



New Churches

for New People

Three good Questions...

According to Øivind Augland, trainer of current UMC church-planters, there are three basic questions every church-planting team needs to ask themselves before starting:

1. Are we a group of people that enjoy being together? 2. Are we a group of people ready to welcome others into our fellowship? 3. Is our life worth copying?

"Church" is not a building, nor Christian activities, but believers being joined together because of their faith in Christ. If we don't enjoy each other's company and if our life with God and one another is not really worth copying, we need to do some rethinking. But – if we do enjoy being together and if we are proud of what we have with God then nothing should stop us!



Church-planting in Siberia

Andrus Kask (Estonia) has a heart for Siberia, where he started to go on mission trips already in 2003. Now he has been there 10 times. Andrus is taking part in M4 in Riga, the training for church-planters within the episcopal area. This is what Andrus says about summer 2011:

- We had some very special weeks in Yamal (north-western Siberia, polar area). Many thanks to everybody for support and prayers! Appointed by my bishop, I served at Muzhi as a mission pastor for 3 weeks. There I led Bible-study groups and prayer-meetings, as well as Sunday-meetings. Three times I went from Muzhi by boat (up to 56 kilometers away) together with Kolja and Zina. We served the Khanty-people in many small villages and cottages. Zina and Valja spoke in Khanty-language and gave New Testaments and Christian Calendars to the people. This is the result of 8 years mission that God has let us take part in.

I also visited reindeer herds in the Komi territory on the west side of the Ural mountains. We stopped by the train-station in Eletskaia. It was a truly blessed time and we got many contacts for the winter. We also visited four families there. Hopefully I can go back again this winter.

In August, I was 13 kilometers north of Salekhard, where a Finno-Ugric Christian Festival was arranged. I was one of the team-members. For four days we prepared the tent and two tsums (moveable house). Two people got saved. Walls between the local churches and Christians of all ages and nations fell down. It felt as if this was a beginning of a revival in North.



I also understood that "church" stands for the people who know God, and what they do is mission. Thanks to everybody for support and prayers! A Kask.

Five factors indicating a leader will finish strong

(Neil Cole).

1. Perspective. Seeing the whole picture. "What would be left if I were to die today"?
2. Renewal. Scheduled times alone with God for renewal purposes.
3. Discipline. Finishing well is not accidental but intentional.
4. Learning. Maintaining a learning posture throughout life.
5. Mentorina. Leaders who finish well mentor others and are mentored.

New Norwegian UMC church-plant ministers to families

In September 2011, a team from Centralkirken, Bergen, started a new fellowship for new families in Sotra, outside of Bergen. Together with his wife, Roar Barmen-Floysand is part of this church-planting team. They also participated in the church-planting track at School of Congregational Development in Gothenburg, September 2011. Roar sees the new work as follows:

- What makes us happy is that the work really seems to meet a need. The first time 75 people came, of which some 25 were from our own church! The second time there were 58, with less people from our own church. And the third time we had as many as 85, Roar says.

The vision is to reach families and children with something that is called "Myldredag".

- Many people are grateful for the initiative, and we really do believe that this work can be a tool in God's hand to help young children getting to know Jesus when they are young, Roar shares.

Remember to pray for this new potential church-plant! More info about the development in Norway will follow.

Text: CK. Photo: Silvia König.



**RETHINK
CHURCH**[®]



What an open home can do

A new church can be started in an ordinary home. Matilda Ek took part in the church-planting track arranged at School of congregational Development in Gothenburg, Sweden, September 2011. This is her interesting story on church-planting in Västerbotten, Sweden.

"I come from Sri Lanka and have grown up daily seeing people come to our home. On Sundays more than usual came, we made a lot of food and there was always enough for all. We were the only Christian family in that part of the village, the others were Buddhists, like the rest of my father's family. One day a Methodist pastor met my father who was a young boy. This led to my father's conversion. It was a hard time for my father, he was thrown out of his family. But the pastor received him and sent him to the theological seminary in Colombo where he became a preacher.

Our home became a place of fellowship for many people. Many started to seek God as a result of the fact that my parents opened their home and met their needs. In this way I have learned, since I was a child, that my own home is a place where I can serve God and people. This insight is part of my DNA .

Two years ago, my husband and I moved to a small village in Västerbotten, called Petikträsk. As newcomers we invited the whole village for dinner. Now the work is continuing. I welcome people to women's meetings, advent services in our kitchen, outdoor services etc Those that come represent all ages and nationalities: people from Sweden but also from Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan, Eritrea. In July 2011 I invited some muslims that have received Christ to give their testimony and 62 people came! People have woken up spiritually.

The fantastic church-planting track in Gothenburg has given me courage to move on. Now I feel I need to give birth to the "baby" I have carried within me for many years. Now I need to put together a core-team. Pray for me that I find the right people for this! And pray for the people of Petikträsk and their salvation. Our God is alive and everything is possible with him – I need to surrender fully to him". Matilda Ek.

Church-planting documented

The current UMC church-planting teams taking part in M4 (training for church-planters) are writing a 7-9 pages document on their plant, including vision, values, goals and how they experience their calling to plant as well as commitment in planting. The documents will be ready by mid-November 2011.

