

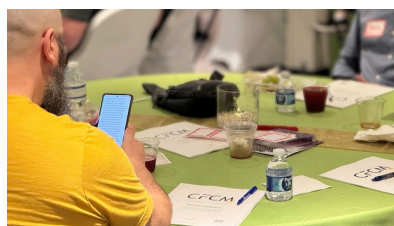


Evangelism is on life support facing the brutal reality

gabor & edina gresz :: prayer-update



Significant moments of training, equipping, prayer, evangelism, field ministry, community and planning with church planters throughout the year.



Dear Praying Friends,

“When evangelism is on life support, what’s at stake is the very future of the church.”

The number of pastors who say their church is very effective at outreach to non-churchgoers dropped from 13% in 2015 to 1% in 2023. **In order words, 99% of pastors say that their church is not very effective at evangelism.** Studies show only 3% of American churches are growing primarily through conversion growth. The remaining growth is transfer growth. 77% of churches baptized zero to five people in an entire calendar year. When the church becomes mainly a fellowship for already-converted insiders, the church’s future is at stake. Add to this reality the following: **church closures are outpacing new church plants 3-to-1.** (Three times as many churches are closing as are planted.) If we add both the population growth and church closures, the ratio of closures to plants is closer to 4-to-1. **The need for church planting has never been greater!** On top of that brutal reality 81% of the pastors are saying that they are not getting regular personal support and **18% of pastors have thought about suicide or self-harm!!!**

Church planting residency program

These brutal facts led our team to go beyond the many evangelism trainings we hosted in the past years (which we continue to do) and launch a church planting residency program, called *Cru Fellowship for Church Multiplication (CFCM)*. This is a year-long commitment from church-planters and their team as we walk alongside them helping to launch their church plant. For this first year, 38 pastors, planters, leaders, church-planting team-members from 21 cities joined our residency program. CFCM is way more than a training curricula. It is ministry together on the field, comradery and fellowship around the difficult task of planting a church. Our most recent in-person gathering was in Ft Lauderdale, FL where we've spend three days together in intense planning and doing evangelism together in the city.



“It has been inspirational to learn practical wisdom and guidance on how to create the culture of evangelism and discipleship.”

Scan this QR code to watch short stories from church planters as they share their experience about our residency program.



Your prayers are vital

- We are in significant need to increase the capacity of our ministry. Our responsibility is not only helping to give leadership to our 126 staff, but also carrying a lot of operational needs, like building websites; writing and designing tools; developing digital resources and systems for scalability; teaching and hosting trainings; organizing events, etc.. We are praying for capable and willing men and women who could help in these areas.
- Our daughter, Rahel is expecting our first grandchild. Her heart issues are concerning. Pray for a healthy baby and easy delivery. Pray that God would make it possible for us to visit them. Also, please, continue to carry in your prayers our scattered family - our kids and Edina's parents in Europe.



We cherish your friendship, covet your prayers and are grateful for your partnership!



Advancing the Kingdom of God together,

Gábor, Edina