



Brussels,
Belgium



Why Brussels for RUF Global?

Brussels, the “de facto” capital of Europe, is one of the most international cities in the world with at least 160 nationalities with over 100 languages spoken. Brussels is a multilingual city where French dominates daily life, Dutch maintains a formal presence, and English bridges the gap for its international population. The metro area population of 2.5 million is around 60% foreign born. Home to major institutions like the European Union and NATO, this city welcomes thousands of international students and young professionals every year.

Historically Roman Catholic, Brussels now sees Muslims (20%) outnumbering practicing Catholics (6-8%) and 30% of the population identifies as non-religious. **Less than 2% of the population identifies as evangelical.** Not only are the native Flemish and Walloons only superficially reached with the gospel, but the city is filled with immigrants from unreached nations. **Estimates are only one evangelical church exists in Brussels for every 75,000 people.** Brussels is in great need of healthy biblical churches that preach the good news of Jesus.

Unique Opportunity for Student Ministry

There is not only a pressing need for more churches, but also an untapped opportunity to help plant and build up such churches through evangelizing the next generation of university students .

Research, such as the Barna Group’s, shows again and again that this time, ages 15-29, are a critical spiritually with 77% of professions of faith happening in those years. In the words of Charles Malik, Former Secretary General of the United Nations: “**The church can render no greater service, both to itself and to the cause of the gospel, than to try to recapture the universities for Christ. More potently than by any other means, change the university and you change the world.**”

Brussels has around **86,000 students**, in addition to 50,000 students in the nearby university town of Leuven, only 20 minutes outside of Brussels. Around **25-30% of these students are international** with English as the language they use day to day, **coming from over 100 nations.** **Yet currently no English-speaking college ministry exists Brussels aimed at reaching this vast international population.** French and Dutch-speaking outreach is also extremely limited with only two active campus outreach groups in the city.

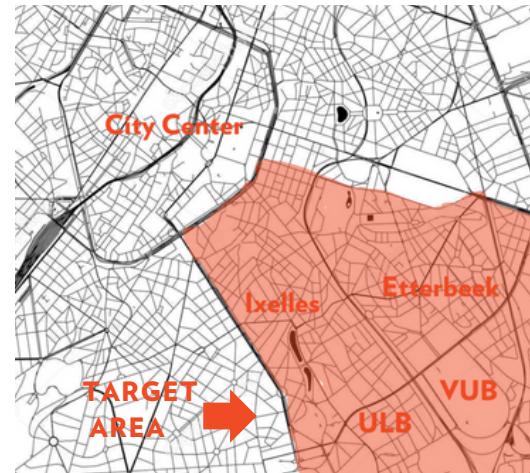
Vision, Mission, & Target Area

Brussels is in incredible need of a Reformed campus ministry targeted at reaching and equipping not only Belgian natives but the vast english-speaking international population.

Imagine the impact of such ministry--not only locally in but globally. Students who encounter the gospel in Brussels could carry its message back to over 100 nations!

Our vision is come alongside Hope International Church of Brussels & plant a Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) campus ministry. Lord willing, our hope is to move to Brussels in Spring or Summer 2026 to begin this work.

Given the unique context, RUF-G Brussels will aim to reach not only the typical undergraduate campus demographic but also graduate students as well. Our model will draw both from both the philosophy of ministry of RUF & RUF International. The two main universities in Brussels, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) & Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), are found southeast of city center near the student neighborhoods of Ixelles & Etterbeek. **They share a secular foundation, established in the 19th century by liberal freethinkers to counter Catholic influence in education.** This secular emphasis has resulted in policies that pose challenges for Christian groups meeting on campus. These campuses are open to outsiders, making outreach & meeting students viable, but reserving space is a challenge.



UNIVERSITÉ LIBRE DE BRUXELLES (ULB)



VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL (VUB)



RUF-G Brussels will be the first RUF in Western Europe & Oliver will be the first RUF campus minister in the States to transition to RUF Global. Our hope is that RUF-G Brussels might be a catalyst for many more RUF-G works in western Europe in the future.

Future Building for RUF Brussels

In light of this obstacle, an exciting development on the horizon is that MTW Brussels team is currently raising funds to purchase a building near these campuses. As Hope has grown, the church is need of building for a morning, eventual evening services, and other church life & outreach events. **This building will also be used for RUF large group and other gatherings, which would be an fantastic resource in reaching these campuses.**

KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN



Who We Are | The Pierces

Oliver, Kim, Emila, Julia, & Luke

In summer 2011, for first time in his life Oliver found himself in an urban diverse city surrounded by non-Christians. Though Oliver came to Berklee College of Music in Boston to explore a career in music, he ended up spending most of his time talking to his non-Christian friends about Jesus. **Ever since then Oliver has had a heart for the lost and especially for students in university cities.**



Oliver's call was nurtured further through involvement as a student and then intern with RUF at MTSU. Kim and Oliver moved Philadelphia for seminary in 2014 and Oliver interned there with the college ministry at Tenth Presbyterian Church serving at UPenn, Drexel, & Temple. In 2018, after seminary the Pierces took a call starting a new RUF at IUP in Western PA & then in 2022 took a call to RUF at Wofford. **Through a series of incredible providences, the Pierces are thrilled to have the opportunity to work again in a global city, reaching students.**

The Pierces journey to Brussels began in 2023 when by God's providence they worshipped at Hope International while Oliver & Kim were on 10th anniversary trip in Europe and visiting friends. They immediately felt at home at this church and loved the getting to know the two couples on the MTW team, the Brinks & the Bacons, who are focused on Hope International. Almost a year later 2024, the Pierces were extended an invite by the MTW team to consider RUF-G Brussels. After an encouraging vision trip to Brussels to further explore the city, the campuses, & the church, the Pierces went through MTW assessment. They now are fully pursuing this call to start RUF-G in Brussels.

Hope International Church of Brussels & Our MTW Team



The Pierces are overjoyed to be invited to work with Hope International Church of Brussels. **RUF is an arm of the church. Our goal is not only to see students come to know Jesus but to also be equipped to serve in the church for a lifetime.** Ultimately, we dream of many students being sent out across Europe and the world to bless & build up the Church. We are excited to connect students to a faithful, diverse, ordinary means of grace church during their time as students in Brussels. Hope has had significant growth since 2023 and is on track to become an established church in the European Mission Presbytery of the International Presbyterian Church (IPC). Even more, a few students are attending Hope & looking for Christian campus community that can reach students and equip them for ministry.

We need your help! We are prayerfully seeking churches and individuals who would consider partnering with us in fulfilling the Great Commission. We'd love to share more of our heart for Brussels and the student population there.

Contact the Pierces

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