



# Christian Associates Europe

## 2022 Annual Report

Dear Friend,

Christian Associates Europe, in cooperation with Christian Associates International, exists to start and shape communities of faith that love like Jesus in their neighborhoods. In the face of political unrest in many parts of the world, war, severe weather events, earthquakes, and radical cultural changes, the opportunity to serve in love has never been greater.

Recognizing the growing need for life-transforming communities of faith, Christian Associates started an intensive effort 18 months ago to increase awareness of the organization and the unique approach we take to help people discern where and how to serve in our mission. The efforts have proven to be extraordinarily fruitful. This past March, we hosted the largest staff on-boarding conference in the organization's history in Scotland, adding many new field staff. Further, our regular cohorts that introduce new potential staff to our mission, vision, and practices, are filling up looking into the next 12 months.

Christian Associates churches and church-planting projects are actively transforming lives across Europe, North America, and Latin America, proclaiming salvation and demonstrating grace to those who desperately need it. We follow God's leading around the world and right in our own neighborhoods. There has never been a greater opportunity to send teams of people to love like Jesus in their neighborhoods to transform lives.

This would not be possible without you. God is truly on the move and pouring favor upon Christian Associates in this season. The church is the very presence of Christ in any culture, and we believe in the unique calling God has placed on Christian Associates to start and shape life-giving expressions of Christ's church. With every prayer, gift, and story you share, you participate in Christ's Great Commission with us. We are grateful to God for you.

The Board of Directors  
Spring, 2023

## Lifting up Ukraine

GERMANY, UKRAINE — Christian Associates International is seeing peoples' lives changed forever by helping churches engage in current events, and by sharing the gospel with people who don't yet know Jesus.

As we start and shape churches, our missionaries are on the front lines, both spiritually and physically. They are a part of how God is uniting churches globally to display His glory by being His hands and feet to a hurting and broken world.

William and Sheila Whittenberg serve with Christian Associates in Berlin, Germany. Last spring, in a random encounter at the airport, William and Sheila met a lost, 80-year-old, Ukrainian gentleman who didn't speak any English or German. God had prepared them for such a time as this as Sheila knows Russian from her work in Siberia many years ago...

William and Sheila found out this gentleman was from the occupied Donbas region of Ukraine. Helping this gentleman navigate his whereabouts that day prompted Sheila to begin serving the very next day at the main train station in Berlin where Ukrainian refugees were entering the country in droves.



Shortly after this, the city of Berlin asked all the churches that could to set up temporary shelters for 10 days in order to house the thousands of refugees pouring into the city daily. Berlinprojekt, the church that William and Sheila work with, and a local Lutheran church pooled their resources and were able to provide food and shelter for 70 family units and afterwards find guest families to take them in for a few more months. Sheila continued to mentor and support four family units that stayed in Berlin. Two of the wives have since returned to Kyiv to be with their husbands and remain in contact with Sheila. Two other young women and their families are still in Berlin. Sheila has walked alongside these women, going to doctor's appointments, government offices, and job interviews together, where she was able to translate for them as well as offer cultural advice and emotional support. Further support came in finding and moving these families into their own apartments. Both of these young women are currently doing well and seeing God's grace in their lives, but the symptoms of trauma are still there, and they panic whenever something goes even slightly wrong. Supporting refugees sometimes just means sitting with them as they shed tears over a particular situation, consoling and praying with them,

as Sheila has done. But on a lighter note, it can also mean making Tik Toks together to process everything that is new.

The Whittenbergs, along with many local churches, continued to mobilize support and housing for Ukrainians trying to escape the ravages of war. Some were believers and most were not. The refugees have been wildly blessed by the hospitality and care shown to them by local Berliner churches and some have even found a home in these church families.

William, through a series of networks, was also able to connect with a church in Boryslav, Ukraine, that was and still is helping with refugees and displaced people, feeding and housing them. As churches in Ukraine and around the world mobilized to help, support and supplies from Europe and the United States have been distributed among people in dire need. The elderly are especially susceptible to being unable to leave their apartments, unable to find the food and resources they need to live and survive. Supplies such as flour and oil are vital, as are beef jerky and untraceable mobile phones for soldiers.

And churches are passing out fresh baked goods to many. William noted, “In this culture, for the Ukrainians, fresh baked goods are a sign of home, a sign of normalcy. It is a symbol of hospitality, freely received.”

William, with others, helps drive from Berlin, through Poland, to get through the border into Ukraine, a grueling day-long drive, to take these types of supplies to Boryslav, even as air sirens wail above their heads. Then the churches in Ukraine drive across the country on pock-marked roads and distribute the items to churches throughout Ukraine at a risk to their own lives. Christian brothers like Yuri, a big, burly, and brave Ukrainian, lead the way.



God is at work. He has been at work and He continues to be at work. Even through the devastation of war, the unity of the church around the world has supported the local churches in Ukraine to be able to literally be Christ's hands and feet to feed, clothe, and shelter.

And amazingly, William recounts how his not-yet-believing friends in Berlin are asking questions about Jesus when he tells them about how God's people are serving in Ukraine. They are getting a glimpse of God's people at work in the lives of those most vulnerable. Both the

unchurched and the churched are drawn to Christ through these acts of service to people in dire need!

“But we’re not going to change the face of this war through our trips,” William comments. “The most important thing is simply for us to go and be there—to show those in need that we see you, we are with you, we the church believe in you. The outside world is watching, is praying, and is on your side.” Just as Paul wrote to the early churches, William hopes the churches of Ukraine will find encouragement as the rest of the body of Christ is with them.

Please continue to pray for safety for our missionaries as well as all those in Ukraine who continue to live in turmoil and uncertainty. Please pray for God’s kingdom to grow as the world sees the people of God rise up and serve and love, even at great risk to themselves. You are a part of the body that God uses to build up His people. We are thankful for you!

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## A Fresh Aroma of Christ

ARUBA, CURACAO — “We have worked in Holland for decades. We have worked in Latin America for over a decade. But we’ve never planted churches in the Caribbean. Is God inviting us into a new place? It’s full of the same post-Christendom we see across Europe and the Americas.”



Last year, Eric Curtiss, Secretary of Christian Associates Europe, asked the question above. He joined a group of Christian Associates workers in the Dutch Antilles islands of Aruba and Curacao for six days to pray, hear from God, and meet with the locals to sense what God might be doing. The scouting group, led by Kevin Johnson, deeply enjoyed getting to know the people and culture. They also assessed the spiritual tone of the land. They returned convinced there was an enormous need for grace-based,

Jesus-centered churches that would reach out as Christ's hands and feet to the lost and lonely.

**Yes, it may seem like paradise, but imagine a majority people who are devoid of God in everyday life yet desperate for authentic and life-transforming community in a post-Christian culture. Local Christians expressed a need to BE the Body of Christ in a fresh way on their islands.**

We were asking, "Is God leading us to start a church here?" After meeting dozens of people from both existing churches and those seeking a new expression of church, the consensus was that a fresh aroma of Christ was indeed needed.

People were expressing a desire for faith communities that would have more grace and less legalism, ones with fewer high-power structures and control, with a greater focus on people and grace, all while staying committed to orthodox Christianity and Jesus's love for people.

Christian Associates International has been starting churches like these in Europe and Latin America for over fifty years now. These are the kinds of faith communities we want people to experience in their culture and context.

Eighty-five percent of Arubans and a majority of those on the sister island of Curacao are nominal Catholics, with very few having a personal faith. This is very similar to many places where Christian Associates is currently working in Europe and Latin America, so we are aware of the needs and challenges of ministering in such cultures.

Other religions are infiltrating the land as well, slowly but surely. *But many people are asking for less religion. They are looking for a lushness of spirituality that would fill the landscape, like the islands themselves... and they are very open to a vibrant encounter with Jesus!*

**We began the trip asking, "Is God leading us to start a church on one of these islands?"  
We left saying, "The fields are ripe on ALL of these islands for multiple church plants.  
Lord, please send us the workers!"**

Please pray with us as we love like Jesus in neighborhoods around the world, working together to be a reflection of Christ to a world looking for a God that is with them and is for them.

As we plant churches and Christian communities to reach our modern world, pray with us that lives would be changed, cultures would be impacted, and transformation would occur for God's glory alone, that people may experience and enter a true Paradise, a joy-filled life with Christ.

## 2022 Report of Activities

For the year 2022, the board of directors of Stichting Christian Associates Europe consisted of Herbert Habnit of The Hague, The Netherlands (partial year, Chairman), Eric Curtiss of Colorado Springs, USA (Secretary), Nicholas Webb of Shrewsbury, UK (Treasurer), Andrew Perriman of London, UK (incoming Chairman), Geoff Rinehart of Cour d'Alene, USA. Remko Dekker of Delft, The Netherlands was elected to the board, and Andrew Perriman was elected Chairman. The board met as required in regular meetings during the year and approved financial statements and conducted such other business as was necessary.

Two employees and one volunteer served the organization in The Netherlands. Nine families served as missionaries through the organization, with work in The Netherlands, France, Spain, Sweden, and Germany, with a global presence in many more countries through the Christian Associates network. Missionaries worked to complete the purpose of the organization as laid out in the Policy Plan and the Articles of Association.

Detailed financial reports were compiled by the Finance Director at the end of the year. Summary reports were approved by the board of directors for publication online, showing income of €438.466 to expenses of €410.045 for the year, compared to prior year income of €335.745 and prior year expenses of €366.853. Assets of the organization increased from €6.613 on December 31, 2021 to €35.328 on December 31, 2022.

Respectfully submitted on 3 May 2023,



Eric Curtiss, Secretary  
Stichting Christian Associates Europe  
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