



Support needed:

Prayer:

We are looking for prayer partners to fervently pray that God would change the spiritual climate in Sweden. We would like to find one prayer partner for every person the church in Gothenburg loses each year (170).

Pledges:

Our target funding for this work is £65,000 per year. In the first three years, we will seek to raise this through partner churches, individuals and trusts and funds. Would you consider pledging to support us at a rate of £15 pounds a month for the first three years? Pledges made now would not need to start until Oct 2019.

People:

We are also looking for people with connections to Sweden to consider moving with us to join our church plant or to become part of other small but significant gospel works across the nation. Sweden needs its scattered faithful Christians to return home.

If you would like to become a prayer partner, make a pledge or find out more please contact us at:

Email: ben@missionsweden.com

Phone: +44 (0)773 60 70 061

Post: Mission Sweden, c/o The King's Centre,
Coppard Gardens, Chessington, KT9 2GZ, England.

Web: www.missionsweden.com

Quick prayer requests:

- Open doors in other churches to join in this work.
- That we would look to God for all our future needs.
- Continued strengthening of our relationship with Allékyrkan.
 - Language learning.
 - Brexit and how it impact our plans.
- Wisdom as we take practical steps to prepare to move.
- For people to come and join us in Sweden in the future.
 - For the lost in Sweden.
- For Swedish Christians who have lost confidence in the Bible.
- Wisdom regarding schooling for our children (Swedish schools actively promote secular agendas).

The Clark family



MISSION SWEDEN
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Quick facts:

The population of Sweden is just under **10 million**.

The official Swedish government website describes the country as **'a post Christian Secular country.'**

Almost **eight out of ten Swedes are either "not religious" or "convinced atheists"**, according to a new global study which concludes that the Nordic nation is the least religious country in the West.

According to the Joshua Project and Operation World, **Sweden has the fastest rate of church decline in the world.**

Gothenburg is Sweden's second largest city, with a population of 570,000. **In Gothenburg the broader evangelical churches lose about 170 people a year.**



Why plant churches in Sweden?

Simply put, we need to plant gospel-centred churches in Sweden because it has the fastest declining evangelical church in the world! (-0.6% per year)

From the 1800s up until the 1970s Swedish evangelical churches sent out more missionaries across the globe than any other country per capita! In the last generation however, the idols of materialism, secularism and individualism took hold of the culture and profoundly damaged the gospel heart of many churches.

As life became more comfortable for Christians they began to lose confidence in God's Word and their passion for local and international mission. A new generation of potential missionaries were told to "settle down/get married/build a career/buy a house and maybe in the future you can become a missionary."

At the same time, Sweden's government became increasingly secular and

liberal, making it harder to openly live for Christ. In 2000 the church and state were officially separated, and Christian institutions that taught the gospel were either defunded by the government, forcing them to shut down or stay open by becoming openly liberal in their theology.

Within one generation this mix of comfort and extreme secularism has decimated the church!

In our travels across Sweden to meet church leaders, we heard again and again that what the Swedish church needs most is to regain its confidence in God's Word.

We believe this is best achieved by the planting of many Bible-driven, gospel-centered churches across Sweden: Churches where the Bible is taught clearly in Swedish and where individuals are taught to rightly handle the Word of Truth!

The story so far:

Ben grew up in Yorkshire, UK, while Emelie grew up just outside Gothenburg, Sweden. We met while both serving with the London City Mission in 2001. To cut a long story short we married near Gothenburg in 2004 and now have four children.

We have travelled back and forth to Sweden a lot over the past 17 years and have witnessed the decline of the church personally, particularly among younger people. When Ben first went to Sweden to meet Emelie's family and friends, he was blown away by all the passionate young Christian friends she had. Sadly, each year we went back we gradually saw many of them either walk away from their faith entirely or subtly stop living for Jesus. So for us, the annual church decline of 170 a year in Gothenburg is not just a number, it has faces.

For this reason and many others, we felt an active call to somehow, one day

serve Jesus in Sweden. What started as a vague desire grew with clarity as we began to get involved in church planting and connected with members of the Acts 29. In 2013 we felt a clear call to think about one day church planting in Gothenburg, but at the time we knew we had important lessons to learn before we could fulfil that calling.

In 2013, we joined Chessington Evangelical Church (CEC) where Ben currently serves as Pastor of Outreach. While serving at CEC, we have both grown in many ways. Under the guidance of the Elders at CEC, we have been trained and set apart for the work of church planting in Sweden in January 2020.

In 2017 we travelled across Sweden to develop gospel relationships and to seek churches to partner with. On this trip, we developed a friendship with Allékyrkan, that has developed into a partnership for planting in Gothenburg.

We are looking forward to serving the gospel in Gothenburg!

The Plan:

We plan to move to Gothenburg early in 2020. In our first year, we will be focused on supporting Allékyrkan where Ben will serve under the Elders of the church. We will seek to help each member grow in faith, confidence in the Bible and personal evangelism. Ben will be supporting a new ministry called Equip Sweden, which has been set up to equip laypeople and pastors in their handling of the Bible. As a family, we will aim to model an open home and seek to read the Bible with as many Swedes as possible.

While doing all this our family will be acclimatising to Swedish culture. Emelie will need to readjust to life in Sweden, Ben will need focus on language learning, and the children will be settling into new schools and making new friends.

In the second year, with the local guidance of the Elders at Allékyrkan, we will decide what community our



church-plant will focus on. We will then start to pull together a core team to become the founding members of the new church. This team will be made up of members of Allékyrkan and Swedish and English friends from across our networks who feel called to join us on this adventure.

By the end of year three, we hope to be a new worshipping community.

Our Partners:

Sending Church: Chessington Evangelical Church

Ben has been working as Pastor of Outreach at CEC since 2013. In 2016 we were set apart by the Elders for a future church plant in Sweden. As the sending church, CEC will be our primary supporter in this mission. As well as providing training and being a vital donor, CEC will also provide a core accountability and support team for us as we start in Sweden.

Receiving church: Allékyrkan, Gothenburg's 8th Baptist Church

In 2017 we met with Johnny Lithell, the leader of a new church plant in Gothenburg supported by Bethlehem Baptist church and Capitol Hill Baptist

Church, USA. We immediately hit it off and share a heart to be part of a sacrificial church planting movement across Sweden.

We have now worshipped in their new little church a number of times and are excited to serve them and to eventually plant out from them to become Göteborgs 9:e Baptistförsamling, Gothenburg's 9th Baptist Church.

Church Planting: Acts 29

Acts 29 is a global network of church planting churches, known for a heart for the gospel and theological clarity. They provide assessment, coaching and training for church planters.

We were assessed by A29 in 2016 and they will help by providing coaching and helping with our strategy. Currently A29 has no presence in Sweden.



ACTS 29
churches planting churches



CHESSINGTON
Evangelical Church
ADOPTED • CALLED • CONNECTED



Göteborgs 8:e
Baptistförsamling