

UNION OF EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES Bulgaria



The Velingrad Church and conference center offers space for worship, seminars, youth camps, women's groups, pastoral retreats, and support groups.

American missionaries founded the Congregational Churches in Bulgaria over 150 years ago - the first Protestant Evangelical Churches in a land where most of the people, to this day, identify themselves as Eastern Orthodox. The gravestones of a young missionary couple, Rev. William and Susan Meriam, who died in Bulgaria in 1862 while serving the Lord, may still be seen behind the Union's first church in Plovdiv.

The churches experienced great hardship and struggle under Communist regimes. From 1949 to 1989, many pastors and active Christians were put in prison, sent to concentration camps, or banished from the country.

From 22 churches under Communism, the Union now has 40 churches. More and more people are interested in the Gospel, and new churches are being planted every year. The mission ministry continues to grow with a special emphasis on work with women, children and young people. Seminars for women and summer camps for youth are organized each year. The Union's retreat center in Velingrad serves as the venue for many of these events. The center is open to other groups as well.

Our association with the UECCB began through the Rev. Christo Kulichev in 1996. In these days, the Union has only 12 ordained pastors, 5 full-time preachers, and 15 volunteers to serve its 40 churches. While their future is full of promise, there is still great need for prayers and financial support, for theologically trained and dedicated leaders, and church buildings for new church starts.

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