studies in October.

> Pray that those who have shown strong interest in the gospel will come to faith, as well as those with whom Team Belgrade is beginning Bible study groups.

> Every Friday at 8:00 a.m. EST, the team is on the streets sharing. Please pray for them during this time. Intercede on their behalf for wisdom in whom to approach, for open hearts that will listen and want to continue to discuss spiritual things with them, and for salvation to come to those who hear.
Black Sea Orthodox Sub-Cluster
Increasing gospel sowing

The Black Sea area’s history of Orthodox Christianity provides familiarity with God, the Bible, Jesus and even major persons in Scripture and church history; however, finding individuals with a personal connection to God through faith and who live a life with the marks of being a disciple is a difficult task. Because of this, gospel sowing must increase to reach the masses.

Volunteer efforts coordinated by IMB personnel with the full participation of national believers are an effective means for sharing the gospel. In one week, medical mission teams near Kharkiv, Ukraine, may see as many as 500 patients, who receive both physical and spiritual care. These efforts foster goodwill in the community and provide church planters multiple contacts as they follow up with patients, seeking to gather them into Bible study groups.

Camp ministries also bring many into contact with the gospel through Bible study, worship, testimonies, preaching and even fun and games. Each summer, hundreds receive Christ at the various camps. National churches, both in their local area and abroad, now do what was once organized by missionaries and led by volunteers. Training and modeling what has been taught are vital to keeping the focus of camp ministries on the gospel.

ESL, sports outreach, special needs training, business seminars, relief efforts and T4T (Training for Trainers) groups are additional tools that are used. The key is being a person who will obey Christ’s command to make disciples and training national believers to do the same.

> Pray that the national believers will flourish in their personal witnessing. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead them and their partners to bear fruit in keeping with repentance.
> Pray for open hearts, open eyes and obedient spirits as personnel and national partners seek opportunities to broadly sow the seed of the gospel among their people.
Euro Russia Cluster

Baltics, Euro & Stans Sub-Cluster:
Estonia, Finland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia and Western Russia

Urals & Siberia Sub-Cluster:
Central and Northern Russia

Far East Russia Sub-Cluster:
Far East Russia
Baltics, European & Stans Sub-Cluster

Russians for Russian Jews

In many regions of Russia, there are decorated Russian Jews who, during World War II, fought the Nazis to defend their people. While hundreds of thousands of Jewish soldiers died in battle, those who survived had to face the Communist Soviet regime for decades. After the collapse of the USSR, many immigrated to other countries in search of a better life. Because of their difficult pasts, those immigrants and their succeeding generations have cared more about making a living than about spiritual matters. Some have wounded hearts that can’t forgive their previous persecutors for putting them in their current situation. Others find escape in alcohol or drugs.

Russians who have accepted the Good News answer the calling to come and help Russian Jews find healing. Being united in language, they are able to freely serve them in love, sing Russian hymns and share their testimonies. Of course, some Jews are suspicious or resentful of their engagement, but others welcome them with open hearts. Three different Russian groups from two Russian-speaking countries came and distributed tracts, literature and the Word to around 1,000 people. IMB workers share, “We saw their comfort and love melting the hard hearts of the Russian Jews little by little. We’re excited for more teams to come and cover the Russian-speaking communities with the Good News.”

> Although there are limitations to how workers and volunteers can relate to Russian Jews, they will continue to work with local believers and organizations to make advancements in His kingdom. Pray for this cooperation.

> Please intercede for a Russian-speaking Kazakh team of 14 who are coming soon. May the Holy Spirit anoint them as they receive visas and do ministry!
**Urals & Siberia Sub-Cluster**

**Spiritual fruit in Udmurtia**

Bushes are heavy with ripe raspberries and every color of currant. Backyards are covered in row after row of potato plants and the biggest cabbages you’ve ever seen, and greenhouses are filled with what locals call “eternally green tomatoes.” Summertime in Udmurt villages is a rich time. Seeds that were planted after a long winter in hopes of an abundant harvest are growing fruit that seems to multiply before your eyes.

Team Udmurtia desires to see new believers and churches blossoming, bearing spiritual fruit and multiplying throughout Udmurtia. The most vital part of this goal is abundant sowing of the gospel. Each week they travel to villages in Udmurtia, visiting homes and stopping to talk. They offer a Bible in the Udmurt language and share the gospel with all who will listen. It was through such an outing over three years ago that they met Maria.* God worked in ways that only He can, and this year they have seen a church planted, meeting in a home in her village.

*Name changed

➢ Pray this church will joyfully and obediently follow the commands of Christ. Ask that they will love one another well and be an example of Christ’s love to their community. Plead for them to have a burning desire to share the gospel with those around them living in darkness.

➢ Intercede for many more disciples who will make many more disciples in Udmurtia! Ask God to work in miraculous ways. Petition Him to light a fire of faith in the hearts of many as they read His Word in their own language, many for the first time.
Far East Russia Sub-Cluster

Extreme evangelism in Siberia

Every year the IMB worker serving in the “Z” Region, Far East Russia (Siberia), along with Russian brothers takes at least one winter extreme evangelism trip in their region. There are only about 2,000 evangelical believers in a population of about 2 million in the region. The brothers travel more than a thousand miles over frozen lakes and rivers and through wilderness on poor roads, only accessible in winter, taking the gospel into hard to reach places. These trips last from 10 days to two weeks at a time, and they visit villages of up to 500 homes and even some larger towns. Care packages, Bibles, DVDs and other Christian literature are distributed to every home. Annually they distribute 500 to 1,000 Bibles and care packages to the villagers, as well as witness door to door and hold evangelistic concerts and preaching in the villages and towns. Most of the villagers hear the gospel for the first time.

God also provides opportunities for them to visit orphanages and nursing homes in these areas to share gifts and the Word of God. Because these trips can only be made in winter, the temperatures are frigid and can register anywhere from -30 to -50 degrees F. These grueling journeys require traveling up to 10 hours a day on terrible, bumpy roads to get the gospel to the various villages and towns, but the men have found that “Nasha Cila Sedit Spokoina” – (their) strength rests in His peace.

- Praise the Lord for the Russian brothers and believers in the “Z” Region and their passion to share the gospel throughout Russia. Ask God to continue to encourage and equip them and their families as they live and serve. Petition that they will bear much fruit.
- Ask the Father to send more laborers into the harvest and to raise up more leaders, missionaries and pastors from the harvest to start more groups and churches throughout the “Z” Region in Far East Russia.
Euro Diaspora Cluster

Canada Sub-Cluster: Canada

Australia Sub-Cluster: Australia

South America Sub-Cluster: Brazil
**Canada Sub-Cluster**

**Training future Christian workers**

In Cochrane, Alberta, Canada, the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary and College is training future pastors, leaders and missionaries in order to sow the gospel abundantly and broadly across Canada and the world. Steve and Susan Booth, IMB missionaries since 1992, moved to Canada in 2000 to help reach Canada through the seminary. Steve says, “One of the degree outcomes for all of our ministry training programs is competency in engaging lostness through evangelism, church planting and cross-cultural missions.”

Steve teaches New Testament and Greek and serves as the academic dean, while Susan teaches Biblical Studies at the college and Evangelism at the seminary and college. Their students are required to be engaged in ministry through a local church, and many find their place of service in church plants. Steve adds, “Graduates now are sowing the gospel seed across the six time zones of the great nation of Canada. Several are even serving internationally.”

Susan explains that the evangelism classes focus on developing gospel fluency through practical, hands-on assignments. Students are also required to develop strategies for discipling new believers and equipping others to share the gospel. Susan elaborates, “We pray together and learn from one another, sharing what is working and what isn’t.”

> Susan asks for prayer that God will use both her writing and teaching to help others share the gospel broadly across Canada — and beyond.

> Steve’s prayer is that the Lord of the harvest will raise up more laborers in this harvest field, and that many more of them will avail themselves of the training for ministry through Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary and College.
Australia Sub-Cluster

Reaching New South Wales, Australia

Ken and Kathy Woods work in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, where 74 percent of the population’s ancestors come from Europe. During the 1800s, the Australian government was consumed with managing the business of a penal colony, thus the churches took up the role of educating children. The government took control of the schools in the 1880s with the agreement that the churches could still come in and teach special religious education (SRE). Currently, the churches are still allowed to have volunteers come into the public primary schools once a week. The high schools have a full-time Scripture teacher who teaches various classes during the week. Students are allowed to attend a class of their religious affiliation. New South Wales is the only area in Australia that continues to permit Scripture to be taught in schools. Ken and Kathy see this as a great opportunity to share the gospel because the majority of these students do not attend church.

In addition to being active in the schools, Ken and Kathy are also exploring opportunities for joining with a national partner in order to plant a new church. Sydney is growing in multiple ways as more immigrants and rural migrants flock to the city in search of employment.

- Pray the government will continue to allow special religious education classes in the schools in New South Wales. Intercede that Ken and Kathy will be able to share Christ with those who attend their classes.
- Pray for opportunities to have spiritual conversations with these immigrants and rural migrants searching for employment. Ask that they will have hearts that are receptive and responsive to the gospel.
South America Sub-Cluster
Sharing the gospel with Italians in Brazil

Brazil is home to over 3 million Italian descendants many of whom still maintain their culture and language after many years of living in Brazil. They speak Talian within their circles of friends and family, but are reluctant to speak with outsiders. Kyle and Valeria Roy are field representatives working among this people group in South Brazil. They have learned Portuguese but know the key to reaching this people group is to learn Talian. Their long-term goal is to begin small groups where the Bible is taught in Talian.

The small groups currently meet in homes to study the Bible, since most of the Italian descendants are reluctant to attend anything other than the Catholic Church. Using a series of studies developed to share the gospel progressively, Kyle and Valeria begin doing so during one of the first few meetings. Thereafter they seek to share the gospel every week in order to allow the Bible study participants the opportunity to hear the Good News repeatedly. In addition to using home Bible studies to reach this people group, Kyle and Valeria also place a high emphasis on building relationships, especially with those people who are unwilling to study the Bible.

> Pray for Kyle and Valeria as they seek to develop an effective strategy to reach the Italians in Brazil. Ask God to give them abundant opportunities to meet and engage in spiritual conversations with their people group.
> Intercede that Kyle and Valeria will soon become a part of the community and be accepted into Italian circles.
Euro West Cluster

Iberian Sub-Cluster:
Portugal and Spain

Italy/Malta Sub-Cluster:
Italy and Malta

France/Benelux Sub-Cluster:
Belgium, France, Luxemburg and Netherlands

British Irish Celts Sub-Cluster:
England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Nordic Sub-Cluster:
Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden
**Iberian Sub-Cluster**

**American football in Portugal**

Who would have imagined American football would open so many doors to sharing the gospel in Portugal? Two years ago IMB personnel began coaching an American football team. Currently there are four followers of Christ on the team, and others are asking spiritual questions. Through a partnership with the Baptist Church of Maia, church members have begun to attend practices, meet players and prayerwalk during practice times. This has led to a Bible study among players and their friends — both believers and seekers. For the last two years, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and coaches from northeast Georgia have hosted a football camp. Through these events, the city of Maia has opened its doors, and this year, the IMB personnel were able to host the first flag football camp for children with the help of an International World Changers team and the local Portuguese Baptist church. Over 60 children heard the gospel and listened to testimonies, each receiving a copy of the Word. These and other community events have enabled the spread of the gospel, facilitating many group and individual conversations about Christ. What a joy to also see the local church getting involved, reaching those in their own community in new and creative ways!

- Ask that the local Portuguese church continues to participate in the spread of the gospel, utilizing their gifts in new and creative ways to reach their community.
- Pray for football players, their girlfriends and their families as IMB personnel continue to share the gospel and invest in their lives. Intercede that they will not only see something different but also continue to ask questions that will lead them to a personal relationship with Christ.
Italy/Malta Sub-Cluster
Ministries to Malta - family festivals

When he was shipwrecked on the island of Malta in A.D. 70, the Apostle Paul found the people to be very hospitable. Today on this tiny island nation, over a million people still find the 450,000 Maltese to be warm and friendly. The staunchly Roman Catholic country is renowned for its numerous chapels and churches. Villages are usually centered around elaborate buildings, and more often than not, there is a playground or piazza nearby.

Ministries to Malta is a nonprofit Christian volunteer association that began in 1999. Through the Village Information Project, churches and small groups around the world adopted and prayed for the 68 Local Council areas of Malta. Many of the groups came to visit and share the gospel. Almost every street in Malta and on the smaller island of Gozo has been prayerwalked, and many Maltese received letters offering free Bibles and follow-up visits.

Although many different evangelistic methods have been tried, the most proven method in Malta is not to invite them to a hall or church but rather to meet them where they work or shop. Ministries to Malta is now sponsoring regular family festivals held in village parks and piazzas, particularly in the spring and summer, utilizing short-term workers from the United States. Increasing numbers of national believers are getting involved, showing Christ’s love through songs, games, puppets and even free giveaways.

◆ Pray for the local believers to be strengthened in their walk with Christ as they creatively share the Good News at these family festivals. Ask God to give short-term workers divine appointments to share with locals.

◆ Ask that these festivals will both bear fruit and yield a mighty harvest of Maltese and foreign attendees desiring to be more like Jesus. Pray for those who have attended Ministries to Malta events in the past or received information. Petition that they will contact believers for more information or meet a believer in their daily path.
**France/Benelux Sub-Cluster**

**Distributing children's books in Amsterdam**

"Remind me which book I gave you, Jeff*,” a worker in Amsterdam asked his small neighbor friend. “You know that book you gave me last Christmas,” Jeff replied. “The book that tells about Jesus. I love that book. I read it every night before I go to bed. Sometimes several times.”

Like many people in Amsterdam, Jeff does not come from a religious family and attends a secular school. It is quite probable that this book is his only exposure to Jesus. Finding the most effective and culturally appropriate way to share the gospel in the Netherlands is challenging. In the past widespread mass distribution has not produced much fruit. However, in this secular climate with very little religious influence, distributing children’s books about the Christmas story has been one way to get the gospel into homes. While distributing books last year during the Christmas Market, the team had to agree not to approach people, only speaking to those who came to them. One lady asked if the book was religious. When the team explained that it was from the Bible she replied, “Great! This is just what I need. My daughter asked me why we celebrate Christmas, and I did not know.”

*Name changed

> Pray that the team in Amsterdam will continue to find effective ways for clearly communicating the gospel with those in their city. Ask that the children’s books and other gospel portions will be read frequently and that those who receive them will contact the team for more information.

> Intercede that the darkest places in Amsterdam will be illuminated with the truth of the gospel. Lift up Jeff and other children in the Netherlands. Petition that they will come to know Jesus personally and then lead others in their family to Christ.
British Irish Celts Sub-Cluster

Seed sowing on campus in Leeds, U.K.

Leeds is one of those quiet cities in Britain; yet, its impact is tremendous. With a population of 800,000, it is the third largest city in the United Kingdom. Nearly one-third of the inhabitants of Leeds are under 25 years of age. It is the second financial capital in the U.K., and after London, it has the second highest population of university students in one city. All of this provides a myriad of opportunities for ministry.

Ryan and Terra Lindsey, IMB personnel in Leeds, are seeking to sow the seeds of the Gospel by utilizing spiritual surveys combined with tasty biscuits (cookies) for the perpetually peckish (hungry) university students on campus. This last year they were able to mobilize a church to start home groups in order to encourage personal spiritual development. One of these groups meets at their home. Ryan was also able to gather some student athletes on one campus to start a Bible study, and Terra started a spiritual discussion group with a couple of atheist mums. Many people have been engaged in regular discipleship. All of this could not have been possible without your partnership, encouragement, and support. A simple thank you is not enough, so please join us in giving glory to God for opening doors and developing relationships for the advancement of His Kingdom.

Ryan and Terra share, “The Bible study we had at ‘uni’ last year will be starting from scratch again as no students are returning.” Petition the Father to draw new students to this group.

Pray for Ryan and Terra as they seek persons of peace to help them start a spiritual community in their neighborhood. As far as they know, none of the parents they know at their children’s school attend church, and only one neighbor seems to have any sort of church participation.
**Nordic Sub-Cluster**

**Focusing on relationships**

Zack and Jennifer Dove seek to build relationships with the people of Norway and share with them the relationship they have with Jesus. Being the only IMB family in Norway, they see the importance of connecting with local partners. They are working with families in three cities in the county. The majority of these are house churches or other small groups. Much of what they do is rather simple. They go into their cities in pairs, trying to engage people in conversation where they live, shop, eat and hang out, and seek to identify those God is already pursuing. Because their strategy is simple, they are able to include local families and volunteer teams that visit from the States. In preparation for evangelistic opportunities, they participate in training that not only utilizes engaging questions in order to connect with people personally, but also, prepares them to be good listeners both to the person they meet and to the Holy Spirit. Being able to share their own salvation stories in two minutes as a way to present the gospel is another critical component of their training because it also allows the listener to think about what they’ve heard and gives them an opportunity to ask questions.

- Zack and Jennifer want to see each person they meet as a unique and interesting person that God created and loves, never as a target or project. **Intercede that He will give them His eyes for the places they live and work, and His heart for the people they meet.**

- Pray for open hearts among the people Zack and Jennifer encounter. **Ask that the Holy Spirit will speak clearly through the Doves.**
Euro Central Cluster

Germanic Sub-Cluster:
Austria, Germany, South Tyrol and Switzerland

Central Catholic Sub-Cluster:
Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
**Germanic Sub-Cluster**  
**Multiplying disciples in Vienna, Austria**

In Vienna, IMB’s church-planting team aims to share the gospel boldly and teach others to do the same. In the last year, they’ve begun several new discipleship groups, empowering Austrian friends with tools to help make disciples within their own networks of friends, families and co-workers. This multiplying principle allows the gospel to be shared on a much larger scale than the team could do by itself. Mike and Carrie Lazenby, as well as Lance and Carrie Borden are leading small groups and training their Austrian partners to share the gospel broadly. In the last six months, God has used friends from within these groups to start four new discipleship groups! In addition, Team Vienna facilitated a large-scale training for pastors and church leaders who have now started four new discipleship groups. One pastor even took six weeks and taught the principles from the pulpit in his morning worship services!

The Bordens and Lazenbys live out the principles they are teaching by investing in the lives of those in their own circles of influence. Whether it is having coffee with neighbors or spending time with school parents, all opportunities are used. Carrie Lazenby hosts a baking club, and Carrie Borden invests in Vienna’s art culture. Mike and Lance use sports as an entry point, and all team members participate in doing evangelistic surveys on university campuses. The goal in all of these activities is to share the gospel boldly to advance God’s kingdom in Austria.

> Please pray for Team Vienna’s partners who are leading new discipleship groups and teaching others to do the same. Ask for courage and boldness to share the gospel.

> Petition the Lord of the harvest to bring a spiritual awakening and openness to the gospel among all Austrians. Intercede that new leaders will emerge from the evangelism efforts.
Central Catholic Sub-Cluster

Community BBQ in Prague, Czech Republic

The city can be a very lonely place. Living amidst the crowd, yet struggling with feelings of not being known by anyone. Through the gospel message, Christians have been accepted and loved beyond anything they could have expected. Team Prague hopes that by providing opportunities for unbelievers to “taste and see that the Lord is good” through community parties, these unbelievers will know that God loves them and has sent His disciples to love them.

One of the ways Team Prague reaches out to these unbelievers is through an annual community BBQ. Team Prague and national believers invite all the people they have met through various activities and ministries, including families at a local school. Each year this BBQ is a highlight of the school year for many kids, giving them a chance to enjoy good food and participate in unique games most Czechs have never played. In preparation for this neighborhood BBQ, all national Christians that are involved are trained or retrained in order to share the gospel with their neighbors. These believers spend time in prayer, asking God to give them one opportunity to share the gospel at the BBQ as well as one new relationship with a neighbor. Team Prague has seen Czechs step out in faith and seize opportunities to share the gospel boldly and broadly.

> Lift up the church plants in unreached districts of Prague. Ask that believers will have boldness and confidence in the gospel to share it readily with whomever God has placed in their lives.

> Pray for the unreached districts of Prague. Intercede that Christians will rise up and see the need to plant gospel-centered churches.
Let’s Stay Connected

European affinity

Personal relationships lie at the core of any missional strategy. Just as God uses personal relationships to spread the light of His gospel, He also uses relationships to bind His church together in fellowship. Field workers in Europe desire a strong relationship with the churches they represent, and the best way to start a relationship is to get to know each other. We would love the chance to get to know you. Below are ways you can get to know us and the people groups we serve. Let’s stay connected and discover how we can work together for the sake of God’s glory!

imb.org
@imb_sbc
facebook.com/imb.sbc
instagram.com/imbmissions
youtube.com/imbconnecting
IMB partners with churches to send and support missionaries who make disciples and multiply churches among unreached people and places for the glory of God.

Help send and support missionaries through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering or your church’s Global Missions Offering.

To learn more about giving, visit imb.org/give
100% of the money you give sends and supports missionaries.

**TOTAL BUDGET**

*Based on the 2015 budget*

- **58%** from Lottie Moon and Global Missions Offerings
- **31%** from Southern Baptist Cooperative Program
- **9%** from Development, Field-generated funds, Investment and Other Income
- **2%** from Global Hunger Relief