



Hope for Europe!

Is there? From October 8 – 13 more than 350 evangelical leaders gathered in the beautiful city of Tallinn, Estonia, to pray, share, discuss and think about this big question. Faith2Share together with the European Evangelical Missionary Association facilitated the Missions Track.

Jesus is the hope for Europe! There was no doubt about that. The challenge is how to spread this hope in different contexts, different generations, different sections of society. For the Missions Track the fundamental question was how we can keep a vision for Global Missions. It is easy to focus on all the spiritual problems and realities in Europe – and therefore on ‘mission to Europe’ - but the Church in Europe still can play a (ok, much more modest and humble) role in being witness of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth, i.e. mission from Europe.

How we can mobilise new generations in Global Missions was one of the questions the twenty leaders of mission movements in Europe discussed. How can we overcome all the dichotomies of Western missiological thinking when it comes to doing missions and making disciples? One of these dichotomies being the differentiation between Church and para-church organisations. In two Bible studies we thought about humility in mission, or rather, how can the Western Church embrace, learn from, rejoice in and bless what God is doing around the globe and also engage long term with ‘hard’ places.

One week is just too short to tackle all these big issues. It was good to meet with practitioners and leaders and share experiences and expertise, pray together and find new inspiration in the Word of God. We had in our track facilitators like Andy Stevens (OMF and Mission-net), Eddie Arthur (Wycliffe), Wolfgang Buesing (AEM and EEMA), Annemieke van den Berg (MissieNederland) and Rosalee Velloso Ewell (WEA and Redcliffe College) , who was also one of the speakers in the plenary program on 'Unity in Diversity'.

For me the most inspiring was to see how the Spirit is moving in Europe. It is not a hopeless continent that is falling apart in selfish nation states that only look after protecting their own interests. Our Lord Jesus has built a Church there that is still strong and that binds people of different cultures, social and economic statuses, and a rich variety of faith based organisations together and that also is and will be involved in global missions and making disciples of all nations. In the end it is He who binds us together and sends us into the whole earth to be salt, light and a city on a hill.

