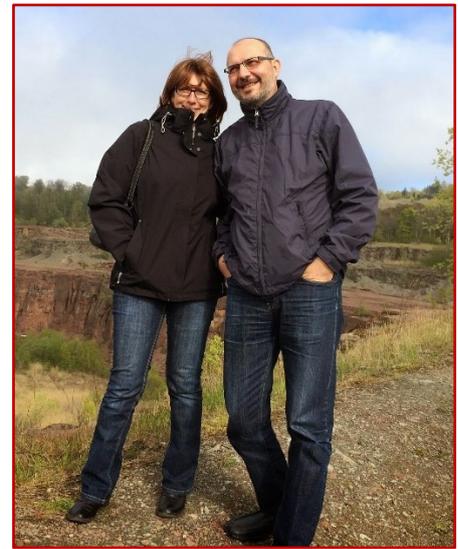


January 2018

Dear mission partners and friends,



A grain of mustard seed

'And [Jesus] said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."' (Mark 4:30-32)

Building and growing a church from a little seed

From time to time we get questions from people who ask us about our church plant. They are used to well established churches with beautiful buildings and everything set up professionally. But here we are, having no building of our own, having to be flexible where we meet, with few believers, very few trained people and so many challenges. It is not very easy to explain the church planting process to people, how actually the tiny seed can grow and become a big tree. But the growing process takes years of hard work, lots of prayers, tears, hope and faith. So thank you, dear friends, for standing in faith and in prayer with us in this mission.

Looking back to 2017

Last year, we focused on teaching the gospel as we preached through the gospel of Mark, led Christianity Explored courses and taught the gospel in bible study groups. We will continue in the



same manner this year but our emphasis will be more on prayer as God is the one giving the growth. Our hearts are longing to see more people coming to Christ and becoming his disciples.

Plans and vision for 2018

The ministry is starting to grow and in order to keep up with the work we need to start training people for leadership and ministry in the church. For now, we are looking into two specific areas: (1) we need leaders for the home groups and bible study groups and (2) we need to start training more lay leaders in basic expository preaching and evangelism. We have some young potential leaders whom we hope will be called to ministry in the future, either

bi-vocationally or full-time. In order to achieve this, we need to develop training courses and other resources so we can be more effective. Our vision is not just to train new leaders but also for them to be equipped to train others. We are fully aware that we need to put in a lot of work to equip the future leaders for the task ahead.

Publishing new training courses and bible studies

Since we got involved with this church planting work two years ago, we have realised how important it is to have materials that are fully contextualized for Sweden. It was hard to find contextualised materials so we decided to start producing our own. This meant that we had to take some new steps, both in boldness and in faith - boldness because it would have been much easier to just take a course and translate it. But by doing so, we would lose the contextualisation. Since we had worked in Serbia for many years on courses, training programmes and publishing, we felt confident enough to start writing our own materials here in Sweden and produce well-contextualized tools for training. The step in faith yet to be taken is finding additional support to make it possible for Lotta to lead the work of actually publishing these tools and materials. We do feel the pressure as more and more people are finding out that we are producing materials for small groups and bible studies. The demands are high but it is crucial that this work is done properly. So for the time being, we are piloting the material internally as we train people in the church family so we can amend and improve the course.

Our goal is to produce courses and materials for evangelism, discipleship and lay leadership training. We're just at the beginning and we are fully aware that there is a long way to go. It will take time and enormous effort but it will be worthwhile in the long run. So please keep us and this ministry in your prayers.

Please pray for:

- Emmaus church and all the faithful people who are sacrificing a lot for the sake of the gospel
- Our upcoming training of leaders
- Us - as we write and pilot the courses, that God will give us wisdom and focus on the gospel
- Support that will enable Lotta to work part-time to get the materials published

Yours in Christ,

Chris and Lotta



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