

## 7<sup>th</sup> International Christian-Military Conference - Ukraine

MMI Chief Executive & Team Leader, Colonel Jos McCabe takes part in a key chaplaincy conference

Have you ever wondered what Chaplains do? Well in Ukraine that was the only question on the agenda at the 7<sup>th</sup> International Christian-Military conference, sponsored by the All-Ukrainian Interconfessional Religious Christian Military Brotherhood. Ukraine currently has no military Chaplaincy but has been considering the merits of introducing them. Over 100 papers were presented on various aspects of Chaplaincy over 2 days in plenary and seminar sessions. Conference organiser, Colonel Sergey Lysenko, who had spoken at the last MMI Supporters' Weekend, invited MMI to send a representative. Jos McCabe filled that role and presented a short paper in plenary session on the Military Commander's

View of Chaplaincy. He also spoke in a seminar session and presented a short paper written by MMI European Team Leader, Grozdan Stoevski on the Multi-Confessional aspects of Chaplaincy.

Over two hundred and sixty delegates attended, including representatives of the Ukrainian government, military men and women and senior church figures from the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian traditions. International delegates included a senior Lutheran prison chaplain from Germany and representatives from the USA including former military chaplains. Our partner organisation ACCTS was represented by Dick Barnes whose language skills greatly facilitated conver-

sation and understanding. The Conference also provided the opportunity to meet up with military Christians from other Eastern European countries. Father Volodimir Kosharko of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, spoke openly and forcefully about his role as an unofficial chaplain with a Ukrainian army unit in Iraq. Picking up on a comment made in Grozdan's paper he spoke about his experience of working with Chaplains from other nations in Iraq. He said, "We need to dwell on the 80% of what we agree on rather than on the 20% that differentiates us". He also spoke movingly about the need to be forward with his men - even in the face of danger. Church politics had fallen away because

he had been in harm's way with his soldiers. Despite real challenges there was evidence of the different traditions trying to work together to bring a chaplaincy into being. There was acknowledgement of mutual fellowship between the Orthodox Brotherhood and the Ukrainian MCF. We thank God that we have been able to help contribute to the debate in a small way and we urge you to continue to pray for the creation of a military chaplaincy in Ukraine with representatives from across all Christian traditions.

Read more about Jos' and Grozdan's travels in Poland on page 4.



### Military Ministries International 2013 Programme

|  |   |                                     |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>July</b>  | 27-3/8 New Wine Conference (Nigeria)                      | <b>October</b>                      |
| 20/6 - 9 Mission trip to East Africa (Vines & team)                | (MMI exhibiting) (UK)                                     | East Africa Prayer Convention       |
| 1-4 Mission Trip to the Balkans (Stoevski & team)                  | Mission trip to Pakistan & Sri Lanka (West)               | 4-6 Romanian MCF meeting (Stoevski) |
| 11-14 Biblical Stewardship Seminar (Ukraine) (Stoevski & Paterson) | <b>August</b>   | 5-6 Czech MCF meeting (Thorun)      |
|  | 31/7-11 Mission trip to Nigeria (McCabe)                  |                                     |
|  | 2-4 West Africa Interaction                               |                                     |
|  | <b>September</b>  |                                     |
|  | 20-22 Mission trip to Nordic countries (Thorun & AMCF VP) |                                     |
|  | 20-22 Polish MCF annual meeting (McCabe)                  |                                     |

# Africa

## Homfray Vines engages with military Christians in East Africa

Looking forward to the missionary trip being led by MMI Regional Team Leader, Homfray Vines to East Africa, 20 June - 9 July 2013

*“After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and travelled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.” (Acts 18:23)*

‘Servant hearted’ is one of the core values of MMI, so we give thanks when we are able to meet with military Christians in our regions to encourage them. In June we welcomed Lieutenant Colonel (Reverend) Lelei, the Principal Chaplain (AC) of the Kenyan Armed Forces to the UK for the MMI Prayer Day and Sharing in International Military Ministries (SIMM) Week. This was very valuable as it deepened, mutual understanding and began building new working relationships.

Later in June and into early July, Homfray Vines is visiting East Africa. Along with MMI As-

sociate, Major John Seii, he will travel to Juba, **South Sudan**, to encourage the MCF of South Sudan and strengthen their relationships with the SPLA Chaplains. In Nairobi, **Kenya**, accompanied by Regional AMCF Vice President, Brigadier General David Wakaalo he will discuss how the MCF of Kenya can take a leading role in supporting the MCFs of the region. In Dar es Salaam, **Tanzania**, again with Brigadier General David Wakaalo, he will explore the possibilities of establishing an MCF in the complex religious situation of the Tanzanian Peoples Defence Force. In **Uganda** Homfray will continue to explore the restoration of chaplains to the UPDF and the return of chapels to the worship of God. He also hopes to meet with the MCF in Kampala to encourage them.

To be effective these visits will require productive meetings with the force commanders of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Please pray for wisdom as these meetings are set up, prepared for, held and followed up.

In October we are hoping and praying that the Kenyans will be able to invite the whole region to come to Nairobi for a Prayer Convention. This could be particularly significant as they celebrate their nation’s Golden Jubilee in December.



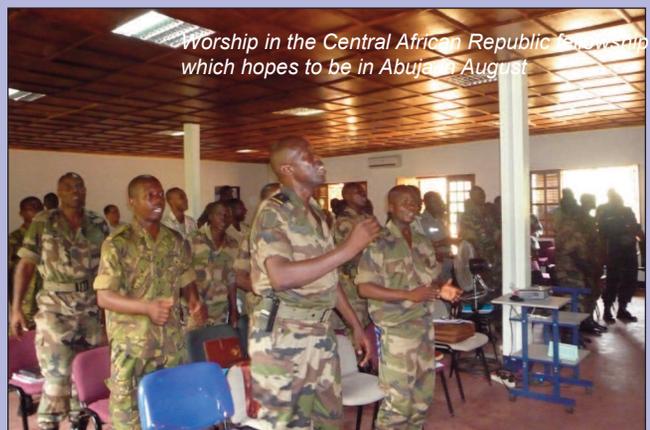
(left to right) Bishop Moses of Wau Diocese Southern Sudan, Homfray Vines, Colonel Lelei (Kenya) - ‘Preparing for the visit to Juba’.

## PTL-The West African Interaction is happening!

MMI Chief Executive & Team Leader, Colonel Jos McCabe is rejoicing at confirmation that the West African interaction will take place

The Nigerian based Christian Military Fellowships Support Initiative (CSI), formerly known as AWAST, is helping to organise and run a West African Interaction this coming August. Invitations have been issued and I will be travelling to Abuja, Nigeria to be with MCF leaders from countries across the region. AMCF World President, General Srilal Weerasooriya, and his wife, Dilhani also plan to be present. Colonel Daniel Njoya, the AMCF Regional Vice Presi-

dent, from neighbouring Cameroon will be taking part. This is an exciting development and we pray it will encourage more joint initiatives and working together across the AMCF regional boundaries. Work is now underway in Nigeria to identify how to raise support for some of the participants and thanks to the Lord, working through you, our generous supporters, MMI will be helping too.





# Praying around the world and throughout the year for AMCF Global Interaction 2014



In preparing this MMI Newsletter it has become apparent that the AMCF Global Interaction Update should be focussed on prayer.

† Our Quarterly Prayer Brief (enclosed in the mailing) gives you a cycle for each week.

† On this page is detail on how to make a Prayer Standing Order for GI 2014.

† Our MMI Prayer Day had a special session committed to praying for GI 2014.

The Christian military experience is that everything we do must be soaked in prayer and for that reason AMCF GI 2014 has appointed a Prayer Director, Mrs Liesel Parkinson who has harnessed the resource of the AFCU Ladies Twenty4 prayer team as the foundation

for that prayer. It is a formidable foundation too.

Applications to participate in AMCF GI 2014 are coming in and being swiftly processed through Participant Selection by Brian Parker. From him they need to be considered for scholarships by the regional vice president and either ACCTS, MMI or MSO as appropriate. MMI has received very gener-

ous gifts to begin to help these scholarships but this is a major undertaking and ACCTS Director, Phil Exner faces a significant challenge with his responsibility for GI 2014 Sponsorship.

It is very exciting as the pace increases but as it does the prayer base must be developed further. Please help us to do this; every little helps ...!



AMCF GI 2014 Programme Director, Rhett Parkinson briefing the MMI Prayer Day



## Can YOU commit to a prayer 'Standing Order'?

Bank accounts with standing orders are familiar to us but now to support AMCF GI 2014 we are asking people to sign up to a 'standing order' of prayer, for one year, from our Prayer Day on 8th June 2013 through to 7th June 2014. You can join in now. Please consider what time for prayer you could spare, perhaps 5 mins a day or an hour a month; as an individual or as a group. If you are part of a group praying regularly for GI 2014, such as a Prayer Beacon group, register that as well. Just contact Sue Millard,

MMI's Prayer Coordinator on [prayer@m-m-i.org.uk](mailto:prayer@m-m-i.org.uk) or call the office, and give details of when you will pray: daily (+time), weekly (+which day of the week) or monthly; your name and either initials or a short nickname to be displayed on our Prayer Standing Order calendar on the MMI website. Let's see if we can have prayer for AMCF GI2014 daily, morning, noon and night. When you sign up you will receive monthly prayer updates via e-mail (hard copy on request).

## Railway Marathon Man- Mike Homer



**7 days**  
**74½ hours on trains**  
**3,161 miles of track**  
**9 Military establishments**  
**Supporting AMCF GI 2014**

MMI supporter, and former soldier, Mike Homer from Fareham, Hampshire is somewhat of a railway fanatic. He heard God ask him to use his interest to raise money for charity and when he heard about AMCF GI 2014 he put two and two together and concluded God

wanted him to raise money to support it. He is doing this by spending a week visiting military establishments in different parts of the UK, travelling on the rail network to and from Fareham each day. He will cover over 3,160 miles and spend almost half the week on trains - and much of the other half getting to them, waiting for them or getting home from the station. On 3 mornings he has to leave Fareham on the 0534 train. This is not an easy ride! His itinerary includes Plymouth,

Colchester, Anglesey and Edinburgh. Mike, who will be accompanied throughout the week by Peter Howes (who is himself deaf!), says "I am really enthused by this fantastic opportunity to support those undergoing the difficulties and stresses of life in the military across the world". To support Mike use the **Donate** button at [www.m-m-i.org.uk](http://www.m-m-i.org.uk) and mark it "Mike Homer" or send a donation to the office using the enclosed envelope and mark it, "Mike Homer".

## Encouraging MCFs in Ukraine and Poland

A report on Jos McCabe's visit to the Ukraine and Polish MCFs

Whilst in Ukraine for the chaplaincy conference (see page 1), Jos McCabe spent some time with Ukrainian MCF Leader, Vasily Khimich and attended the 22<sup>nd</sup> Pray and Plan conference of the MCF at a Baptist church in Kiev. MCF Group leaders from across Ukraine attended to pray together, hear and give updates on local MCF activities and to consider the future. Jos was asked to bring a word of encouragement to the meeting. Despite many challenges the Ukrainian MCF continues to be strong and is a real witness in the armed forces. Jos, with Dick Barnes from ACCTS (USA), was also able to have a short meeting with the leaders of the Russian MCF who had driven from Moscow to attend the chaplaincy conference. From Kiev Jos travelled on to Warsaw to meet with MMI staff

member and Polish MCF President, Colonel Igor Sawicki and enjoy his fellowship and the generous hospitality of his wife, Aldona prior to meeting the Polish Protestant Military Bishop, Colonel Miroslav Wola. We hope we will be able to host Bishop Wola at an MMI event in the future and encourage his support for the Polish MCF. Jos was later joined by MMI Regional Team Leader for Europe, Grozdan Stoevski, prior to the European Leaders Forum (see back page), for a meeting with the Polish MCF Committee. The meeting took place in Warsaw Baptist seminary and during it a certificate of appreciation was presented to the President of the Polish Baptist Union for their support and help to the MCF. The Polish MCF also agreed to form a prayer beacon for AMCF GI 2014.

Jos McCabe shares about MMI with the Ukrainian MCF



Igor Sawick (left), Jos McCabe (centre) and Bishop Wola

## Marriage, an invention of God

MMI Staff Member, Rainer Thorun reports on the Marriage Seminar he and his wife, Karin, conducted in Lithuania

“It is important we have heard this at the beginning of our marriage. We had one main problem but now my view to it is different - I know I must change myself, not my husband!” This was one of the statements shared at the end of the “Marriage Seminar” in Kaunas, Lithuania on Palm Sunday weekend. Following the successful marriage seminar last year almost 30 people attended the event in March this year. God compares His relationship to church, mankind and even every single person

with a marriage, not with a partnership. He has given us wonderful, constructive advice for it in His manual for a prosperous life, the Bible. This includes every aspect of wedlock and family life. The oneness of a couple covers all facets of a person. In the same way the advice of the Lord applies for the mental, spiritual and physical aspects of matrimony. It was amazing discussing all the details acknowledging our creator having the best recipes for a delightful everyday life.



Military Bishop, Gintaras Grušas, blesses each couple

## Warfare in Syria impacting beyond their borders

An update from MMI Regional Team Leader, Richard Sandy



*Rubble strewn streets in Syria*

In the last newsletter I said that general unrest within the region meant it was proving very difficult to make visits to our contacts. Since then the situation in Syria appears to have worsened and is having an increasing impact on neighbouring countries. The overall result appears to be an increasing wave of Islamisation spreading across the region. In one country where there is a small MCF I have not been able, as a Christian, to obtain a visa to visit. Furthermore, in view of the increasing pressure he has come under, our contact in that country has now felt obliged to flee, although his family have not yet been able

to join him. We are investigating ways to make contact with the remnant MCF there. We are also following up new avenues for a first visit to a country within the region where previously we have had no contact.

I am pleased to report that despite the worsening situation in Syria our contact there, together with his family, remain safe. They continue to support other Christian families, elsewhere in Syria, who have been forced by the fighting to leave their own homes. Please continue to pray for a peaceful resolution of the Syrian crisis and continuing protection for our contact and his family.

# South Asia

## It is God who gives the increase!

### Travel plans and an update on South Asia

By MMI Regional Team Leader for South Asia, Chris West

We praise God that 'Rahnuma', the Urdu translation of the MMI Discipleship Course, has been successfully launched in Nowshera, Pakistan. There was a good attendance at the launching of about seventy people. Already there are courses running in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Area (was North West Frontier Province).

Sadly plans did not come together for me to visit Shillong in North East India in May but a visit is tentatively planned for October. Even so, we have heard

that the Presbyterian Church in Shillong has started using the MMI Discipleship Course and it is 'raising many questions'! I have been invited to Sri Lanka to present the course to the Sri Lankan MCF and I plan to do this in association with a visit to Pakistan in July when Rahnuma will be launched in Lahore and Multan.

**Some plant, some water, but God brings the fruit.**

We thank our Father for faithfully watering the seed with your prayer!



## ELF-An MMI Resource?

### ELF? - the European Leadership Forum

Forum, in Wistla, Poland attended by Jos McCabe and Grozdan Stoevski in May. This was a gathering of around 750 Church and mission leaders from across Europe in a very accessible venue. The Forum was run with the aim of encouraging and equipping leaders for mission and outreach in Europe. Plenary speakers included Oz Guinness, Becky Pippert, Ditrich Schindler and Stefan Gustavsson. The teaching in the plenary sessions was excellent and the different workshop streams allowed participants to learn some really practical skills to enhance their mission effectiveness. The forum also provided ample scope to network with church leaders from nearly every European coun-

try and to make people aware of the military mission field. Jos and Grozdan believe that MCF leaders in Europe may benefit by attending in future and it is hoped that next year 3 or 4 may be able to attend and bring back new skills and contacts to help build the Kingdom of God in their own countries armed forces.



Follow the MMI **PrayerBlog** on  
[www.m-m-i.org.uk/category/prayer](http://www.m-m-i.org.uk/category/prayer)

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## Praying in the vision

**'Where there is no vision, the people perish'**

*Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)*

MMI Prayer Coordinator, Sue Millard, reports on the MMI Prayer Day

It was great to have special guests with us for our Glory and Vision prayer day, including Colonel Lelei, Principle Chaplain to the Kenyan Army, who told us 'Military ministry is vibrant in Kenya' and shared something of his vision for chaplains and the MCF in Kenya working together as two parts of one body.

It was so encouraging to hear the MMI RTLs share stories of answers to prayer as they travelled in their regions this year and how amazing it is to see

the pieces of God's plan fit together like a jigsaw.

During the day we launched a 'Year of Prayer by Standing Order' for AMCF GI 2014, (see page 3 for details of how to be involved). We prayed for Mike Homer's fundraising railway marathon in his wheelchair (see page 3). Various interactive prayer activities were enjoyed at lunchtime and we closed with, the now traditional, time of tea, cake, fellowship and prayer.



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