

Europe: Work in Progress or Doomsday?



General Assembly 2013
Stadskanaal, 7-11 October

Dear Participants of the EEA General Assembly 2013,

A heartfelt welcome to all of you!

What did you think and feel when you read the theme of this year's General Assembly (GA)? *Europe – Work in Progress or Doomsday?* For some of you this question probably cuts quite close to the bone. You have been affected by the economic crisis in your country. You have felt it yourself and it hurts. Have you been able to maintain a sense of hope and look at this as work in progress or has it just been hardship and doomsday?



Probably all of us have experienced the challenges of the various aspects of today's crisis facing Europe. There are all kinds of responses to this in different countries across Europe. Christians are often at the forefront when it comes to helping and setting things right. And yet there is this other side where one is tempted to lose hope.

This GA is happening to give you hope. We want to listen to God's Word together and be encouraged. As Christians we actually know how things are going to turn out. We just need constant reminding of the present and future hope.

We will be looking at the root causes of crisis in many realms of life and we will hear how various national EAs are responding to it. We hope you will be equipped and encouraged through this.

And we want to give each other room to share pain and doubts. Take the opportunity and pick up courage to speak about it to a brother or a sister in Christ. We do not need to pretend in our EEA family. We are human and need encouragement and prayer. So share with and pray for each other.

May the Lord bless us all and may you go encouraged and with hope back to your work in progress!

Yours for the preparation team and the whole EEA family,



Thomas Bucher
General Secretary

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Programme overview

Monday – Day leader: Evi Rodemann

- 18.00 Dinner
- 19.30 Introduction & Worship
- 20.40 Fellowship & meeting Younger Leaders

Tuesday – Day leader: Evi Rodemann

- 07.30 Breakfast
- 08.30 Worship & Bible Study Nehemiah
- 10.00 *Break*
- 10.45 Europe in Crisis
- 11.40 Introducing the WEA GA
- 12.10 Mid Day Prayer
- 12.30 *Lunch*
- 14.00 EEA Members & Affiliates meeting & Parallel Programme
- 15.45 Coffee break
- 16.30 Europe's Economic and Social Crisis
- 17.40 Evening Prayer
- 18.00 *Dinner*
- 19.30 Being Good News people to Europe in crisis, part I

Wednesday – Day leader: Stoyko Petkov

- 07.30 Breakfast
- 08.30 Worship & Bible Study Nehemiah
- 10.00 *Break*
- 10.45 Europe's Political Environmental and Religious Crisis
- 11.40 Europe's crisis affecting youth and children
- 12.10 Mid Day Prayer
- 12.30 *Lunch*
- 14.00 EEA Members & Affiliates meeting
- 15.45 *Break*
- 16.30 Being Good News people to Europe in crisis, part II
- 17.40 Evening Prayer
- 18.00 *Dinner*
- 19.30 Europe: Crisis as the new Normal

Thursday – Day Leader: Inga Zinge Pupina

07.30 Breakfast

08.30 Worship & Bible Study Nehemiah

10.00 *Break*

10.45 A Faith based response to Crisis

11.40 Presentation by the UK EA

12.10 Mid Day Prayer

12.30 *Lunch*

14.00 Revitalizing Europe's Cross Cultural Mission activity

15.45 *Break*

16.30 Being Good News people to Europe in crisis, part III

17.40 Evening Prayer

18.00 Lord's Supper & Festive dinner

Friday

07.00 Breakfast

07.30 Transfer to Schiphol

Explanation of programme

All meetings and meals are on the first floor of the main building in the meeting rooms called Batenborg and Klinkenborg.

Bible Study Nehemiah

Jan Wessels

Tuesday: Nehemiah 1:1-11 and 2:11-20 – A time of Crisis

A 'problem-tree' is a wonderful management tool to analyse a crisis situation. Applied to the history of Nehemiah this would give us a picture of the desolation of God's people in Nehemiah's time. The symptoms or results of the crisis are that Jerusalem, centre of the religious and political identity of the Jews, was in tatters. The root cause for Nehemiah is clear: we have sinned. This is reason for him to confess the sins of his people.

Wednesday: Nehemiah 4 – Threats and Opportunities

Another wonderful strategic planning tool is a SWOT-analysis. Of course Nehemiah didn't know this tool as such, but he knew how to seize the opportunity and to avoid threats. Both were very real: the goodwill of the King on the one hand side and the hostility of the people in the land on the other hand. Guided by his faith and through his close relationship with his God, he managed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in a record-time.

Thursday: Nehemiah 6 – Seizing the Opportunities

Zooming in on how Nehemiah managed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem with the help of all the people, one can emphasize the strong points: Nehemiah's prayer life, his visionary leadership, the commitment of the people. On the other hand also, the weaknesses are clear, especially in the people he had to work with: their weak faith, their low morals and standards, their (lack of) spirituality, their worldliness.



Jan Wessels (52) is married to Beppie Schuurman (BTh). They have 4 children. After their BTh at the Theological University of the Christian Reformed in Apeldoorn, they served a small congregation in the Netherlands before they were sent out as missionaries to Botswana in 1992. In 2010 they returned to the Netherlands, where Jan was called by the Christian Reformed Bethel Church in Veenendaal to become director of the Evangelical Alliance. In 2013 he finished his MTh New Testament at the North West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

Europe in Crisis

Jim Memory and Jeff Fountain

Tuesday morning: Europe in Crisis (Jim Memory and Jeff Fountain)

Europe is in crisis – again! This generation of Europeans has lived through an unprecedented period of peace and prosperity. The fall of the Berlin Wall was less than twenty five years ago, though it seems like a distant memory. And as for the Second World War, well that is ancient history. Yet crisis is nothing new to Europe’s Christians. As we face the economic, political, social, environmental and religious crises of today’s Europe we would do well to remember the faith and fortitude of previous generations of Jesus’ followers. But we should also have our eyes open to see beyond the current crises to the opportunities that lie ahead.

Evangelicals have a rich heritage of social and political engagement, but our overall record is patchy. A Great Reversal in the later 1800's saw many withdraw from the public square to concentrate on evangelism and church life, while Catholics and neo-Calvinists developed biblical social doctrines. Not until Lausanne in 1974 did the global evangelical movement embrace a 'two-handed Gospel'. The current European crises test us afresh on our commitment to that good news.

Tuesday evening: Europe’s economic and political crisis (Jim Memory)

For most people the crisis in Europe is all about economics and the Euro. Yet economics and politics are closely linked and, in parallel with the economic crisis, Europe is enduring a series of political crises. What is the impact of the economic and political crises on Europe and Europe’s churches and how might they engage in mission in the current climate?

Wednesday morning:

Europe’s social, environmental and religious crisis (Jim Memory)

In addition to the economic and political, Europe is also suffering a social, environmental and religious crisis: a social crisis as it comes to terms with mass migration, demographic change and global consumer culture; an environmental crisis of potentially devastating consequences; and a religious crisis as secularization continues apace across most of Europe. How can today’s Jesus followers preach good news at a time like this?

Wednesday evening: Crisis as the new normal (Jim Memory)

Many of the crises that we are living through in 2013 are here with us for many years to come. Rather than placing our hope in the secular salvation of an economic recovery Europe's Christians must learn to live with crisis as the new normal. Rather than longing for a return to Christendom we must embrace our identity as exiles and learn to live "freely, dangerously and tenaciously in a world where faith does not have its own way" (Brueggemann).

Thursday morning: A faith based response to the crisis (Jeff Fountain)

Paul's letter to the Ephesians contains lessons for living in a secularized world which we often find intimidating. Yet Paul affirms that it is 'now through the Church that God's manifold wisdom is made manifest to the powers that be'. Our calling is to be memory, conscience and imagination in a society at drift.



Jeff Fountain is the director of the Schuman Centre for European Studies, and chairs the Hope for Europe Round Table. He has regularly attended EEA General Assemblies over the past two decades, and was director of YWAM Europe from 1990-2010. He lives with his wife Romkje in Heerde, The Netherlands.

Jim Memory is Vision and Strategy Team Leader for European Christian Mission International, course leader of the MA in European Mission and Intercultural Christianity at Redcliffe College (UK) and the editor of Vista, Redcliffe's quarterly bulletin of research-based information on mission in Europe. Previously Jim was a church planter with ECM in Spain for fourteen years.



Being Good News People to Europe in Crisis

Julia Doxat Purser, Christel Ngnambi and EEA's members

Everybody is affected by the crisis in Europe, in a positive or negative way. You can join this session each day to share, think and pray together on how multiple crises can become an opportunity for the Gospel.

It is sometimes very difficult to recognize God's hand in a crisis. What could be happening in Jesus' Name? How can we hear and follow God's will in the crisis?

Tuesday: How can EEA members help and inspire Evangelicals to be Good News People? What are specific roles for Evangelical Alliances and affiliated ministries?

Come, share and listen to ideas, both practical and inspirational, that will enable us all to empower Evangelicals across Europe to demonstrate and speak the Gospel, even as we face huge challenges ourselves.

Wednesday: How do we help the Church respond to specific economic, social, political and religious challenges?

Choose from a wide variety of topics. Come, share and learn about examples and success stories of Gospel responses to these areas of need.

Thursday: This will be an opportunity to think more concretely about ways to engage and cooperate, and allow God to guide our responses. You can also opt to learn about a new topic.

Christel Ngnambi started as the EEA Brussels Manager in September 2007. He is a political Science graduate with a deep interest in developing a Christian mind and applying Christian thinking to public policy. His personal public policy interests include migration.



Julia Doxat-Purser is EEA's socio-political representative & religious liberty coordinator. Julia's role is to help Evangelicals engage in the public arena effectively and with solid biblical foundations of how one engages "Christianly". She teaches, writes, offers advocacy & consultancy support and connects specialists together, especially in the area of freedom of religion and belief and also human trafficking and prostitution ministries. Julia is married to Alistair and lives in the United Kingdom.

Revitalizing Europe's Cross Cultural Mission activity

Dr. Derek Copley

Two practical 'do-able' approaches, based on Scripture, will be presented. First, using Mission activity in Acts as a model, an additional new missionary selection process is proposed. Second, based on the ancient mandate to reach every people group with the Gospel, a strategic (instead of the current uncoordinated) way of working is suggested.

***Derek Copley** is a former nuclear physicist who entered 'Christian ministry' in his 20s. Since then, he has founded and run a Bible College for 27 years, authored 10 books, and planted 12 churches. He has worked in 70 countries. Previously he was Chairman of the EAUK and President of the EEA. He is Chair of the Central Asia Forum in the UK, and serves the Central Asian Church by helping in the formation of EAs in the region.*



Europe's crisis affecting Youth and Children

Evi Rodemann, Harry Bryans and Colin Piper

Children and youth at crisis point in Europe – major paradigm shifts are happening across our continent. What is our response to them and how can we together disciple this next generation?

The team will highlight some good practices and resources available.

***Evi Rodemann** is passionate about encouraging young Christians finding their kingdom role in this world and mobilise them to live missionally where God calls them to be.*

After high school, she set off to study Theology. Since then she has worked full-time first in a church and then for about 8 years in various countries outside Europe. As Europe stayed her strongest passion, she came back to work interdenominationally in Hamburg, in Germany and with Mission-Net (www.mission-net.org) in Europe while living missionally in Germany's largest aluminium company.





Colin Piper is on the staff of the EEA with special responsibility for youth. He coordinates the EEA21 European youth leaders' network. Colin is a Brit, and chairs the WEA Youth Commission. Colin and his wife Melissa also head up International Christian Youth works which includes a small pioneering pan-European network of youth workers training at undergraduate and post graduate levels. Colin is also a writer, (his last book was a novel based on the life of Abraham), and a rugby referee!

Harry Bryans is Children's Ministry staff member within the EEA, born in Belfast, was actively involved in the Christian Endeavour Movement and has served as a missionary in Belgium since 1983. He is married to Catherine with two children. He has a wide experience with Children's work and with setting up Children's ministries networks around the world, participates in over 20 global and European networks related to ministry to children and their family.



Special features in the programme

Younger leaders

Within the EEA context, we like to invest into younger leaders across Europe, exploring with them how to be involved in the body of Christ and stay there.

Major focus points include our own discipleship and walk with God and exploring together ways of being discipled as well as becoming disciple makers with a continent focus, crossing denominations and cultures.

If you wish to participate in this program, please contact Evi Rodemann.

The following times have been set for younger leaders to meet:

- Monday evening 20.40 fellowship
- Tuesday 14.00 (parallel to the members meeting)
- Wednesday 12.30 lunch meeting

Parallel programme during Members Meeting

Tuesday at 14.00 there is the opportunity to talk to Jim Memory and Jeff Fountain.

On Wednesday there will not be a parallel program.

Worship & Prayer

The times of worship are led by Andreas Wenzel and several musicians.

Each day before lunch and before dinner we will take time for prayer. We would like to pray for the topics that have been discussed, take time to give thanks, pray for each other, for nations, for organizations, situations...

Join us in prayer!

Practical information

Address conference centre

Holidaypark Pagedal / Hoveniersweg 1 /9502 BW Stadskanaal /The Netherlands
+31 (0) 599 611 000

Opening hour's reception: 08.30 to 17.30; Night desk available at bar, for technical failures.
EEA Conference coordinator: Hester Zoutman +31 (0) 6 2505 8898

Access to internet

In the main building there is Wi-Fi. The password is: *pagedalgast*

In your bungalow or room you will need a cable; you can get one for a €10,- deposit at the reception.

Sport Facilities

You can freely use the swimming pool, tennis and squash facilities. You can get a sports card at the reception for free, to access the facilities. Make sure you make a reservation for the tennis or squash court. You can rent equipment at the reception. Check the reception desk for the current opening hours. The fitness facilities are not available to conference guest.

Meals and Drinks

All meals are included in the conference fee, during the day you will be offered two breaks with a drink. Drinks at the bar are not included; you need to pay for those in cash. Please note that you cannot pay with credit card at the bar. At the reception you can get cash with a credit card.

Payment and Registration

Room check in and all questions concerning the facilities and your stay can be directed to the reception of the conference centre. All other questions concerning the conference, fees, transfer, scholarships or other issues can be directed to the EEA helpdesk. The helpdesk is available in the meeting room, 30 minutes before each session and in the evening till 21.30.

Transfer

Friday morning at 07.30 there will be a bus available to take you to Schiphol airport. Participants that registered for the transfer before the conference have priority. If you have not registered for the transfer, but would like to use it, please see Hester about the possibilities & costs.

Displays

We provide tables in the main meeting room where you can have a small display and put interesting materials, brochures, books, DVD's, posters etc. We encourage you to bring interesting stuff from your EA, organization or church that might interest other participants.

Translation

Simultaneous translation of the plenary meetings will be provided from English into French, German and Russian. You can use the headphones to listen to the translation.

Personal Notes





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