

Site Report: Naples, Italy

From: Rev. Dr. F. Douglas Hudson, Director of Military Ministry for Southeast Alabama Presbytery, [doug.gertie@yahoo.com](mailto:doug.gertie@yahoo.com) 1-704-909-6516

**Introduction:** Naples Naval Base is located in Agnano in the Bay of Naples. Mt. Vesuvius is about 8 miles from the port. This base provides administrative and logistical support to over 100 tenant commands and activities throughout the Mediterranean. The US community in Naples includes service members and their families. The total community population fluctuates around 10,000.

**Need:** The Naples Naval Base needs a Presbyterian and Reformed Church. These are highly trained and motivated professionals serving their nation far from home. Spiritually, the community is served by chaplains in a highly pluralistic environment. I have not been able to locate an English speaking church off base. A Presbyterian and Reformed Church can best serve the military community. A church that stresses covenant theology would be a tremendous value to the young families that rotate through the base.

**Project Description:** A Church planter is needed to establish a Presbyterian and Reformed witness in the Naples area. The efforts of the Church would be primarily directed to the American military community. This is a pioneering effort. Funding for the work will be initially borne by the sending presbytery that adopts this location. Churches outside the geographically bounds of the sending presbytery could also partner in this effort to expand the Kingdom of God and His Church. The Church planter could also participate in raising funds for the effort. Becoming self-supporting might be a bit more of a challenge for this work because of the population of the targeted area. The Church planter could also implement an ongoing support effort by getting commitments of support from those that rotate through the church to continue to support the work to some extent when they move from the Naples area. We can discuss how this effort would look and function. The Church planter must be a self-starter. He must be willing to work hard. He should be a good expositor of the Word of God and have a burden to reach the lost with the good news of Christ. He must be a disciple maker. A man of strong faith and of a tender heart is needed in this ministry. Hospitality will play an important part in this type ministry. A familiarity with the military culture would be helpful, but not essential. A brief training period could be provided for a man without military experience so as to get him up to speed on the culture of the military. He should also understand that the military community is a highly mobile entity. It moves soldiers and families around quite often. This will present challenges and opportunities. Challenges due to the loss of members on a regular basis and opportunities because there will be a constant influx of new people for ministry. The pastor, during the course of his ministry, will literally impact thousands of lives with the gospel. Additionally, the church planter must be prepared to live and work in an environment where there are few, if any, like-minded pastors around.

**Conclusion:** The military community is a wonderful community that could benefit greatly from the doctrines of grace ministry. In addition to the opportunities for life changing ministry, the minister and his family in their free time, can explore a great culture and travel around the beautiful country of Italy.