



Biblijski institut, Zagreb, Croatia

Zagreb Bible Institute: Fulfilling its mission



What their stories tell us...

IT BEGAN AS A BIG DREAM

A dream of transformed lives
that are equipped for service
to Christ and His church.



The dream was birthed in a context of deep spiritual hunger resulting from 45 years of communism and followed by the bloody civil war in former Yugoslavia.

The dream has evolved into the Zagreb Bible Institute, which is training and equipping Europeans to serve, teach, and minister to the broken world around them.

Our students are receiving a Christ-centered, Biblical education that prepares them to face the challenges of life. But more importantly, their hearts are transformed by the power of the living word of God. As those changed lives are sprinkled throughout Europe and the rest of the world, they pass it on in some extraordinary ways.

We are currently candidates for accreditation with the European Evangelical Accrediting Association. This year we have gone through a self-evaluation, in preparation for the upcoming accreditation visit in March. This has led us to look at two key success indicators: 1) How many of our graduates have been accepted into graduate programs? and 2) How many are actively involved in church ministry?

Our amazing results:

72% have gone on to do graduate work with one of our partner schools, or with universities in Slovenia or Croatia. Some of these are now part of our faculty and are preparing to be the teachers, Bible researchers, and translators, to equip future generations.

76% are actively involved in ministry. They are preachers, church planters, evangelists, Bible teachers, children's ministers, or serving refugees.

Here are some of their stories...



Nina and Andrej Lovše

Nina and Andrej Lovše came to the Institute from the country of Slovenia. They graduated from B.I. and then completed Masters degrees in Christian Ministry. They have since returned to their home town in Slovenia, where they are national leaders of a youth outreach called Josiah Venture. The result is the planting of vital churches that are reaching and discipling both youth and adults.



“When God sent us to Maribor five years ago, He spoke to us words from Joshua: ‘Be strong and courageous.’ We had no idea what was ahead of us. We were scared, nervous, and lost, but we walked in faith. Now we look back and see God’s church planted in Maribor. We see young people finding their life in Jesus. We see families being restored. We see the love of Christ being poured over people. We see hope for the city.”

BAPTISM OF NEW BELIEVER

HOUSE CHURCH RETREAT WITH SIBLEYS



**Bringing hope to the
country of Slovenia**



Karlo Biočina Serving refugees



This past year one of our graduates, Karlo Biočina, was selected to head up the relief work for Samaritan's Purse in Croatia. Last year at one point, Croatia saw about 7,000 refugees a day passing through. Karlo coordinated efforts to care for these desperate people. Karlo was the right person for this job. His love for Christ and for people is revealed in his compassionate work. His organization and leadership skills made a real difference on the ground.

Evangelizing and church planting Monika Bajić

Monika Bajić is an Institute graduate and is currently working on her M.A. through our partnership with David Lipscomb University. She is also working as administrative assistant with our Center for Biblical Research.



“ I learned about Biblijski institut after I was already eight years into pastoral and missional ministry with my husband, Milan. We planted a church in the war-torn area of Sisak, as well as several house groups. We worked in prison ministry and evangelized throughout Croatia and Bosnia, but soon I realized my training and education was not enough. Leaders needed to be coached and trained, people had to be counseled, scripture had to be taught, and there were many other needs for which we were not equipped. At that point I decided to enroll at the Bible Institute for a systematic theological education. This brought instant results, because I received tools and sound Biblical theological teaching, which I could use in my ministry. At the Institute I studied alongside others in ministry with whom I could share and learn. I had access to the director and professors, who were always there for me. I am determined to see Croatia touched and changed by God through His people. The Institute is not only a place for gaining theological knowledge, but more importantly, the institute empowers and prepares believers for ministry in the body of Christ. It is a place where students from different denominational backgrounds can freely share and care for one another.”

Ivan Karadža **Distributing Bibles and aiding refugees**



MORE THAN 35,000 CHILDREN'S BIBLES DISTRIBUTED

“ The Bible Institute is not just a school. It is a learning community where academics and practical living come together. It is not just a place for the mind, but also for the heart. It was after a class on Romans at the Institute that I decided to be baptized, and through the Institute I learned what it means to be a true believer and how to respect God's people and God's creation. I am not just a product of the Institute but I am employed by the Institute, and it is a great pleasure and wonderful blessing to participate in such a remarkable work of God.”

Ivan Karadža, B.S. Theology from B.I. and M.A. from A.C.U. Ivan teaches Spiritual Formation, and is the registrar for the Institute. Ivan also heads up the humanitarian work for the Kušlanova Church of Christ in Zagreb. Ivan is inspiring our students to serve, and leads the way in practical theology. Christ transformed him from a troubled youth into a strong leader.

THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES



Life-changing education Nino Brozinčević



Nino Brozinčević enrolled in the Institute just because it was convenient. He knew little about theology or a relationship with Christ. Through his studies, he encountered the living Word, and it changed his life. Once an unmotivated student, he has now completed his M.A. in History at the University of Zagreb and is working with our Center for Biblical Research as a Biblical archivist, preserving ancient Biblical texts. Nino's family and friends see the remarkable change in his life that only God can bring.

“ When I first came to the Institute, I was amazed at how well the people got along and worked together. I had not seen this behavior in many places, and the way they treated each other and everyone else was amazing to me. I noticed this was not just well developed people skills but rather something spiritual; in fact Christian to the core. I discovered I had a friend in Jesus Christ that I can look up to when I am lost and confused. Things in life can get very tough but I see here Christian role models and I am learning from them how to deal with life. I am so grateful that in my current role I get to give back to the Institute, and to develop my own Christian life, and share that with those close to me.”

Mislav Ilić Church leader and preacher



Mislav Ilić has a diploma in Mechanical Engineering but he came to Christ as a college student during the war and later felt called to serve the church full-time. He lacked the Biblical and theological foundation for this work and the practical tools for ministry, so he enrolled in the Bible Institute. Mislav was associate minister to Mladen Jovanović. Now, after the passing of Mladen, he is the preacher for the Kušlanova Church of Christ, the founding church in Zagreb.

Mislav also works with children and youth, along with our staff member, Steve Taliaferro. Together they head up our summer outreach, Champs Camp. Through this ministry they share the message of Christ with around 130 children each summer, and whole families are being reached.





Kids and youth ministry

Mateja Stolnik

“ The Institute has really been a blessing in my spiritual growth. I have learned how to live a Christian life and how to serve others. The skills and knowledge I received have helped me in my ministry. My personal and spiritual life has been changed because of learning how to study and interpret God’s word.”



Mateja Stolnik came to the Institute three years ago. She already had a B.S. in Economics and Management, but she had no Biblical foundation and hungered to know God more deeply. Today Mateja is continuing her studies at the Institute and is deeply engaged in full-time ministry with her church in Varaždin, Croatia. She works with children and youth, leads three different English clubs, and is currently an editor for a Christian magazine. She also functions as the church secretary and frequently has opportunity to evangelize and counsel those in need.



Reaching Europe's youth for Christ

Filip Grujić

Filip Grujić, a Bible Institute graduate, is a preacher and youth minister for the largest protestant church in Zagreb. God is using Filip to reach many youth for Christ. His preaching is inspiring many young people to surrender their lives to Christ. He and others like him represent real hope for reaching Europe's youth. He is currently in graduate school, working on his Masters in Theology.



Ervin Budiselić

Ervin Budiselić was already involved in full-time ministry when he heard of the Bible Institute. He is typical of so many young Christians who are trying to serve the church, but have no formal theological or Bible training. He and his wife Romana helped plant a church in Samobor, Croatia, where he leads worship and preaches. Ervin is becoming an outstanding Christian scholar and teacher for B.I.



Teaching, preaching, and worshiping

“ Being in ministry, one is faced with many tough situations and questions. Hence, in 2002 when I heard about the Institute, I came to take one course to see if it could help my ministry. I never left! Currently, I’m finishing my Ph.D. in New Testament and I am serving as preacher and worship leader. I also teach New Testament classes at the Institute. Living and working on both sides of a spectrum (church and academia), taught me how much schools like the Institute can help those who work in ministry. They give us the tools and resources we need to study the Word of God and build a theological and Biblical foundation from which to draw.”



Bible translation and church planting



Goran Medved

Goran Medved became a believer while he was a college student in the USA. Upon his return to Croatia he enrolled in the Institute. He served the Zagreb church as translator and youth minister. He helped plant a new church and is working with Bible League on a new, first-time, contemporary translation of the Old Testament.



“ There are many things that I could write about how much the Institute, and its teachers and staff, have helped me in my life and ministry, but I will point out one specific thing. My main job now is in Bible translation. I am the managing editor for a new, first-time, contemporary translation of the Bible into Croatian. My education at the Institute, in theology, in Hebrew and Greek, along with years of experience as a translator at the Institute, has qualified me for this job. I feel that I am doing something very important for the spreading of the Kingdom of God, and I am thankful that my education and experience at the Institute has prepared me for it.”

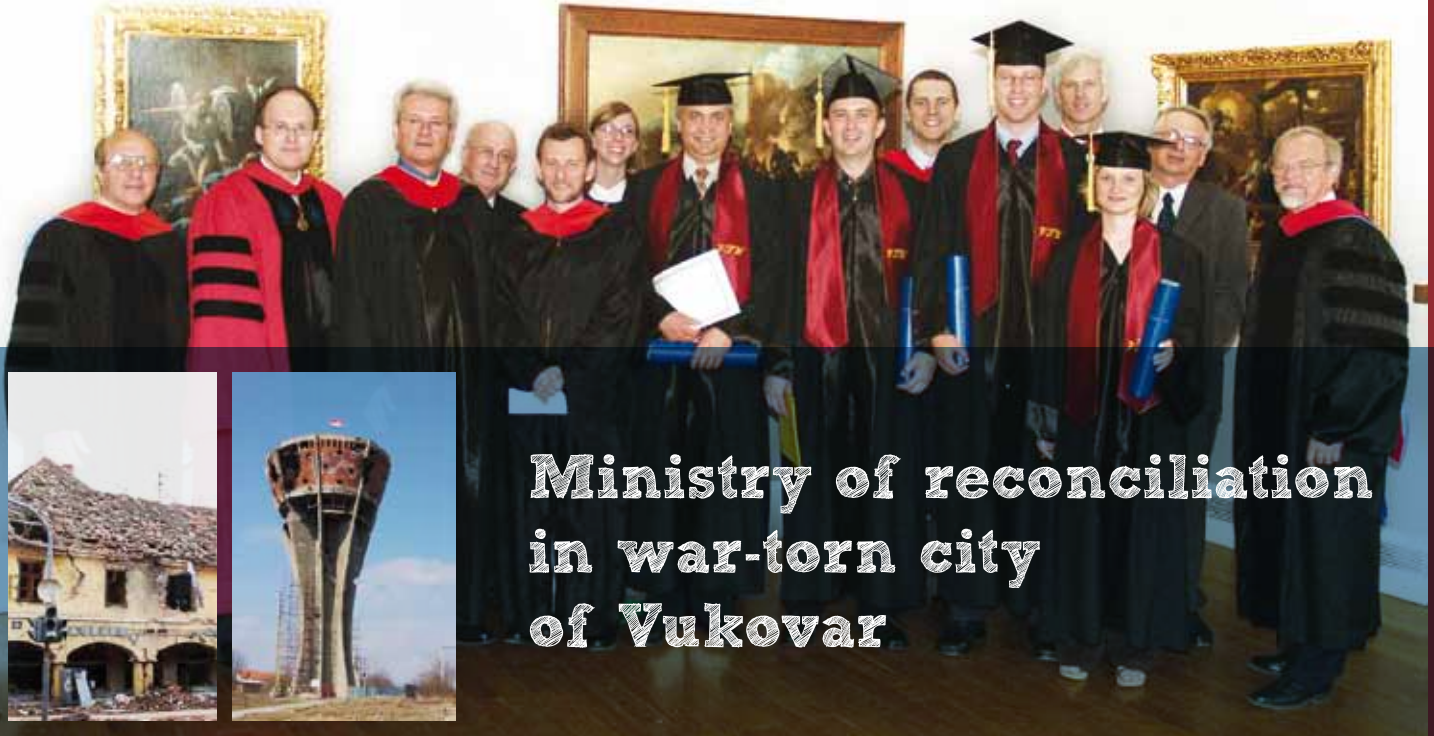
Vlado Pšenko

Vlado Pšenko was one of B.I.'s first graduates and is working hard, along with his wife Renata, to plant a new church in Vukovar, Croatia.

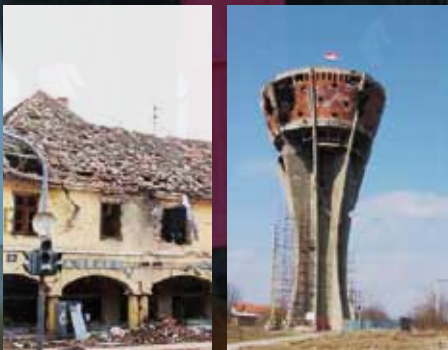


“ The Bible Institute has equipped me for ministry. The Institute has provided good knowledge of the Bible, including deep insights into the Word of God. That is what I consider as the first step in planting the church. Furthermore, the Word of God, during that period of Bible study at the Institute, put my heart on fire to be available for God’s purposes. Thanks to personal spiritual growth, equipping, knowledge of the Bible, and enthusiasm that I received from the Institute, I accepted the call of God to move with my wife Renata to Vukovar, the city highly devastated in the war in the former Yugoslavia. The divided city is a great challenge; Croats and Serbs remain socially separated. They tolerate one another but do not live and work together. We are planting a new work focused on reconciliation through the love of Christ. The teachers at the Institute always directed their students to call people first to Jesus, not to their church or denomination. When they find Jesus, our Lord will direct their steps to His family of believers.”

VLADO PŠENKO AND THE FIRST GRADUATING CLASS AT B.I.



**Ministry of reconciliation
in war-torn city
of Vukovar**



The future of God's work in Croatia is filled with challenges and opportunities. For example, due to economic issues, more than 100,000 young Croatians have left the country to seek jobs elsewhere in Europe. This presents a unique opportunity, because the young people who are trained to minister and lead in the Kingdom of God can have a huge impact throughout Europe.

Another significant challenge is that **Bible-believing Christians make up less than ½ of 1% of the population.** Bible-believing Christians must work together if the Kingdom of God is to spread. The Institute is uniquely situated to **build bridges and promote unity between the churches,** unity that is **centered in Christ and His word.** We are working hard **to listen to churches** who share our commitment **to reaching the lost, and then equipping these believers for life and service** to God's Kingdom. We want to understand their churches' needs and develop programs that meet those needs. This year, this has led to three new certificate programs for church workers and members, which has resulted in a record enrollment at B.I.

Our commitment from the beginning has been to equip Europeans to reach Europeans. This model makes sense. It costs about \$8,000.00 per year to educate one student, **but it costs far more to put a missionary on the field in Europe.** Our data shows that **Europeans who are properly trained** and equipped, **can launch ministries** which God uses to impact hearts and change lives through His Word and Kingdom.

The work we are doing has a powerful impact for the Kingdom, but we cannot do it alone.
We need your help.

Will you help us in equipping young adults in central Europe to carry the banner of Christ into a broken world?

TO MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION:

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE AT: **www.cecef.net**

CHECKS CAN ALSO BE MADE OUT AND MAILED TO:

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455 McNally Drive
Nashville, TN 37211

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