



Iglesia Evangélica Reformada de Almuñécar Premises project



This brochure sets out the plans for the purchase project and the implications for the congregation.

Contents

1. The Need
2. The Vision
3. The Plan
4. The Timeline
5. The Cost
6. How You Can Help

1. THE NEED

The Evangelical Reformed Church in Almuñécar is part of a small denomination called Iglesias Reformadas Españolas (IRE), reformed in doctrine and presbyterian in government. We are a member of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC).

The church in Almuñécar will be 20 years old in September 2023. The work began with a small group of ladies meeting in their homes. Since then, we have met in two different places: a small garage which we used for 7 years, and the present premises where we have been for more than 10 years.

Over the years the Lord has blessed the work which, though small, has remained stable and we have always been able to pay the rent and other overheads. However, the money invested in paying the rent over 20 years could have been paying a mortgage and by now we would own our own property.

Because we have visitors for much of the year and because we are also a bilingual and international congregation, our current facility is often over-crowded. Also, the room for the children's Sunday school is too small and due to limited space, we must also use it as a storage room.

As we have only this small facility, all our activities (sewing workshops, pilates, English and Spanish lessons, etc.) have to be held in the worship hall, which we do not consider appropriate, and which also proves inconvenient as we have to move chairs and tables to adapt it for each activity.



Why we think that buying a freehold premises is the best option for us:

- 1 - After 20 years of presence in the town of Almuñécar, we believe that buying premises would send a message to the local authorities and the town that we are here to stay .
- 2 - Looking for larger premises and continuing to pay rent is a waste of money which we will never recoup, a bad investment.
- 3 - With the purchase of a property , we will be able to redirect the offerings and tithes to pay part of the salary of a new pastor in the future, so we will be less dependent on outside help.
- 4 - Buying premises would help to consolidate the work in this city.

2. THE VISION

Our primary purpose is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with today's world. The Gospel is the good news that Jesus came into the world and died on the cross to save sinners. We believe our own premises would enable us to develop and grow our current ministry and activities as well as providing the necessary space for our growing congregation.

As we are located on the Tropical Coast of Spain, an hour from Málaga International Airport and an hour from the city of Granada, we are reaching out primarily to Spaniards, but also to people of different nationalities, among whom there are many English speakers.

Our vision is to establish a Spanish and International, bilingual and multicultural church



The church has a full programme of activities:

- Sunday worship is at the very heart of congregational life. There is one service at 11.30am, and the sermon is translated into English every Sunday.
- Before worship: Adult Bible class.
- Monday evening: Men's meeting.
- Wednesday morning: Ladies' prayer meeting (for those women who are unable to attend the evening prayer meeting because of their work).
- Wednesday evening: Prayer meeting.
- Thursday evening: Sewing workshop.
- Friday evening: Ladies' meeting.
- Different types of workshops, according to need: Spanish for internationals, English classes, school support classes for children, etc.
- Once a month: Congregational meal.
- Different evangelistic activities throughout the year.
- Marriage counselling.

After much prayer, planning and preparation we are excited by the prospect of owning our own premises and believe that this is God's next step for us as a congregation.

Our desire is for God to use the new premises for the extension of His Kingdom in Almuñécar and to provide an evangelical witness for future years.

We are conscious of the need to move forward on this journey prayerfully, committing every step to the Lord for His guidance and direction. We believe God will provide the means if we faithfully and obediently look to Him.

3. THE PLAN

The plan is to find a suitable premises and to create a multipurpose worship space, as visible, accessible and central as possible, with sufficient space to fulfill the purposes of our vision.

Requirements for the premises include:

- A place of at least 200 square metres.
- A large multipurpose worship space.
- Accommodation for Sunday School classes for children and for the different workshops.
- A versatile reception/café space and kitchen.
- Quiet space/minister's office.
- Ample flexible storage.

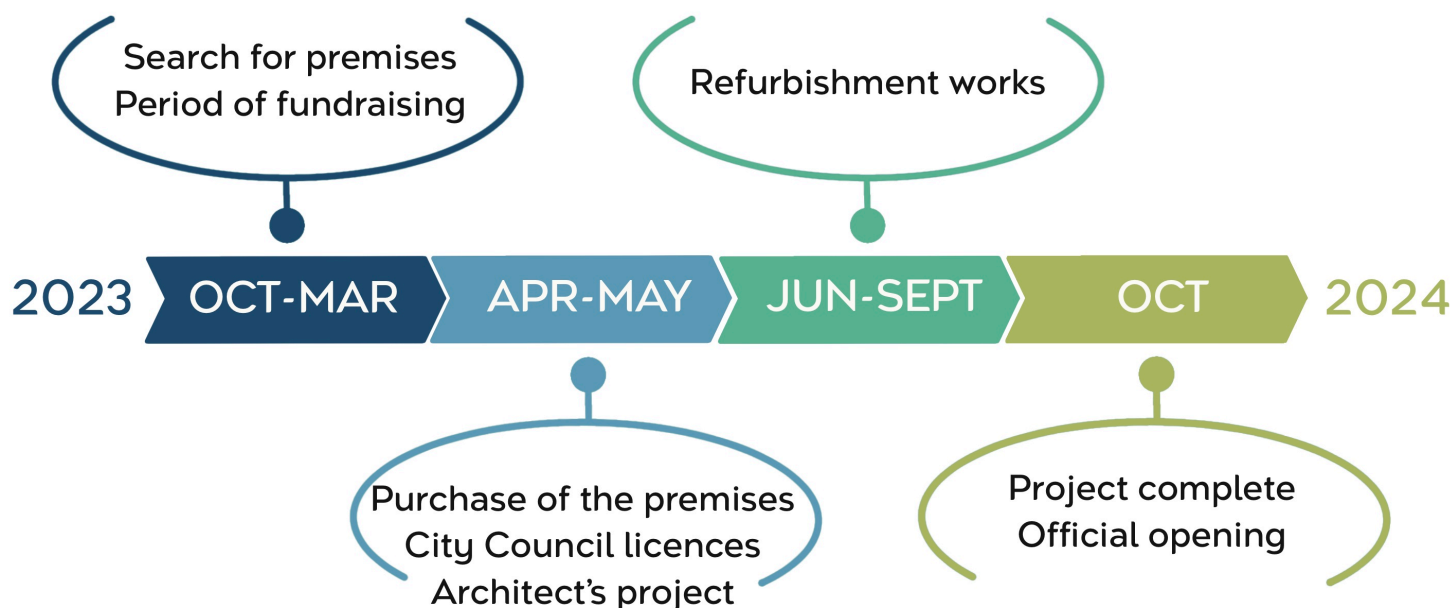
Any premises we find will need refurbishment to accommodate the needs of the church.

4. THE TIMELINE

There are a number of constraints in the timeline of any project, particularly in relation to planning, resourcing and funding. While there is a necessary degree of flexibility in these dates, the challenge is to keep progressing towards the goal in faith. In fact, the sooner the funding is in place, the sooner we will be in a position to acquire the premises and start whatever renovations are necessary to accommodate the needs of the congregation and then, in the shortest possible time, to make use of the facilities.

We estimate that the search for premises that fulfil all our requirements will take between 6 and 8 months. We currently know a technical architect and a lawyer who are advising us on the whole process and who are dealing with the local authorities to apply for the necessary permits.

A possible timescale for the project:



5. THE COST

The approximate cost of this project is estimated at €370,000. It is a daunting amount of money for a small congregation like ours. However, we believe that God's plan for the congregation is to serve this location, and therefore we are looking to raise the necessary funds.

To date, we have €15,000 in donations and grants from the congregation. Approximately €355,000 needs to be raised while the search for the premises is going on because, once we have found the right place, we will need the money to proceed with the purchase.

Funding sources

The advisory board is considering finances from the following sources:

- Congregational giving
- Grants and donations from the charitable trusts of other external bodies.
- And a bank loan if necessary.

As an illustration, the total cost of the project might be sourced as follows:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Congregation | €20,000 |
| Ongoing pledge | €100,000 |
| Grants & donations | <u>€250,000</u> |
| | €370,000 |

These amounts are purely illustrative. If we do not reach the total amount or if the price of the premises increases, the congregation would be willing to take out a bank loan of up to €50,000.

Biblical principles on giving

The total sum required for the new premises is undeniably challenging, but the biblical principle for giving is that each is to give as they can afford (as the Lord has blessed them - 1 Cor. 16v2).

We are asking that people consider committing to regular giving for a period of time (for example 6 months), to allow the advisory board to plan financing the project. We understand that any commitment made may be subject to change as individual circumstances change.

Bank loan

In taking a bank loan we will clearly be committing to repayments over a significant period of time.

A €50,000 loan over 15 years would incur repayments of approx. €5,000 per annum. We believe that this is the maximum amount that our small congregation could afford.

6. HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Pray for wisdom and patience as we look for the premises and the funds to purchase them.
2. Support our fundraising programme through one of our church partners or directly through our local church: BIC code: BSABESBB
Bank Sabadell - IBAN: ES45 0081 0543 6400 0191 3603
3. Promote the project with like-minded individuals and churches who may be interested and share the exciting vision God has entrusted to us.



'It's been a real privilege to be involved with the witness of the Evangelical Reformed Church in Almuñécar over the past few years. The current premises are not large and it would be a great matter to see the congregation settled in a more spacious location. This development would enhance the witness of the Church and also provide a good base for the various outreach teams that visit during the summer months. I wholeheartedly support this project and pray that the Lord would bless the witness in Almuñécar at this significant time.'

Rev. Gareth Burke (Stramillis Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Belfast, NI)

'I had the great pleasure and privilege of worshipping with God's people in the Evangelical Reformed Church of Almuñécar, in August 2023. What struck me was the love for Jesus, His Gospel and the needy people of Almuñécar. On the two occasions I was present for worship the Meeting House was almost full. There is a great need for a bigger meeting space both for those worshipping and for child care and hospitality. I highly commend this project to God's people.'

Rev. Alastair McNeely (Richhill Presbyterian Church, Armagh, Northern Ireland)



'It's been a real privilege to get to know Manuel and the church in Almuñécar, to see how God has blessed this long term ministry. The opportunity to see the work established further by obtaining a property is thrilling. I wholeheartedly commend this project.'

Rev. Paul Levy (International Presbyterian Church, Ealing, London)

'In a spiritually dark and needy corner of Europe, the Evangelical Reformed Church of Almuñécar is shining the light of the Gospel of God! The purchase of a more suitable property could greatly enhance this vital work. I could not commend Manuel Lopez Franco and the team more highly.'

Rev. Andy Pearson (St. Peter's Free Church, Dundee, Scotland)



'It is been our privilege at Smithton Church to partner in the Gospel with the congregation in Almuñécar over many years. This exciting and much-needed development to secure suitable premises for the long-term witness of the congregation is one I am thrilled to support, and am sure others will be too.'

Rev. Alasdair Macleod (Smithton Free Church, Inverness, Scotland)

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