

MMMI NEWS

SUMMER
2021

Helping military Christians follow Jesus Christ in armed forces around the world



MMI NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

EUROPE	05
AFRICA	18
MIDDLE EAST	12
SOUTH ASIA	14



www.mmi.org.uk



Battle is joined!

Dear Supporters and Friends,

We sense that battle has been joined! As we contemplate moving out of lockdown in several of our regions, and evaluate the prospect of a number of mission trips, we send you heartfelt thanks for your faithful prayer for MMI over the last 14 months of lockdown. I also want to testify to the Lord's amazing care for us; His guidance and leading these past months; and for what He has taught us and what He is leading us into. Whilst it may be possible to travel in Europe again soon, we have joined the spiritual battle raging over India and Nepal and many regions of Africa. We are also addressing the distinct possibility of an Alpha Course across our regions, and specifically a bespoke Alpha Course in Arabic, led by a trained pastor in the Middle East. And it grieves us to witness the conflict between nations in our regions, about which we are committed to pray.

Lockdown will lift sequentially across the globe but it may be many months yet until we can engage directly in mission trips, particularly in Africa and Asia. Nonetheless, we sense the →



05 EUROPE

European Military Christian Meeting (EMCM), Croatia MCF film makers & MCF Bulgaria has a problem!



08 AFRICA

Looking beyond the pandemic in Africa E & S, Nigeria MCF Gathering



12 MIDDLE EAST

Exciting momentum in the Middle East with Alpha



14 SOUTH ASIA

Standing in the gap, interceding for the nation



18 MMI CALENDER

A quick view of what's coming up across the regions

20 PRAYER IN MMI

Join us in a full programme of daily and weekly prayer, and hear about upcoming prayer events

22 NOTICE BOARD

Snippets of life from around the regions

24 BACKPACK

Thoughts, prayers and scriptures to carry with you

Newsletter is a private circulation by:
Military Ministries International, Havelock House, Barrack Road
Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3NP, United Kingdom.
Telephone: +44(0)1252 311222; Email: comms@mmi.org.uk.
Registered Charity No. 284203. Editor Sue Millard

spiritual battle hotting up in all our regions and I believe the Lord is calling us to intercede fervently. There is much work to be done in the heavenlies whilst we cannot 'go'. I am greatly enthused by this, as I believe that, as we redouble our focus on prayer, we will see the Lord break through in ways and in areas we cannot properly imagine. Praise his name!

God has been preparing the MMI team. Following the injunction of Hebrews 10:25, we have met weekly (now fortnightly) on Zoom for Bible study and prayer since April 2020. We have grown close together and very synchronised in prayer and sense of mission. It has been beautiful, and each meeting has been a joy, often with unexpected blessings as we have studied the Word together. I believe one of the results of this is a fitter spiritual combat team in the hands of the Lord. We are willing and enthusiastic but, I trust, not presumptuous.

There are significant battles ahead and we know that, if we wish to see the Lord's Kingdom Come, there is striving to do in the heavenlies. We also have



much to learn. The team will update you in the articles that follow and, as you read, please join us afresh in the spiritual battle, not in fear but in the power, love and sound mind afforded by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 1:7); in the boldness and preparation in the Word required of Joshua (Joshua 1:6-9); with our armour fully on, clean, in working order (Ephesians 6:10ff); and remembering that the weapons the Lord has given us are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds (2 Cor 10:4-6). When we are equipped for battle, there is great freedom operating in the will of God= and power of the Spirit, surrendered to Jesus.

We are praying the Lord's cover over us in accordance with Psalm 91 and Deuteronomy 33:26-27. Although Satan is roaring around like a lion, seeking whom he may devour, our God is on the move and we know on whose side we stand and who has the victory.

This is what the LORD says to you: "Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow march down against them." 2 Chronicles 20:15-16. ●



In all things God works for the good of those who love him

RTL EUROPE REV GROZDAN STOEVSKI

Like most charities and ministries, the work of MMI has been heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and most of our activities have gone online. We do know that 'in all things God works for the good of those who love him' (Rom 8:28), and this Scripture has proved true for our ministry in Europe as well.

Over the last year, we have had ten online monthly European MCF leaders' meetings, with an average attendance of 20-25 from across the region. At each meeting we have had a guest speaker, including Maj Gen Roddy Porter, Brig Mark Leakey, Rev Mark Chester, Col Eric Mandille and others, followed by a Q&A and ending with a sweep of short prayers across the screen. These online meetings have really helped maintain the network of believers, have provided people with the opportunity to have fellowship, to

encourage others, to be encouraged and to share prayer needs.

European Military Christian Meeting (EMCM)

These monthly meetings gradually built up to the EMCM, our annual European Conference, on 24th April which, like last year, had to be online. The plus side of meeting online was that more people could attend. The two European AMCF VPs, Rev Mike Terry (Western and Southern Europe) and Timo Vehvilainen (Northern and Eastern Europe) led the conference on the theme of "Refreshment and Renewal", based on Mark 6:31b (Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest). 65 people from 23 countries participated - representing Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece,

Hungary, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Moldova, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, and USA. We were delighted to be joined by representatives of the Apostolat Militaire International (AMI), its President, Admiral (NL Rtd) Matthieu Borsboom, and three members of his exec committee from the Netherlands, Italy, and the USA. Another welcome guest was the new head of the UK's Christian Association of Police (CAP).

Despite all circumstances or maybe because of them, the participants were eager to get together, and were hungry for good Christian fellowship, even though it was online.

The Bible teaching took place over three main sessions:

1. Renewal and Refreshment – by Rev Mike Terry. The Christian life is anguish along with joy. It is hard to let go of our 'busyness' to spend time with Jesus. In addition to having daily quiet time, we need to have a dedicated time of retreat—a full day,

several days, a week—to get our spiritual batteries recharged.

2. What are you doing here? – by Rev Grozdan Stoevski. Six life lessons and questions to ponder upon, drawn from the story of the prophet Elijah on Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:9-13). The questions we considered were: What are you doing here today? What is God calling you to do?
3. Prayer – by Timo Vehvilainen – experiencing the presence of God, with emphasis on the father-son relationship. Do you long for this relationship? Consider the story of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32) – the Father was looking eagerly for his younger son to return.

In addition to the main sessions, a highlight of EMCM 2021 was the break-out groups, led by some of the European MCF leaders. It was a time of refreshing and renewing in the Lord. Pray that the refreshing will continue to bring fresh inspiration and renewal to AMCF's work in Europe.

Croatia MCF film makers

In the last couple of months, the spread of the virus has started to decrease and many European countries have begun to relax some of the restrictive measures, which has enabled the MCF leaders to get back to business. A good example of this is the Croatian MCF who were able to hold their Annual Retreat in person at the Life Christian Centre, Crikvenica, near Riejka.

Drazen Hrženjak, leader of the MCF and MMI co-worker for the former Yugoslav republics, has been able to resume work on his second film which is dedicated to the foreign volunteers in the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. The group are delighted that they have managed to film the last scenes of the film in Vukovar (see picture), and they have started work on a third film, which is a short documentary about the chess tournament in Dubrovnik in 1991, where the main prize was 5 litres of drinking water!

Drazen's first film, Storm of the Soul, has been a huge success across Croatia and was broadcast on prime time National TV on the first Monday after the Western Easter. Millions have had the opportunity to hear the Gospel through the powerful testimonies of the main characters. Praise be to God! Storm of the Soul is also available on YouTube with English subtitles.

MCF Bulgaria has a problem!

The Bulgarian MCF has a problem, which is a great problem to have – it is running out of camo New Testaments and the Shield of Faith book! Both books have recently been re-discovered and greatly appreciated by the military medical community and senior officers. Join us in prayer for the resources for a new edition of both books. ●



ABOVE: Grozdan with Maj Dr George Popivanov
LEFT: Vukovar tower Croatia MCF
FAR LEFT: MCF Croatia meeting at Crikvenica.



Eswatini MCF revival prayer meeting.

LOOKING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC IN AFRICA EAST & SOUTH: SPOTLIGHT ON ESWATINI MCF

RTL AFRICA EAST & SOUTH MAX MUPONDI

RTL Max wanted to see what lessons could be learnt from lockdown: there were breakthroughs, but also setbacks and areas of no breakthrough. There is an ongoing need for spiritual warfare, and we need to know the way forward, and to see what we can carry beyond the lockdown.

The spotlight was put on the Eswatini Military Christian Fellowship (formerly Swaziland MCF) where, during this season, many military people repented and drew nearer to God, after reflecting on their calling and purpose.

The MMI E & S Africa team started

weekly prayer meetings via Zoom and allowed themselves to learn from the Holy Spirit new ways of conducting ministry, standing with military believers, encouraging prayer, teaching, and supporting them to serve the Lord, alongside service to their country. Free online tools such as WhatsApp chat groups were useful in sharing prayer requests and supporting one another. We learned to use Zoom to keep the team and people from various regions connected and to pray on a regular basis, with much greater impact. Many MCFs and Chaplaincies were revived, the Eswatini MCF is a

shining example of that. God kept a remnant there who prayed consistently and maintained their witness. Prayer was also rallied from outside through MMI Regional Prayer Meetings, the Regional Pray and Plan Group (RPPG) meetings, the German MCF Africa South Prayer Group meetings (all online) and the global intercessory prayer link.

It was difficult to grow the RPPG as internet access is an unaffordable luxury in many parts of Africa. Mobilising people for regular prayer was a challenge, as too was building relationships without meeting the people face to face. The pandemic brought even more suffering to people in conflict zones such as Somalia, South Sudan, the northern region of Ethiopia, and Mozambique (where Islamic terrorist attacks continue). Further suffering has been caused by the floods and mudslides in many parts of Africa South. The 'South African covid variant' wreaked havoc in the region and did not spare our contacts, many of whom repented and drew closer to God - the 'Rock of Ages cleft for me.' God gave some people strength to lift their voices in prayer and to witness, which resulted in many people giving their lives to the Lord. The hard-hearted often come to faith in times of trouble. This is the story of the Eswatini MCF, which is now actively undertaking outreach to other uniformed services. Many families suffered huge difficulties due to lack of food, unemployment, loss of breadwinners, a rise in domestic abuse and depression. The pandemic also gave rise to xenophobia, racism, poverty, politicisation of aid and religious hatred. The Chaplaincy and MCFs were often put under pressure as they rallied to support bereaved families unable to say goodbye or to

conduct decent funerals for their departed loved ones. The homeless, widows and orphans who would look to the church for love, care and acceptance were left exposed, as this support became unavailable. Many parents, especially from poorer backgrounds, felt ill-equipped to support their children with home-schooling. It will be difficult for such children to catch up with others. These issues will continue to affect individuals and families, so we will keep on praying.

As we seek to broaden our prayer base, the way forward will be to use budgeted funds to assist members who want to join our prayer channels but cannot afford to. We would love to see more internet access at cafés. Limited field trips will cut costs and be the new norm as most of our work will be online. We can also learn from Paul who wrote most of his epistles from prison, a form of lockdown. Paul did not stop but found new ways to carry on with his ministry. Writing during his two years of house arrest in Rome to the congregation he helped to establish at Philippi, he encouraged them saying, 'Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' Phil 1.2.

We will continue to pray for the Africa South Regional Conference planned to take place in Antananarivo, Madagascar in October. The decision will be made in June as to whether it will be a physical gathering for all, or physical only for local delegates with international delegates taking part online. We will continue to pray for the provision of resources for the conference, and for the mobilisation, registration and participation of key contacts in the region at both the conference and the interaction

afterwards. To maximise the opportunity of being in the region, MMI staff have planned visits to Eswatini, Tanzania and Kenya after the conference.

The East Africa Prayer Convention might be held towards the end of the year if travel restrictions are lifted. We need our supporters to with stand with us in prayer for the troubled spots of Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and also for the Africa Union Peace Keeping Mission. We will also pray for financial resources to support outreach missions, the introduction of online Alpha for the Forces and that the forthcoming launch of the East Africa digital Bible pilot programme will produce great fruit.

The Eswatini MCF provides evidence of answered prayers as God turned its mourning to dancing during the lockdown. This season has truly been a time of refreshing, reviving and rebooting prayer for individuals and groups. In April the Eswatini MCF conducted a week-long revival prayer meeting, which was attended by their Commander and senior officers. The final day saw delegates from the Police, Prisons and Fire services joining

the meeting with their commanders.

Paul's closing instructions to the Ephesians are relevant to us today: "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." Ephesians 6.10-18 NIV ●



Eswatini MCF revival prayer meeting.

Great joy to meet at last - Nigeria MCF Gathering

RTL WEST AFRICA - EDDY AMPONSAH

With great joy, the Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship (NMCF) held its first face-to-face gathering in April, the NMCF Annual National Convention. The Convention was the first significant in-person gathering of NMCF activities planned for this year.

"Members attending the Convention were enthusiastic after all the covid issues that have placed enormous restrictions on so many in-person interactions. With the partial easing on gathering restrictions in the country, it was such a huge relief and blessing to gather again to fellowship together". An NMCF leader

The convention was attended by those in high military command, including both the Nigerian Chief of Defence Staff and the Nigerian Chief of the Air Staff, as well as para-military dignitaries - showing the value the NMCF adds to the military and security service communities. It is also a testament to the grace and blessing of God on NMCF activities.

The theme of "Run the Good Race of Faith" from 1Tim 6:12 allowed delegates to focus on their family and ministry settings, and also on various areas of their careers. The convention offered a vital call for commitment in their faith in a time of global pandemic.

This Convention reminded members of the essence of our vision and mission as Christians, to continue the 'great commission' in the military and para-military community.

Because of the ongoing global health issues, we were not able to meet in the usual way, so the Convention went to a hybrid format, with some delegates attending in person and others joining via social media platforms. This format may become the new norm for MCF events.

This year's Convention also allowed the National Executives from the previous term to continue in office.

Praise be to God for the 2021 National Convention of the NMCF. Its immediate success reminded members of the responsibilities that await the NMCF and the roles each member has to play in fulfilling the mandate of the Lord, especially in these last days.

Members are relishing the gradual reopening of face-to-face interaction for fellowship, worship and prayer. ●



TOP: The Nigerian Chief of the Air Staff with members of NMCF at the Closing Session

BOTTOM: The Nigerian Chief of Defence Staff with members of NMCF at the Opening Session