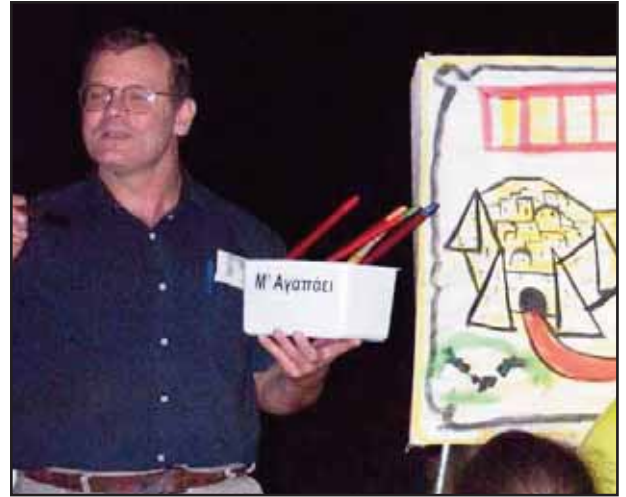


GREECE

Though Greece has remained strongly Orthodox Christian, resisting Islamic influences, that does not mean that the people are truly believers, as the church has become a religion that does not emphasize a personal faith in Jesus Christ. Evangelical Christians make up only about .04 percent of the population. The Orthodox Church reflects the cultural identity of the Greek people, and anything outside that church is considered heresy.

Dan Truitt hails from Chicago but is part Greek. He has ministered in the country of Greece since 1989, when, while studying Greek at the Greek Bible Institute, founded by Greater Europe Mission workers, he met Korky Davey, who had been teaching a one-week sketchboard seminar annually. Two years later, he attended the training seminar as a student of the school, where all classes are either taught in Greek or translated from English by guest teachers such as Korky.



DAN TRUITT AT THE SKETCHBOARD

God has used many of our OAC staff to influence and enhance fellow OAC'ers through the years, and Dan's situation is no exception. Korky Davey began teaching sketchboard evangelism at the Greek Bible Institute in the mid 1980s and annually led teams of young Greeks out into the public squares of Athens until 1996. He returned for another two years, teaching his last seminar in 2004.

In 1998, after a time of training under Korky's tutelage in Bristol, Dan Truitt took over the teaching duties at the school until 2008, when the school opted to discontinue the program. During those twenty-plus years, over 200 students learned the basics of sketchboard evangelism, many of whom continue to use it as a tool in their local churches.

For several years in the early 2000s, Derek Heyman from the UK came to Greece to help conduct outreach, both at the Bible School during the autumn and in Thessaloniki during the summer. These efforts almost always drew good crowds, and thousands of Greeks were reached with a clear presentation of the Gospel during the events.



DEREK HEYMAN MINISTERING THE GOSPEL IN ATHENS FOLLOWED BY AN INVITATION TO TRUST CHRIST



DECEMBER 2019 SHARING AT THE THESSALONIKI SEAFRONT



DAN'S EASTER WEEK MESSAGE, 2007



DAN GIVING AN INVITATION, 2007



A SEMINAR STUDENT'S FIRST MESSAGE, 2006

Dan married into a Greek family; he and Zoe have one daughter, Catherine, who was born in 1999. They center their ministry in Zoe's hometown which is Thessaloniki. This city is, of course, ancient Thessalonica, with the Apostle Paul as the founder of the church there! Dan does open-air ministry in public places, works with local churches, and with CRU (formally Campus Crusade) at Aristotle University, the country's largest institution of higher learning.

Through the years, Dan has shared stories of the intense spiritual warfare which he and his family have experienced. However, there have also been times when God intervened powerfully. In 2004, Dan was doing an open-air meeting in one of the plazas of the city when a very large and obviously drunk man began harassing him and his co-worker. The man shoved and kicked both men for a few minutes while a crowd gathered around them. He tried to push Dan into the traffic of Thessaloniki's busy main highway, the Egnatia Odos. Dan reports that he did what he did next purely as an act of self-defense. "I wasn't angry," he said later. "I was scared that this man was going to kill us." The man came running towards him, yelling and screaming, leaned back to administer a kick to Dan's knee, and Dan hit him squarely in the jaw. "I didn't even feel my fist hit his face," he said later. "That's why I suspect it was the Lord that smote the guy, not me. I've never hit anyone in the face in my life," Dan said, "and I'm not so sure that that is still not a true statement." The man's hat flew off, he tripped and could not get up; it was as if an invisible force was physically holding him down, though he was still screaming and yelling. He was only allowed to get up after Dan had finished the meeting and was leaving the area!

Dan has found the work in Thessaloniki to be rather difficult and lonely. Other than occasional help from kind people like Derek Heyman, Korky Davey, Paul Adams, and other OAC-affiliated members coming through from time to time, he has more or less had to go it alone in Thessaloniki.

At this writing in 2020, Dan, 66, describes himself as "semi-retired." He continues to work closely with a local church planter, going out weekly. He cooks meals for the church members on Sundays and fills the pulpit from time to time. At the moment, he spends a lot of time helping Zoe take care of her bedridden 99-year-old mother. After they have finished that task, they desire to split their time between the USA and Greece. As long as he is in Greece, he wants to be active in evangelism there.

Praise God that Dan continues to do the work of evangelism in this very difficult and lonely field.