

## Germany



Germany is a western European country with over 2 millennia of history. It has a population of 83.24 million, and the official language is German. Germany is also the location of the Eurasia Regional Office. The Church of the Nazarene began work in Germany in 1958 when Jerald and Alice Johnson were called to pioneer the work in West Germany.



Dr. Carla Sunberg, who was elected as the 43rd general superintendent in June 2017, was born in Germany as a missionary kid. Because the Church of the Nazarene is committed to education, European Nazarene College was established in Büsingen, Germany, in 1965. In 2011, the school transitioned to being fully decentralized and now has learning centers established in more than 17 countries throughout Eurasia. EuNC continues to prepare leaders and ministers for Christian service across the region!



2,055 members



17 fully organized churches



14 District Licensed and  
25 Ordained Ministers

Eurasia Regional Office continues the ministry of friendship with refugees in Büsingen, Germany **(Summarize story when presenting to the congregation)**



In 2012, the European Nazarene College closed its residential program in Büsingen, Germany, and expanded its reach to 17 countries through a decentralized model. The former campus grounds were sold to the town in 2015, and in 2017 the apartments that were formerly used as marriage housing was given a new purpose—sheltering refugees!

When the housing of refugees started, Germany was facing a historic influx of refugees from countries such as Syria and Eritrea. Though the Church of the Nazarene no longer owned the property, Nazarenes continue the work of Christ through the ministry of neighborly love in Büsingen.

It all began when missionary Annemarie Snijders decided to buy Easter eggs and distribute them to her refugee neighbors in order to form connections. She, along with Sandra Tibi, who is a missionary that can speak Arabic, went and delivered the Easter gifts and invited the refugees for tea and coffee at the conference room in the Eurasia Regional Office on Easter Monday.

Consequently, a connection was formed, and this was only the beginning. In 2019, Lydia Sawatzky, a missionary serving in the regional office, decided to take the work with refugees one step further. She began to offer German as a second language classes in the State Reformed Church that is right across from the Eurasia Regional Office (ERO). Sandra Tibi and another missionary, Heidi Bowes, continued the Nazarene partnership and work with Lydia by attending and assisting Lydia in facilitating these classes. They invited the moms of Syrian children to come and take these German lessons.

The classes experienced a stall, as most things did, because of COVID-19. They experienced even more difficulty after the sudden illness and passing of Lydia right around the time they were ready to start the classes again as the pandemic lessened in severity. After all the women took time to grieve, the classes started up once again and entered yet another phase in its history.

Sandra Tibi began working with a local farmer's wife named Gabi who wanted to help. Gabi is a member of the State Reformed church. The classes took on a more informal structure as they entered the new phase. Today, the classes still include German lessons, but also teach practical skills, the German culture to help with assimilation, baking, and swimming lessons for the children because they live near the Rhine River.

Gabi decided that baking bread should be a part of their activities because bread is something that is in every culture. The Swiss German woman taught the ladies how to make Swiss Sunday bread, and the Syrian women returned the favor by teaching them how to make middle eastern pizza with all of its unique spices. This has been a wonderful way for the woman to share their culture with each other even though they do not always speak the same language.

Sandra Tibi stated that "this is just neighbors reaching out to neighbors. It is a place of refuge for people who have had to flee. They know we are Christians and are helping them

in the name of Jesus. It has just been beautiful to watch the village embrace humanity by welcoming these refugees.

Through the work of hospitality this ministry helps to break down prejudices and help people to find hope. Sandra Tibi went on to say “the classes help the refugees to see that you are seen, you are valued, and you are welcome.”



## **PRAYER**

- Pray for God to open the doors for local churches to reach out effectively to families, children, and youth.
- Pray for God’s blessing on church planting initiatives to be more fruitful.



## **PRAISE**

- We praise God for the way the church has been able to help and support refugees from our Nazarene churches in Ukraine.
- We praise God for the contacts the church has in Arabic-speaking communities as a result of the refugees from the Syrian war.
- We praise God for the way young adults have been working for needs of the Kingdom through Work & Witness.
- We praise God for the ordinations celebrated in April 2022.

Missionaries currently serving:



**Nikolaj Sawatzky**



**Stéphane and Sandra Tibi**



**Heidi Bowes**

#### Suggestions for mission meeting:

##### Bread

Make a small loaf of bread for each family in the congregation to tie in with the story. You may have the ladies of the church get together the night before or a couple of hours before the service to make the bread. Another idea is to have a loaf of bread (not sliced sandwich bread) and go to each person and let them break a piece off to eat. Make sure you tie this to the story above.

Share scripture about bread with the congregation. (Examples: Matthew 6:11, John 6:32-35, 1 Corinthians 11:23-24, Matthew 26:26-29, Matthew 14:15-21 and Matthew 15:32-38.)

##### Tea or Coffee

Have the congregation meet in the fellowship hall for tea and/or coffee. While there, give each one of them an Easter Egg filled with candy. Make sure you tie this to the story above.

##### Challenge

- Ask the congregation to help someone in need or to teach a skill they have to someone – even children.
- Talk to your church board on how the church can reach out and help the community.

##### Teaching

Learn to say a phrase in German and teach it to the congregation. Use Google to help translate. Use a phrase like, “Jesus said He is the Bread of Life” or “Bless this bread” or something pertaining to bread.