



International Messengers Good News

Fall 2013

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring Good News. Romans 10:15



UPSIDE DOWN

Darwin Anderson

This fall, Darlis and I are celebrating our 23rd year in ministry with International Messengers. Wow, what a grace-filled story it has been from our beginning days in Bemidji, Minnesota, in 1990. November 4th marks the ten-year anniversary of the home-going of our dear friend, Bob Rasmusson. Bob founded International Messengers in 1984 and lovingly mentored us into leadership to serve with him. We continue to work from the core values and principles that Bob set in place for this mission and thought it appropriate to honor Bob's great heart with this reminder of who we are. Here are a few of them:

- Let the mission direction be ground-driven, not dictated from the top.
- Disciple adults by training and sending them short-term into frontline ministry to deepen their local churches for the sake of their communities.
- God takes great joy in using passionate, ordinary people who are listening to and following Jesus.
- Expand mission fields by God's leading in called people not leadership vision.
- Our calling as a mission is to risk, not control.
- Fill a niche in the missions world by providing a place for missionaries who need a second chance to heal and reengage on the field. Err on the side of grace in dealing with all staff.
- Protect the missionary and his family over the reputation of the mission or the mission's funding. Work to leave them in better shape than when they came to you.
- Missionary training needs to be very relational and in the context of daily ministry, always mindful of character development.
- Missionaries thrive and accomplish more when given their freedom to pursue what God has gifted and impassioned them to do.

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- Emphasize “staff care” in creative ways through keeping a family environment in the organization, Staff conferences focused on feeding and fellowship, prayer, short-term adult teams, and personal visits from caring folks
- Pray and worship a bunch.
- Allow God to do His work in staff on His timetable.
- Keep people engaged in ministry to give them opportunity to heal.
- Trust God, not deep pockets.

IM

(Upside Down Missionary Management)

LOCAL CHURCHES (North America & Overseas)

MISSIONARY TRAINING CENTERS in Montana, Ukraine, and Uganda CAREER MISSIONARIES, and THEIR MINISTRIES & FOUNDATIONS

*(Joshua Project, River of Life, Titus 2 Center, Life Art,
Purity Coalition Uganda, Father's Heart, Hope for Roma,
Friendship House, Truth Project-Romania, Sessions Project,
Daybreak Ministries, Borne Church Project,
Odessa Project, Français sans Frontières, Amazon River Boat Project,
Mobilizing Uganda for Missions {MUM}, Sojourn)*

SHORT-TERM ADULT TEAMS

HOME OFFICE STAFF

PRESIDENT AND LEADERSHIP TEAM

IM BOARD

Thanks to so many of you who have encouraged, gone, served, and supported through these years. And thank you for your continued prayers as we navigate the years ahead. These are great days to be alive, serving, and watching for the LORD's return. ●

Darwin & Darlis Anderson live in Clear Lake, Iowa. Darwin serves as President of IM and Darlis is the Recruiting Director.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

“I have been to Romania five times to do camps. This was very different. Living life for ten days with Laura in the city [Odessa] where she ministers regularly gave me a much better sense of the culture she is working in, the population she is serving, the needs of the ministry, the daily difficulties, etc. I feel I will be much more equipped to pray, to advocate in our church, to provide practical/material items for the ministry, to understand Laura's heart. My passion for her work has been ignited. In camps it was passion/joy for relationships with students. This was a tremendous learning experience, but also impacted my heart. I have brokenness for the 'least of these' in this culture that it would be hard to get any other way.”

Susan - Ukraine

Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from the community. The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over him, and the more deeply he becomes involved in it, the more disastrous is his isolation. Sin wants to remain unknown. It shuns the light. In the darkness of the unexpressed it poisons the whole being of a person.

*~Dietrich Bonhoeffer,
"Life Together"*

CULTURE *SHIFT*

Brent Howland



The alarming stories and statistics about internet pornography and other sexual addictions in the mission world have caught our attention. We are thankful that God has spared us from any big moral crises in recent years, but we realize that we have individuals who are struggling against a secret sin that is poisoning their spirit and their world.

How do we respond to an urgent crisis when it's so hidden? How do we put out the fire, when we can't see the source, and even the smoke is hard to spot? We are working to shift the culture of IM to that of a thoroughly grace-based community. Missionaries who are stuck in sin need to step into the light; our responsibility as an organization is to create an environment where honesty is valued. For too long, missionaries have felt the pressure to appear as if they are the perfect Christians so that they won't lose support from those back home. We are eager to remove the masks and walk together through life's struggles. Maybe if we as leaders are the chief-repenters, then

transparency will become more of a norm in our organizational culture.

We have also been working to reassure our staff about the grace that God has for them and that we want to show to them too. Instead of disciplinary policies for those who fail morally, we have developed a restoration plan to help them heal. Real healing never happens in isolation and secrecy, so we are praying for God to give courage to those who need to walk the hard path of restoration.

God has raised up a team of people who are invested in the lives of our missionaries. We have counselors and pastors and computer programmers and educators and farmers who are excellent at extending God's grace to others. Together we are starting to see a delightfully freeing culture shift. ●

For more resources, go to www.im-usa.org/resources/moral-social

Brent & Tammy Howland live in Mason City, Iowa, with their two boys. Brent is the Vice President of International Messengers.



CYPRUS & EGYPT

It seems that life with Jesus is never boring and our life in the North of Cyprus isn't boring either. Since arriving here in December 2012, we have had the opportunity of getting in contact with many people from many backgrounds. At times this can be very challenging, especially when cultural differences and varied spiritual approaches come together.

Cyprus is something like a hub for believers who had to leave their ministry in countries of the Middle East for various reasons. The diverse fellowship of believers that meets in our home serves as a forum for leaders where they can share and find serious prayer support before they go back on their ministry fields. It is very encouraging to see how committed many of them are to support others in prayer. Russians pray for Americans, Brits pray for Russians. Nigerians, Togolese, and Kenyans join the worship. We also have somebody from Norway and from the Philippines, plus the two of us from Germany.

God also gave the opportunity to support a little Russian speaking fellowship. Our goal is to enlarge this group with Russian speaking students and immigrants of all ages who have started flooding into North Cyprus. Ben is preaching in this fellowship whenever needed. We are very glad that God uses the talents He has given us in this direction!

Jesus has opened many doors to lives that need a deeper walk with Him, that search for freedom

and healing. So many lives need restoration on all levels of their existence, so that they can serve God freely in the future.

Ben is in contact almost daily with our two little teams in Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt, via Skype and Facebook. The work is growing rapidly around our local co-worker and brother who is gathering a group of Egyptian students and other young men. He disciples them, teaches them by doing Bible studies, and prepares some of them for a future ministry among the poorest in villages all over Egypt. We are amazed to see how God blesses this ministry in the midst of political and social turmoil and extreme insecurity. Our brother shared with us several times how God protected him in dangerous situations. This too is very encouraging to us.

We are planning a discipleship training camp in January 2014 for Arabic students near Alexandria, Egypt, a big evangelistic summer camp for students in July 2014 in Cyprus, and another evangelistic summer camp for students in July at King Mariout, North Egypt.

We pray and hope that in 2014 the countries of our activities will not be dominated by political crisis, but that the Lord will provide freedom to reach out and to equip young Arabic believers with what they need to walk with Him. ●

TIME IS VALUABLE

Loring Morris



O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! Psalm 39:4-5

I left the States close to five years ago. I uprooted my life and left my family and friends to live in Uganda. Suddenly, everyday relationships that I had taken for granted for years were priceless to me. Those days of hanging out with my friends and letting our kids play together had seemed so normal, almost mundane. And now without seeing these friends daily those memories of our times together became so valuable.

I got an email a few weeks ago telling me that a friend and co-worker had just lost her ten-year-old daughter. I was shocked. She was a vibrant beautiful girl who I had just seen on the last day of school in May and now she is dead. As I worked through stages of disbelief and shock and compassion for the family, I realized that time is so valuable.

Sometimes I hate being so far away from everyone. I hate seeing my babies become children and young adults. I hate watching my parents grow older. I hate missing out on birthdays and major life events. I hate hearing that people I love have died. I can really get depressed thinking about all the TIME that has passed. "Each day

is a gift." We hear that frequently. How true it becomes when we watch a friend lose a child, or a grandfather dies, or the little girl you saw two years ago is now almost a woman. What we

My days are completely in God's hands. He has determined how long I live, where I live, who I spend my days with, and how I spend the time He has given.

wouldn't give to just go back and have more time with our kids when they were babies, or sit and listen to the wisdom of a now deceased grandparent, or hug more and laugh with our friends. If I don't bring it all back to what God has taught us in His Word then it all becomes meaningless and void.

My days are completely in God's hands. He has determined

how long I live, where I live, who I spend my days with, and how I spend the time He has given. When I consider the sheer GRACE involved in each day that I wake up alive I am humbled. I want to learn

to hold time with an open hand, with eternity in view. I don't want to mourn the passing years but be thankful for each moment. I want to entrust my relationships to a faithful God who keeps hearts close to each other even over many miles. I want to feel the weight of the gift of time as a precious burden that I am privileged to carry.

I want to spend each day with a grateful heart and a renewed mindset on how to use the time I have been given with my children and family, my friends, and my church. I want to stop fearing the passing time but look forward to whatever is next, enjoying where I am and who I am with for however long I am given, and trusting that God has had it all figured out from the beginning of time. ●

Loring, her husband Dan, and their children live and work in Kampala, Uganda, serving in a church plant called "Sojourn Church."



CAMPING IN THE FOREST...TRY IT!

Laura Rechkemmer

With Luba, an orphan at camp.



I grew up on a farm and have wandered through the muck in cow pens and pig pens. I have also dug in the dirt, picked up rocks, and wandered in a bean field pulling weeds. But those things were years ago and I don't think most people believe me when I tell them.

So when I was challenged to attend a camp in the forest without running water or electricity for 13 days, I was nearly sickened by the thought. A "bathroom" without running water for washing your hands or electricity for my hair dryer cannot be called a bathroom! I succumbed to the pressure and found myself in the midst of a rainstorm in a forest without running water or electricity. I was more than wet and dirty, but somehow there was joy amongst the muck. Why was there joy? It was because I was serving His children in the forest. The

children from the orphanage were there and were more than overjoyed to be without electricity and running water. Why? It was because there was a team of people that sacrificed some comfort to love them and to share with them that God loved them. I walked out of the forest quite dirty, but with a heart that was burdened for these children. I am thankful that I chose dirty and unsanitary for 13 days because God showed me more of His heart for His children. It's worth it.

Wanna get dirty? Come join us next summer in the forest and open your heart to these orphans, God's children. ("Bathroom" provided.) ●

Laura works with orphans and orphan graduates in Odessa, Ukraine.



THE POWER OF PRAYER

Olivia Stuart-Cox

Lately I've been so amazed at the power of prayer. Not only how God changes others and situations through prayer according to His will, but especially how He has been changing me through it too. As we sat on our balcony in Odessa praying with Nastya, a girl who two months ago had no desire for God but is now being transformed daily by His word and by time in prayer, I was absolutely amazed to hear her pray. She prayed boldly for her family, her friends, those she once considered to be her enemies, and even for all the nations of the world to worship God the way He

deserves. As we disciple her, I'm even more amazed to see how specifically God is answering our prayers for her life. Her hatred of her sin, rejection of idols, her hunger for God's glory, and boldness in sharing her new faith in Christ is beautiful and contagious. God has been showing me how we have been invited into His throneroom and been given the opportunity to change history on our knees; again and again I feel the Father telling me, "Ask and it will be given to you." I know that the transformation that God has bought about in my life and in the lives of those

around me is largely due to the time we spend in prayer. It's so exciting to feel God changing our bad attitudes as we pray and even relieving our fears and anxieties. The verse that God keeps bringing me back to is Philippians 4:6-7. ***"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*** I have been loving this year of learning about God's sovereignty, grace and glory, and I look forward to many more times of prayer, petition and thanksgiving. ●

Olivia is from South Africa and is serving as an intern in Odessa, Ukraine.

I AM JUST A MOM

Nicole Beger



The job of being a wife, mom, and servant of Christ is no easy road. Some days are harder than others, like when the kids are sick and Grandma is thousands of miles away. Days when I can't figure out the instructions to their medicine, or when I think, "What am I doing here anyway? I am just a mom."

Recently there was an evangelistic group in Borne using clowns to do outreach to kids. Partway through the show they wanted someone to share a testimony. I was approached to do it (as I was chasing my two young ones), without preparation time. I said a quick prayer as my heart raced! In all my wonderful spirituality I asked, "Shouldn't someone Polish do it?" The response was, "Who? This is a

crowd of moms—nothing I can say will matter." He is right, they were looking for someone like them (struggling to survive this adventure of mommie-hood) with some hope to give.

A short while later I was in front of the crowd relating to them about how tired I am, how hard it is to be a good mom, and how I wish I could go to the toilet alone. I could not believe I said that! But that is where the hope is, (and I don't mean going to the toilet alone), but being real with one another about our need for hope. As I struggle through this life wanting to be a good mom, knowing at the end of the day that I messed up, again, I always have hope that Christ can

make all things new—that His mercies are new every morning.

My ministry isn't fancy. It is to my husband, my children, the "Zumba moms" in Bible study late nights, the young ladies I disciple, and the preschool teachers who don't know we are praying for them. But my ministry is important. Be encouraged moms wherever you are, you do have ministry and you may never know just how important it is. ●

Nicole Beger, her husband David, and their children live and serve in Borne Sulinowo, Poland.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"I benefited from this trip in so many ways. My walk with God was strengthened by my brothers and sisters in Radom. I was greatly encouraged to see many national believers who have grown in their faith since the last time I saw them. It was exciting to see the Friendship House and all that has been accomplished there."
Julie – Poland

"This mission experience allowed me to spend significant time with a great team of people. It allowed me to disciple a few people and it allowed me to learn a different culture. The trip allowed me to watch God do great things in people's lives and it allowed me to do ministry with my son." Scott – Romania



ALCATRAZ

Filemon Shaded

Alcatraz Prison:

Location: San Francisco Bay

Capacity: 1,576 prisoners

Alcatraz Dormitory:

Location: Warsaw, Poland

Capacity: 1,800 students

Alcatraz is a dorm in downtown Warsaw. Although it looks and feels like a prison it's occupied by 1,800 students who are imprisoned and blinded by sin. At the turn of the year we started to spread the Gospel in this dark place where there are no divisions among the men and women students as they share rooms, showers, and have a big hall to party in three times a week. Before we decided to do anything, we spent a lot of time in prayer over the people who live there, having "prayer walks" in the building. My prayer is that God would set the prisoners free and open their eyes to the Gospel.

*"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you **by the hand** and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a **light** for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness."* Isaiah 42:7-8

And so it started—every Monday we are there fighting the good fight. You may ask, "Who is we?" Well now I have an "inside man" that lives in the building! David is a young man who I began discipling two years ago. What a great "Timothy" he has become and what a great encouragement and joy it is to have him there. Although we started serving together, our time of one-on-one discipleship is still the priority.

Alcatraz is one of two dorms we are working in and we praise God for what He has done here. During this last year 135 people heard the Gospel, 22 gave their lives to Christ, and 14 regularly attend a one-on-one Bible study. ●

Filemon lives in Warsaw, Poland, serving in his church as well as evangelizing and discipling university students.



MINISTRY AND MEDICARE

Deborah Sharp

pretty cool way to celebrate our retirement. Retirement? Well not so much – as Ed Kleiman reminded us, "retirement is not Biblical..."

We have no intention of buying an RV and parking it on a beach in Texas. Although... Nope, we're committed to full-time ministry with IM, just in a different capacity. So why are we doing this even though we really could retire? I have to admit that although the idea of

being somewhere sunny and warm, baking on the beach with no travel, is really attractive, I have to agree with Ed. Despite the fact that the aches, pains, and limitations of age are challenging us to say goodbye to the things we used to do, we are not willing to hang it up! There's plenty for us still to do, just in a different capacity.

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Medicare ...continued from page 8

While Steve did go on Medicare this year (it'll be years for me—I'm **much** younger) we know that God can still use us. There is always a place to serve, whether it's here or abroad. Something that has thrilled our hearts over the years at the Training Center has been people in their 50s and 60s who come as students—ready to sell out, pack up, and GO! God enables us to do things we never thought possible, maybe even go places we never intended to go. Is there a price to pay? You bet—sacrifices, distance from friends and family, and physical challenges of getting older. Is it worth it? **YOU BET!!** So just hang up the RV keys, pack the Bengay and Ibuprophen, and step out in faith to do ministry with your Medicare! ●

Deborah and her husband Steve live in Libby, Montana, and are seeking God's direction about their future.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"The camp this summer was like being at church every day for over a week. I was reminded about a lot of things I know about God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in such a short time and in contexts that strengthened my faith so much. It was a joyful week." Kay – Poland



SOKLEY AND PISETH

Bernie & Lynn Jacobsen



Living in Moscow, Russia, with 16 million others has its challenges, but it also has its joys. Being a truly international city means we have contact with more than just Russians, although our main focus is Russians in our language school.

Earlier this year, Lynn and I met a couple of students from Cambodia. Most nationalities have thousands, if not tens of thousands, here in Moscow, but there are only about ten Cambodians. We befriended Sokley and Piseth and after seeing in them an interest in spiritual things, presented the Gospel to them. They were intrigued, but needed to think about it.

This summer, Lynn and I bought a couple Khmer language Bibles. When Sokley and Piseth came over a few weeks ago to cook us an authentic Cambodian dinner (very good food) we presented them with the two Cambodian Bibles.

Their reaction was a lot more than I expected. When they saw

that the Bibles were in their mother tongue and that they were actually holding them, their eyes got big and they touched the pages. Apparently, they had never actually touched a Cambodian Bible.

They wanted to see the Christmas story so we had them read Luke 2 to us in Cambodian. Lynn and I didn't understand a word, but it was truly beautiful. We gave them some reading suggestions (Romans 5 and 6, the Gospel of John) and are looking forward to exploring Scripture together with them.

Pray for Piseth and Sokley. They need Jesus. They (now) have God's Word.

God's Word is powerful. We are privileged. Presenting God's Word and His Gospel is the greatest privilege anyone can have. ●

Bernie & Lynn live and serve in Moscow, Russia.



IS GOD CALLING YOU?

Marion Caldwell

Yes He is! He calls us to worship Him, to deepen our relationship with Him, and to serve Him wholeheartedly! You are pursuing these foundational elements of our faith, but you sense that our Gracious Lord is gently tugging at your heart to take another step of faith. You have been seeking to discern what that may be. Becoming an IM advocacy team member may be the answer to your quest!

An IM advocacy team is a group of people who are called by God to facilitate and advocate for a specific ministry within IM. Serving the Lord as an advocacy team member allows you to:

- **Join God in His work** in the mission field. He chose you for this purpose in this ministry.
- Participate as a **vital support person** in a needed ministry without being a full-time missionary on a foreign mission field.
- **Work with people of like calling and passion** for the ministry you serve. Developing close relationships; experiencing comradeship and fellowship on a deeper level with fellow team members and ministry staff.
- Go on short-term missions to **work alongside ministry staff**. This enables you to learn first-hand how God is working through the ministry and its impact on those people the ministry serves.
- **Experience the joy** of coming alongside IM missionaries and ministry staff as they share the love of Christ.
- Provide God an **additional avenue to grow you in the image of Christ**; build your Christian character; teach you to work with a wide variety of people's gifts, talents, temperaments, and baggage; and stretch you with a variety of ministry activities and responsibilities.

Tom and I have been part of an advocacy team for the River of Life Ministries in Cornesti, Romania since 2010. If God is calling you to serve Him in this way, we highly recommend that you take this important step of faith!

To explore the possibilities of joining an advocacy team, please contact the IM Home Office at 800-243-6763 or office@im-usa.org. ●

Tom & Marion live in Illinois.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"I took a step of faith to go to Poland. The Lord was with me and helped me. I learned to depend on Him more. The training and spiritual preparation were important. The Lord blessed me with new friends both on the team and among the campers. I felt honored to work with missionaries and nationals. It gave me insight on how to pray for them. It was good to receive a new perspective, to see God at work building His church in Poland." Barbara – Poland

"The benefit I received from my missions experience is that I saw first hand what the full time missionaries work with and how the Lord provides beyond expectations. I learned that missionary families face similar challenges to what I experience at home. It was incredible to experience a large number of people praying for my family as we traveled and worked as missionaries."

John – Romania



WEDDINGS

DANNY SHAW



HANNAH ANDERSON
(daughter of Darwin & Darlis Anderson)
married on 11-17-12

MICHAEL GREGORY



DARIA LIPUSOVA
(daughter of Bronek & Larisa Lipus)
married on 12-28-12

SERGEY DOTSEN



YULIA OKHOTNIKOVA
married on 3-23-13

KOSTYA TUSTANOVSKYI



ISABELLA MUGISA
married on 4-21-13

VITALY FILONOV



MARTA WOZNIAK
married on 7-13-13

DAVID LONG



KIM FOX
(daughter of Gene & Grace Fox)
married on 8-17-13



CARING FOR THE BODY

Anna Hunsucker

In 2012 I began a journey to being a healthier me. I had put on weight at a young age, and gradually built on that over the years. I found myself at a point where I needed to make some drastic diet changes due to allergies, and realized that I was ready to commit to making major changes for my overall health. Sixteen months later, I've lost sixty pounds, dropped multiple sizes, and cycle over a hundred miles, swim three hours, and do two hours of Zumba....all in a single week. I've even begun to run recently, because my big goal for next year is to do a triathlon. Why am I telling you this? Well, because all along this journey I've had people who've cheered me on, speaking words of encouragement. And the ones who've encouraged me the most have been the ones who knew that though forty pounds was good, fifty pounds was better. And though fifty pounds was great, sixty was even greater. And now, there are those who keep cheering me on, because they know that I haven't achieved my ultimate goal yet. And so they keep cheering, encouraging, and spurring me on.

And it reminds me that as the body of Christ, we should be doing this for each other continually. I think of all our brothers and sisters

serving in other countries who might be struggling with the daily challenges that come with living as a foreigner in another land. They accept the fact that they will struggle with language learning, cultural issues, being homesick, or having loved ones die back home, but it doesn't make those things any easier. Let's remember to invest in their lives, and to let them know that we love and care for them. You can invest in the life of a missionary by remembering birthdays and holidays, sending care packages, calling or sending cards or letters, blessing them with unexpected gifts, listening to both their joys and their heartaches, visiting their ministry location, and caring for their many needs when they're back in their home country. Let's choose to be active cheerleaders in their lives; to cheer them on verbally and through prayer, not just when they're struggling, but as they put each foot in front of the other, continuing on in the race that they've been called to run. (1 Cor. 9:24-27) ●

Anna Hunsucker lived and served in Odessa, Ukraine, and is now living in North Carolina and serving IM missionaries through Member Care.



GOD HEARS AND ANSWERS

Cindy Howard

Jane is a thirty-something mother of two preschool children. After two years of learning about Christ, she became a Christian last spring. Her husband is extremely controlling, verbally abusive, and an atheist, but he enjoys hanging out with the men from our little church plant.

Jane is very busy, as she works full-time and has a son with food allergies (so she must prepare all his meals from scratch). But Jane still finds time to read her Bible and meet with someone for discipleship.

One day as I prayed, I asked the Lord, how I could encourage her. How could I send her a good verse or thought for the day? After my prayer time, I decided to go on Facebook, to see pictures of my niece. But God had another idea.

I am not a Facebook person. I only use it to see pictures of my relatives. I got on Facebook, and after a couple minutes, I noticed that a picture of Jane's children was on my screen. Then a window opened up and said "Hi Cindy, How are you?" It was Jane. She was

sick and at home for the day. She had about 30 minutes free before getting her children from preschool. During that time we chatted online. I encouraged her, gave her some verses, assured her that I was praying for her, and listened to her heart. Even though I heard a lot of pain in her voice, she said that she is looking to Jesus to show her exactly what to do in her family.



With Jane at her baptism.

What a miracle. I have probably logged on to Facebook six times in my life, and I have never chatted on Face-

book before, but Jesus "happened" to put the thought in my brain, so that Jane and I could have 30 minutes of uninterrupted time. Praise the Lord that He is a God who hears and answers. His plans will not be thwarted. *"I know that You can do all things, and that no thought or purpose of Yours can be restrained or thwarted."* Job 42:2 (AMP) ●

Cindy lives and serves in the Czech Republic. Her ministry is mainly to children and their parents.



BIRTHS

JONATHAN

born on 10-28-12
to Adrian & Elizabeth Biskup

WITAK

born on 11-20-12
to Dawid & Justyna Wawrzniak

JEREMIAH

born on 1-31-13
to Jackson & Reinell Helstad

SARAH & NAOMI

born on 3-5-13
to LeRoy & Ania Schwartz

XIANNA

born on 5-6-13
to Aulo & Sarah Wing

JOHN

born on 5-19-13
to John & Christine Pipes

MAKSYMILIAN

born on 8-9-13
to Kris & Danielle Jaje

MATIAS

born on 8-9-13
to Claudiu & Jenn Soare

VERONIKA

born on 8-14-13
to Sasha & Lena Litvak

ISABEL

born on 10-21-13
to Mark & Lisa Nagel

THE LONG, LONG ROAD TO LOVE



Andreea Luncan

I was a little intimidated when I first met her six years ago. She was smart, sophisticated and well mannered but you could breathe the brokenness and pain in the air around her. Initially I just smiled, made mild conversation, and generally tiptoed around her. But after two days of camp and lots of prayer, I plucked up the courage to sit down and eat at her table, asked questions, and braced for answers. She was much more open than I'd thought. Soon I learned the story of a young girl with an over-demanding mom, a college pregnancy, a fiancée who abandoned her and their unborn child, a shameful return to her parents' home, and parents who embraced the baby, but rejected their daughter. Amazingly, she did recover from this... in some ways... She worked hard, graduated, got a good job, married a nice man, and had two more kids and a comfortable life. Well, sort of, if you don't count huge problems with her oldest daughter, a terrible relationship with her mother, and an even more terrible burden of unforgiveness towards her parents. She felt guilty and broken for her daughter's problems, she felt raw pain and hatred for her mother's rejection, and she saw herself as inadequate as a wife and mom. At times it felt as if she were drowning, lost in a huge hurt past that could never be contained.

When she was done with her story, it was clearly not a good time to preach, so I swallowed my tears just enough to say how welcome she was in camp and "God loves you." She just looked at me silently, but I could clearly read the disbelief in her eyes "Really?"

Six years, lots of Christian friends, and tons of prayers later, M. said she had something important to ask me. We had just finished our morning Bible study on the fifth day of camp, and were supposed to get ready for English class, but right then I decided our English was already good enough. I could sense that her question couldn't wait. When she asked it, I realized I was the one who couldn't wait to hear it. What she wanted to know was: "How can I receive Jesus Christ in my heart?"

This question and the answer that followed will not undo her past. The love and prayers so many of you have lavished on this extraordinary lady will not change what has been broken. And still, what a happy time that was! When I told her "God loves you" on that day after we prayed, the look in her eyes no longer said "Really?" it said, "I know!" ●

Andreea lives in Timisoara, Romania, with her husband Dani and their two children.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"The experience really stretched me, as I tend to be more introverted. I wasn't sure I would be able to connect with the teenage students, but it went better than I expected. The missionaries on the field really led the way and made it easy for us to minister alongside them. The experience strengthened my faith as I had to trust God in a deeper way. I was able to share Jesus with students multiple times throughout the week and I began to become increasingly more comfortable and confident in doing so. I came home with a greater desire to do the same thing here with friends and colleagues." Cheryl – Ukraine



Our ultimate goal here in France is to share Gospel conversation with many who have not yet heard the Word. *"In the beginning was the Word,"* says John 1:1, the One who is eternally active, desiring to bring people to Himself. Our motivation is to use words to teach the Word of God and so point others to the life-giving Word.

We use the French language in our organization, Français Sans Frontières (FSF), as a bridge to share the Word of Christ with students who don't know much about Him. In bringing teams of French Christian laypeople to countries off the beaten path, and offering quality language and culture courses, we earn the right to speak of the Word. This last summer 30 Ukrainian and Russian students and young professionals were exposed to the message of



USING THE WORD



Jeanne & Ben Beckner

Jesus. During the year, outreach French camps were also organized in Tunisia and Albania and plans are underway to return and continue the relationships that were started.

We use the spoken word in various ways: Ben teaches modular missions courses at several French language Bible schools, and I lead an English international church women's Bible study. Ben has developed new curriculum dealing with both the history and practice of missions, sparking the interest of many students from various backgrounds.

I speak with women from all over, at different stages in their spiritual lives: from pre-believing to mature. I am thankful for the privilege of teaching the living Word to women who are so open. We are presently doing the Gospel of Mark with the goal of getting to know Jesus. I also volunteer at a local Christian bookstore—promoting the Word! We have a large stock

of Bibles in various languages, and provide the Chinese New Testaments given out at the large basilica here in Lyon!

And we use the written word to reach others. Ben has developed three on-line missions courses which are being used throughout France. The eight-week pilot project for the History of Missions course has begun with seven students. I am halfway through translating the biography of the first French missionary to Lesotho, Eugene Casalis, which will be published in England this year.

All we do in Lyon and abroad is because of what The Word has done in our own hearts. We use the medium of words to communicate this, and so introduce many to the Lord Jesus himself. ●

Ben & Jeanne live in Lyon, France. They are the founders and directors of Français Sans Frontières (FSF)—French without Borders.





HUMBLE VISION

David Price-Williams

We are to remain determined in the completion of our goal and stand firm in adversity. We are called to rise to the challenge and never slink back from oppression. We are told to have vision and goals and not fear failure. We are encouraged to seek accomplishment and achievement. We are told to participate as if it is a competition and to run with the intention to win.

And on the other hand...we are instructed to extol others as more supreme than ourselves. We are advised to be humble and seek humility. We are called to plan nothing and to recognize we are but a vapor. We are told to live and die for others. We are reminded of our iniquity.

This past year I have struggled living without any vision. My only hope was to get to Odessa. I was told I would have to sell out my goals and plans and just live. My goal was simply to survive. I struggled with who I was. I felt torn in who I was to be if I was to live with no vision but to be humble.

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HOME SWEET HOME

Beth Oehler



"Without a credit history here we are unable to rent you a flat (apartment)."

"Can a credit history from Canada or the US count?"

"No, that does not apply."

"You can always have someone who lives here in Scotland sign for you, if they have a good credit history."

"We don't know anyone in Scotland. We just moved here two days ago from Canada and we only have two more nights in the Youth Hostel before our reservation runs out. No hotels in the city seem to have any vacancy."

"Yes, well we can sign you up for flat viewings for next week, but there is usually a very tight competition for each of them."

This was the type of conversation that welcomed us to our new home, Aberdeen, Scotland. We had just one month earlier received word that Alex was accepted into a PhD program that would enable him to do field work in Siberia, Russia. This seemed to be a long-hoped-for opportunity, so we purged all of our belongings, said "goodbye for now," with many tears, to beloved friends, and bought airline tickets to Scotland.

I didn't anticipate feeling unwelcome upon arrival, but I certainly did! A city where you don't know a soul and don't know how to get around or find the basics feels like a cold and heartless place. At least

we spoke the language! (For the most part).

Six months into our stay the city had transformed before our eyes. It was a city full of history with a smattering of warm glowing dots of familiar places: friends' flats, weekly toddler play groups, offices of colleagues, favorite places to view an amazing landscape. This scenario has repeated now several times in my life: Japan, Ukraine, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, and Scotland. It is so precious to find God as a constant presence in every location. It has surprised me to find locations I considered "extreme and exotic" to be someone else's cozy home. Each location has aspects that I find unnerving contrasted by aspects that are unique and delightful. How strange to find that my home is now not really centered in one location, but in many places around the world, everywhere that God has blessed us with friendship. Since no place on earth can meet the full definition of the word "home," my mind increasingly turns to eternity. I imagine it to be a combination and multiplication of all the precious people and places on this earth, along with the presence of God Himself. ●

Beth and the boys are currently living in Arizona with family while Alex does his PhD fieldwork in Siberia.

Upon finally arriving in Odessa I saw both kinds of missionaries and ministers. I saw those with goals and aspirations. I also saw those who were full of humility, looking to live Christ-like lives. I had the opportunity to meet with an experienced missionary who loves God. He made an interesting statement, "Naturally man wants to encourage others to be like himself."

I have begun to see this in action. Pastors love to see others commit to ministry. Missionaries strive to see others go into missions. Christian workers extol those who strive to evangelize the work place. The list goes on and on. As I struggle to find my place in Odessa, I have to check myself and ask, "Do I really want people to just become like me or am I working for the glory of God's kingdom without attaching my own identity to those I work with?"

Is it possible to live with humble vision? ●

David, his wife Teniece, and their children are serving their internship in Odessa, Ukraine.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"[The mission trip] allowed me to see God's marvelous and sovereign work in drawing people to Himself." Daniel – Poland



SMASHING SPIDERS

Elizabeth Huber

Here is the scene from the living room one evening: "AHHHHH!!! There's a tarantula!!! Ron, kill it, kill it, kill it!" I then stood (yes, I stood) on the couch with my eyes glued to the ugly beast, and then I waited, rather impatiently, for its inevitable fate. My co-worker took care of business and the mutant spider could not defend himself. Let me just tell you that this was no ordinary spider. It was the biggest, ugliest spider I have **ever** seen in my entire 23 years of life. Upon sight of this creature my very first thought was, "I have to get out of here! This is just too big!" Well, during my first year on the mission field, I've had this thought all too often, but it hasn't always involved a spider.

I'm in the middle of my 18-month internship with International Messengers. Prior to moving to Bircii, Romania, I often wondered what living in another country would be like. What a wonderful, exciting, glorious adventure it must be! It is, indeed, an adventure, but for me, the exciting newness wore off fairly quickly. I was immediately hit with the realization that I did not know the language, or the culture, or how to do, well, anything. I thought that following the Lord's

leading to a far-away land would produce automatic joy and contentment. My heart's desire was to be in Romania, so surely I'm not supposed to be sad. I mean, is it okay to miss my family? Aren't all **other** missionaries excited about new ministry and learning a language? Do other missionaries cry as much as me? "Maybe God doesn't really want me in Bircii," I've thought. "This is just too big—maybe I should just get out of here!"

I have wanted to flee from the road of being an intern several times; but, it is on this road that God has taught me about truly trusting in Him, even when I don't understand. He has shown me that He really will take care of me, and that my worth is not measured by how much I have everything together. I have learned that joy is something to fight for, and that emotions are always up and down. There will always be nasty spiders of fear, doubt, and lack of trust, but God likes to smash them. Let's face it, being in Romania *is* too big for me. I cannot handle it alone, and He doesn't want me to. ●

Elizabeth is serving her internship in Bircii, Romania.

HOPE FOR PROSTITUTES

by Anna*

We decided to drop by to say hi. It was my coworker's idea, I was tired and not happy about going to that dark restaurant after a long working day (reminder—working days for the staff here usually start in the morning and finish in the middle of the night).

"Ok, I am putting the last bits of strength together," I told myself as we entered, feeling enthusiasm practically escaping me with every step closer to the entrance door.

Anyone who has ever worked with Central Asians or any other ethnic group which was under intense Soviet rule, recognizes the facade many of those people put on when you meet them in public, especially for the first time—a rigid facial expression with a stern unwelcoming look. It makes you feel as if you are standing in the middle of a field on a windy November day in summer clothes only. Such an attitude is designed to be intimidating. I know this is just a protective strategy, but sometimes you just want a little hospitality in that dark restaurant.

When we entered I remembered how everything had changed during the last month. The girls cordially welcomed us with smiles, some of them gave me greeting kisses on the cheek (a sign of acceptance), offered us to join them for dinner, kept polite conversation with us, shared some concerns, joked, and laughed

at our jokes. But there were also some who were sitting quietly and watching us with mistrust.

"This is a big change," I mentioned to my friend. We were seated right in the middle of the room and were trying to be at ease with the dozens of eyes that were screening us. What caused the change? God, through His gift of vision, prayer, commitment, consistency in outreaches, practical help to the girls, and so much more.

When we left and headed home, discussing the experience and plans for the next day, images of those girls flashed through my mind. I often notice people have little compassion toward such girls because they, Central Asians specifically, usually voluntarily agree to enter prostitution. They just don't realize how bad it is going to be and how quickly it will ruin them to the core. Though the public is now more familiar with the idea that the "voluntary" choice is a result of many social, economic, psychological, and spiritual factors pressing on the girls, still this does not change the deeply engrained general thinking. Even more, girls' life stories often seem "so typical" and do not "break one's heart," especially now when the anti-trafficking movement has become trendy and an average person is getting used to an increasing amount of information

about social justice. I often notice that I too have little compassion toward those girls myself.

What helps me personally to not have a cold heart towards them is a memory that at one time my story also seemed so typical, full of consequences of my bad decision-making, yet not so full of visible, extraordinary misery. But there was someone who took a closer look, had patience for two years, and went through two more years of fighting for my soul with a continuous stream of disappointments. They finally had access to me when I hit the bottom, and they walked alongside me when I was climbing up. It was all God's grace and mercy towards me.

Indeed, girls who sell their bodies do the wrong thing. Those who buy their bodies do the wrong thing. Those who arrange deals for them do the wrong thing. And all of this is so dirty and without the display of extraordinary misery...at first glance. But God takes special delight in saving and completely restoring wicked, confused, and disgusting sinners. ●

Anna is living in Thailand where she serves women who are caught in sex trafficking.

**Last name withheld for security reasons.*

COMFORTABLE?



Kim Huffman

"It's just not comfortable for me." At least she was honest about why she would no longer serve in our church.

I'll admit, at first, I was mad at her selfishness. Then, I was grieved. She is missing the blessing of serving. Later, I recognized her words in my life. Only I'm not quite as honest.

Spend one evening a week serving international students in my city? "I'm too busy for that," I think. Meet weekly with a younger woman for discipleship? "I'm not qualified for that."

Visit that neighbor who's sick or grieving? "What do I say?" or "I'm too tired."

Bottom line - it's all about being comfortable!

Jesus gave His disciples, and us, His mission in Matthew 28:19a, "Go therefore and make disciples" But we don't. It's not comfortable.

Making disciples is uncomfortable. It takes time. It makes us feel inadequate. But it is what we were made to do! If this is what we were made to do – this is what will bring us joy! We forget when God calls us to "make disciples" in Matthew 28:19, that He equips us to do it! He equips us with His own authority, (Matthew 28:18) and His own Spirit! (Matthew 28:20)

One young lady I spend time with regularly is in transition, moving from college student to working adult, which is extra challenging here in Odessa. She had many questions about what to do with her life. It took time. I felt inadequate. But I trusted that God would work through His Word and through me to encourage her. And He did! In the end, she had hope, and I had joy doing what I was made to do.

We must get over ourselves and our desire for comfort. Real joy and real purpose are not found in comfort, but in obedience. When we are obedient to Christ's mission, we may not be comfortable, but we will be joyful, and that is far better! ●

Kim, Mark, and their son Nate live in Odessa, Ukraine. They are serving as church planters at the Living Hope Church in Odessa.

A BOY AND HIS SHOES

Bethany Baxter de Noriega



"Take off your sandy shoes before going into the living room," I announced to the eager toddlers entering the house one

Sunday morning for nursery. One little boy blatantly ignored my order and ran down the hall. I called for him, but instead of complying, he flashed a defiant glance back, proving to challenging me.

I followed after him to clarify the rules and establish my authority, but the look of rebellion on his determined face stirred resolve in me. "This might work with everyone else in his life," I reasoned, "but he will not manipulate me."

Explaining that he could take off his shoes, or return to the church service, I tried taking them off. But he screamed hysterically in my face, so I sent him back to his grandma.

I was appalled at his behavior and couldn't easily forget the event. Later that day, I told a relative of his family what had happened. She shed light on the situation, "he probably lost his shoes once," she explained, "so his mom beat him as punishment. Now he won't take them off, because he doesn't want a beating."

I was both horrified and humbled at once as I realized the look in the boy's eyes was not defiance or rebellion, but fear. I instantly regretted my resolve and decided that when I find myself in similar situations in the future, I will strive to put myself in the other person's shoes, rather than just fight to take them away. ●

Nelton & Bethany, along with their children Kyliana and Briel, live in Iquitos, Peru. Nelton is co-pastor of their church plant—Genesis Church.

2014 SHORT-TERM MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

EVANGELISTIC ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAMPS (EELC)	LOCATION	HOST	TRIP DATES
	Corabia, Romania (day camp)	Droll	June 20 – 30
	Poznan, Poland (college students)	Shaded A/M	June 27 – July 8
	Czchow, Poland*	Hybel	Early July**
	Mohacs, Hungary (day camp)	Dan	2nd half of July**
	Odessa, Ukraine*	Huffman/Naydenov	July 17 – 30
	Antonovka, Ukraine*	Torres/Litvak/Winkler	July 19 – Aug. 2
	Corabia, Romania (day camp)	Droll	Aug. 29 – Sept. 8

FAMILY EVANGELISTIC ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAMPS	LOCATION	HOST	TRIP DATES
	Near Poznan, Poland	Genesis Church	July **
	Near Gdansk, Poland	Jachym	1st half of July**
	Tatranska Strba, Slovakia	Berger	July 1 – 14
	Near Bucharest, Romania	Clark	July 2 – 14
	Odessa, Ukraine	Naydenov/Huffman	July 3 – 16
	Mazury Lakes, Poland	Shaded M/S/F	July 9 – 22
	Kiczycze, Poland	Pszczola	July 17 – 28
	Cluj, Romania	Vitelar/Popa	July 18 – 29
	Borowice, Poland	Dabrowski	July 22 – Aug. 5
	Kiczycze, Poland	Pszczola	July 31 – Aug. 11

SPECIALTY CAMP	LOCATION	HOST	TRIP DATES
Evangelistic College Student Retreat	Near Poznan, Poland	Shaded A/M	Dec. 26 – Jan. 5
Youth Discipleship*	Odessa, Ukraine	Winkler/Litvak/Torres	Dec. 31 – Jan. 12
Discipleship	Kiczycze, Poland	Pszczola	Jan. 26 – Feb. 4
Youth Discipleship*	Wisla, Poland	Dabrowski	Jan. 29 – Feb. 9
H.S. Outreach/ English Day Camp*	Radom, Poland	Hageman/Snyder	February 6 – 24
Construction	Bircii, Romania	Nicolae/Roberts/Huber	Dates flexible***
Evangelistic Hiking Outreach*	Crimean Mountains	Huffman	April 17 – 28
Business Evangelistic English Camp	Malenovice, Czech Republic	Lipus	May 14 – 27
General help at River of Life	Cornesti, Romania	Moore	Ongoing, anytime
Construction (bathrooms)	Cornesti, Romania	Moore	May – September
Construction (misc. repair, painting)	Cornesti, Romania	Moore	May – September
Construction (cabins/fences)	Turciansky Michal, Slovakia	Stein	June – July
Construction (plus opt. camping ministry to orphan boys)*	Odessa, Ukraine	Rechkemmer	June 25 – July 7 or (June 25 – July 13)
Youth Discipleship Day Camp*	Krakow, Poland	Hybel	July**
Kids' Camp/VBS*	Bircii, Romania	Nicolae/Roberts/Huber	1st half of July**
Kid's Camp–Father's Heart Ranch of Hope*	Turciansky Michal, Slovakia	Stein	Mid July**
Evangelistic Camping Ministry to Orphans (girls & boys ages 6-15)*	Odessa, Ukraine	Rechkemmer	July 25 – Aug. 10
EELC/Softball Day Camp*	Zirc, Hungary	Petrik/Jofoeldi	August**
Evangelistic Soccer*	Antonovka, Ukraine	Torres	August 4 – 17
Evangelistic Camping Ministry to Orphans (girls & boys ages 6-15)*	Odessa, Ukraine	Rechkemmer	August 8 – 24

*Youth/Kids Camp

**Specific dates yet to be determined

***After April 6th but before July

For the most up-to-date camp schedule visit our website: www.im-usa.org/camps-schedule



LIKE A NEW WINESKIN

Heather Nicolae

"Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."
Matthew 9:17

This particular verse has come to mind so often of late that I began to meditate on its significance. Jesus brings a freshness that cannot be confined in the old forms and traditions. There has been and always will be discussions and/or arguments in the Church about the style of worship, the appropriate way to dress, etc. But what is sad is that those who were not raised in the church culture and don't know all the "rules" about what is "correct" don't feel comfortable or welcome.

I desire to see a church here in our village that no longer has all the baggage of the local church culture. Here are a few examples of what I mean: the men sit on

one side of the church, the women and children on the other; women wear long skirts, married women cover their heads with scarves, no jewelry, no makeup, etc. These are mostly cosmetic issues, therefore the idea follows that if you look like a "repenter" then you must be one. But isn't Jesus much more interested in the state of our hearts than the seeming appearance of righteousness? My husband Pavel went into a place of business and saw a fellow believer there working and

he greeted him. The man put his finger up to his mouth and said "Shhh, don't tell anyone here that I am a Christian." We all know that what looks good on the outside is not necessarily good on the inside.

God has given us the desire to make a place in our village that is like a new wineskin, a place that can handle the newness and freedom of being in Christ. A place where everyone is welcome just as they are and a place that allows Christ to make the changes He wants in their hearts and minds. God has already provided for the property, the fence, the pavilion, the soccer field and volleyball court, as well as the foundation for the building. If you would like to be a part of this new wineskin we would greatly appreciate your prayers. If you would like more information about how to get involved with the Titus 2 Messengers project, please contact the IM home office. ●

Heather, Pavel, and their children live in Bircii, Romania. Their main focus is reaching out and building relationships with adolescents and youth in the villages of Bircii and Potcoava.

We all know that what looks good on the outside is not necessarily good on the inside.

OVIDIU

Roberta Moore



One recent morning, I had a dream about a two year old boy named Ovidiu who was born at the River of Life Care Home in Romania, and lived here with his mom until last spring.

In my dream a group of Care Home kids, moms, and staff were gathered together on a warm sunny day having fun together at a picnic. Little Ovidiu toddled away after a butterfly. At the edge of the green grass was a rocky cliff which Ovidiu went over. Rushing to the edge, I saw that he was on a lower level of rocks but there was a sheer cliff face right below him. He was leaning way out over the side of the cliff focusing intently on the fluttering butterfly. Totally unaware of the danger he was in, Ovidiu was precariously ready to fall! "Only God can save him!" I exclaimed helplessly in my dream and then I promptly woke up.

Ovidiu's mom left the Care Home last spring. As an adult, she was free to leave and take her son with her. There was nothing we could do to protect Ovidiu. The local social worker told us that this is a high risk situation for Ovidiu

because there are five people in this family that are schizophrenic (including his mother and grandmother), it's a poor family with 13 kids, and there is much neglect. His mom was in treatment when she lived here but Ovidiu still suffered emotionally.

Another mom gave birth to Adrian last February, while living at the Care Home, and also had a one year old named Andrei. Both showed symptoms of having neurological problems, possibly autism. When Andrei first came here he was nine months old, but couldn't reach for a toy, make eye contact, roll over or sit on his own. Six months after living here and having intervention, he laughed, played, made eye contact, reached for toys, sat up by himself, and even started walking with help. But their mother wanted to leave the Care Home and has since moved from one place to another every few weeks; her little ones are not getting the proper care or intervention they desperately need.

Our intention has always been to help mothers with the neces-

sary support they need to be able to keep their children and not abort or abandon them, but the sad reality is that there are innocent children in perilously grave danger because some moms simply cannot or should not keep their children.

We are certain that both of the moms in this article would have left their children here if we had an orphanage. These three babies would've been safe and well cared for instead of in perilous situations. Only God can save them, but He chooses to work through His people, who seek His will. God has put on our hearts to start taking the steps necessary to start an orphanage here at the River of Life. Will you join us in this work to help protect children like Ovidiu, Andrei and Adrian? ●

Doug & Roberta have been living in Romania since 1998, they are the founders of River of Life Humanitarian Foundation and overseers of ROL ministries, including the River of Life Care Home.



THE ENEMY DOESN'T GIVE UP EASILY

Gene Fox

Summer camps are over, but the work in campers' hearts continues. Sometimes that doesn't happen as we think it should. Here's one example:

Two days before the team departed, five people from the twelve-man team couldn't go. So our smaller team of seven left on schedule. In our smaller (weaker) state God showed His power.

A non-believing family of five from the waiting list was able to come because of the smaller size of the ministry team—this was their first time at an IM camp. The husband said, "Your way of relating to God is the right way, unlike the priests who are corrupt and selfish. We want to relate to God as Czarek and Ewa (IM staff) and the others at camp do." He and his wife placed their faith in Christ. Then, their seven-year-old son asked a team member if he could ask Jesus into his life, too. She assured him that he could, and he did.

The family attended Czarek and Ewa's church on the Sunday morning after camp ended. They spent the afternoon with Polish believers and the IM team members at a picnic, enjoying the fellowship. One church couple later began spending time with them. But then everything changed.

"The Church is a cult and wants to entrap us," the husband and wife suddenly declared. "Anyone who believes God would allow Himself to die on a cross is insane!"

Czarek has seen them but they won't speak with him. The husband has been sending angry text messages to the church couple. He apologized once, blaming his behavior on his alcohol problem. But, the text messages resumed shortly thereafter.

Satan, it appears, is attacking this family, but we know that the seed of the Gospel found good soil in their hearts at camp. And so the battle rages, and we pray.

We're trusting the Holy Spirit to cause these spiritual seeds to take root, grow, and blossom.

God loves this family, and we do, too. We'll continue praying for them and trust that, Lord willing, we'll see them again at camp next summer. ●

Gene & Grace have been the directors of IM Canada since 2007. They live in Abbotsford, British Columbia.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"I gained a great understanding of missions work abroad and the believers who live there, and was encouraged by other believers' stories and testimonies. I was given the privilege of participating in missions work abroad and understanding with more clarity the difficulties and rewards of the work. I was stretched and challenged and reminded how I can't do anything by myself. God changes hearts and moves people."

Mandi – Poland

"The most amazing mission trip I have taken yet! God placed the right people at the right time to hear His Word, receive encouragement, and be strengthened. We had a great team of people who worked well together and used what God has gifted them with generously. It was another reminder for me of how God is sovereign." Julie – Ukraine

CARING FOR MISSIONARIES



Lisa Nagel

I've been working in the field of "Staff Care" for a few years now and have recently returned to serve under the leadership of IM again. Over the past couple of years, I continue to be amazed that the idea of caring for missionaries is still a foreign concept. I wonder if we still have the mindset that missionaries have it all together and are self-sufficient. I think I used to have this mindset myself. I remember the day that God first called me into missions. I remember arguing with Him saying, "I'm not a strong enough Christian" and "I have too many issues to be a missionary." All of this was true, but what I realized was that these were just excuses. God doesn't call perfect people into missions. He calls anyone with a willing heart. I felt like a failure in my first years as a missionary. I struggled with depression, bitterness, anger, heartbreak, etc. Was I the only one? Over the years, I came to realize that I was NOT the only one. It was through some of my difficult times in my early years in missions that God showed me that missionaries are people just like you and me...and that's

where I caught the passion to come alongside others who might be struggling. It was amazing to see how many missionaries really WANTED someone to talk to and to come alongside them. Most didn't feel like they had anyone else to talk to!

We can ALL care for the missionaries in our lives. I'd like to encourage each of you to take the opportunity to reach out to one of the missionaries you know who is serving overseas. Send them a note (or a Christmas card) in the mail and ask them how you can pray for them. When they respond, spend some time praying for them and check in with them down the road. Believe me...it WILL make a difference! ●

Lisa, Mark, and their daughter Isabel live in Colorado. Lisa serves as part of IM's staff care team.

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

This last year was a year of change. After five years of living on the edge of Radom, where it was peaceful, the air was clean, and we rode the bus wherever we went, we moved to the Friendship House in the very center of the city. Now, there's a lot of traffic, pedestrian noise, and air pollution, but we can walk most any place that we need to go.

Bob asked what I needed in an apartment and I told him a bathroom. So, that's exactly what we had – no kitchen, or anything else. In less than a year's time, God provided the funds and volunteer labor to turn the Friendship House into a working ministry center. It's been a joy to watch God provide through so many of you. We're thankful for your encouragement, prayers, and giving that made this a reality. There also were people who gave of their time and finances to come work on the building and/or on an IM Celebrate Recovery Team. You not only encouraged us, but also our local volunteers, to work a little harder.



Vera Hageman

Another IM family joined us this year. Adrian and Elizabeth Biskup and their three small children arrived in March, making a ten-year commitment to serve here. Adrian is Polish, speaks English, translates, and enjoys leading Bible Studies. Elizabeth is a British nurse. The gifts and skills that they possess greatly enhance the ministry here and we're so thankful for them!

Friendship House offers the following: Street Ministry (sandwiches, coffee/tea and first-aid); Recovery Meetings (soup, coffee/tea, dessert, first-aid), hygiene kits once a month; daily Bible reading/studies; information about rehab; showers by appointment;

continued on page 24



INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Bogdan & Johanka Pszczola

When we asked Darwin and Darlis for the first time whether, together with IM, we could organize a Family Evangelistic English Language Camp (FEELC), they asked, "What will you do with these people after the camp?" Great question! Poland is considered to be a Christian country. Unfortunately, most often it is just empty religiosity. That is why evangelism and discipleship are so important. It is not only knowledge about God, Bible meetings, and prayer meetings. Discipleship is something more—it is sharing your daily life with people you teach (Mark 3:14)—inviting them to your house, spending time together, serving, supporting each other, honestly speaking about difficult things, and sharing all kinds of successes and failures.

Thanks to God's grace, we are privileged to share the Gospel and make disciples. In 2013, we gave lectures for men at the SLOT Art Festival and we led the FEELC, where about 28 people gave their lives to Christ. After the conferences for men, another eight men decided to submit their lives to Christ.

We also see people we had previously invested in, working at the Lord's harvest. When we see people such as Piotr giving a sermon in church for the first time; Ela, Kasia, and a few others teaching at the conference for women; Ania leading a women's group; another Ania serving teenagers; Artur and Ewa getting ready for their missionary service—we can say that it has been worthwhile to invest prayers, time, emotions and strength in people.

A week ago there was a conference in the mountains called *I Choose Love*, where many women entered their calling to teach other women and received many practical hints about what to change in their daily lives with God and people. In November, another women's conference will take place in Gdansk. We are planning on six conferences for men called *The Faces of Courage*, as well as a discipleship camp in winter and two FEELCs in the south of Poland, which will be run by two churches from Silesia. We will help the two church teams in their preparations.

Please pray that these outreach events will impact many lives for God's kingdom. ●

The Pszczolas live in Katowice, Poland where they focus on sharing the Gospel and discipleship.

..... Friendship House ...continued from page 23

walk-in coffee/tea, clothing when available, volunteer work with lunch supplied.

There have been up to five men living here at one time, waiting to go to rehab. Women are also welcome, but as of yet, none have come. There's room for nine men and/or women, and so far we have sent thirteen to rehab. Those who've finished their eighteen month rehab stint are welcomed back for temporary housing while looking for a job. Besides housing men and women waiting to go to rehab, we enjoy hosting guests, and also offer a place for IM interns to live and serve.

Upcoming possibilities in ministry are:

- Hosting at least two IM Celebrate Recovery Teams a year. The best times for teams to come are late spring, summer, and fall. Winter is possible, but outdoor activities are limited.

- Weekly Christian Movie Night followed by discussion.
- Saturday Worship Service.
- Activities for women (they've been difficult to reach) The first activity planned is cookie decorating. The cookies will be frozen and then used in ministry during the Christmas season.

We're still in awe that God would choose this old couple to go overseas to work with the homeless/addicted, and then convict us to look for a ministry building and move in. Our Polish skills are limited, but God in His great mercy has allowed us to do ministry anyway. Isaiah 40:31; Hebrews 13:20-21. ●

Bob & Vera help with Family English Camps and Youth English Workshops. Their main day-to-day ministry is with the homeless and addicted of Radom, Poland.

WALKING IN PRAYERS

Paula Roberts



I knew I needed better shoes. Being the tightwad that I am, I kept making do. The pain in my right foot was starting to speak too often though, so I did some research. The best way to alleviate this type of pain came from good shoes—ie: expensive shoes. Specifically, Birkenstocks.

My half-hearted hunt started in Romania. We were headed to a town that had German descent, so maybe I'd find those famous German shoes there? Fail.

Knowing we were visiting the States soon, I did the prayer thing until we hit my hometown. I knew God would come through, but after visiting stores that were alien even to this native girl, it was obvious He wasn't answering this way.

"My only option is on-line." I told Ron when I slumped through the door.

"Spending that kind of money for shoes you don't know will fit isn't such a great idea," came his unwelcome reply. I bit my tongue, and gave it up to God. Now both my tongue and my foot hurt.

The next week we were in my "other" hometown. It's much smaller, but full of friends from the recent past.

"Paula," the voice on the phone was a woman I had just visited.

"I had some shoes laid out for you by the door, but I forgot to give them to you before you left."

Could she hear my heart picking up speed?

She went on, "I realized I didn't need them last year but for some reason I held onto them. Anyway, just recently I knew those shoes were for you. They're size 9 or 10 and **they're Birkenstocks.**" (She didn't actually put those last words in bold...I mean, how was she to know what my prayer had been?)

That night I stopped by to pick them up. On the table sat not one, but two, pairs of Birkies. I didn't need to try them on to see whether they fit. God had designed them just for me.

So why am I telling of God's provision and not writing about what is happening in Bircii? Because this is what is happening in Bircii. The shoes on my feet keep reminding me that even if I can't always see the spiritual changes He's making in Bircii (and in me), it's not because He's not working. He's designed the answers to ALL my prayers. I'm simply not walking in them yet. ●

Paula & Ron Roberts live and work in Bircii, a small village in Romania. Working mostly with youth, they offer youth group, a computer lab, and help with English.



REDEEM
THE SUMMER
INTERNSHIPS

re•deem  /ri'dēm/

verb

Definition of REDEEM

1. To exchange

EXCHANGE your boring, lifeless summer for an **ADVENTURE** full of life. Let God **REDEEM** your summer by serving Him at the very edge of His **KINGDOM!**

For more details, check out Redeem the Summer Internships by visiting www.im-usa.org/redeem



The first time I came to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation back in the fall of 2012, I ran into a Native American pastor who pretty much tried to run me off the reservation. He said something to me that really took the wind out of my sails. He said, "The white man has been coming here for 150 years and nothing has changed." This was coming from a "pastor." Reinell and I have been here in South Dakota now for four months and the one thing that really sticks out to me is how much "ministry" happens here and yet there is little impact or lasting fruit. I think this is why Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, *"And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you*

REZ LIFE

Jackson Helstad



the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

We have been crying out to God that He would pour out His Spirit and confirm the Gospel message with His power. We know that the Gospel message IS the power of God but which message are they to believe? There are so many people coming to the

reservation telling the Lakota a multitude of versions of the Gospel. It has bred confusion and apathy. It is going to take much more than a good message, or the schemes of man for the Gospel to break through, especially in a place where they are already skeptical of anything from the white man. There have been numerous times when I have preached the Gospel message and I have had people tell me that they don't know who to believe. Please pray with us as we seek God and continually ask Him to do what only He can do. ●

Jackson, Reinell, and their five children live near Edgemont, South Dakota.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"I have been on several mission trips and this was the most incredible trip I have taken. I think the biggest impact came from spending 24/7 with them. They see who you are when you are tired (most of the week) and come to really know us and we really get to know them by sharing our lives together. I was able to see God work when I felt very inadequate and unprepared. I saw God work through a situation which I was not expecting and did not feel prepared for. God allowed me to be a friend to four teenage boys for a week. That friendship helped two of the boys to commit their lives to Christ which now means they are not just friends but family. God continues to do amazing things in our lives."

Doug – Poland



CONFESSIONS OF AN IMPERFECT MISSIONARY



LEARNING TO BE AN ARROW

Julie Hybel

Kimberly Treadway

I'm humbled to admit that most of the time in my Christian life, I have been doing what I do in ministry as a means to get followers and glory for myself. I realized recently I'm looking for a fulfilling life, and this has been motivating my ministry. I was trying to make ministry a means of personal gratification. "Eventually, I'll get to a place where doing missions makes me happy." But the Lord has been gently showing me how sinful and how futile this is. I was reading about Christ in Hebrews and in Philippians, and it struck me that Christ did not leave His glory and live among us and go all the grueling, agonizing way to the cross because it was a fulfilling or gratifying experience. He endured it, seeing what joy and glory was set before Him in the future. I realized that I was even "using" my Lord to make a name for myself—to surround myself with affectionate, appreciative people, to even take His place in their lives as someone who cares about them and showed them "the Way." It's hard to admit that these sins were driving and sometimes still

It has happened more than a few times that I've walked past a girl crying on a park bench, knowing that I should stop and talk to her, but I didn't because I felt insecure with my foreign language ability. I've passed young prostitutes knowing that I should go tell them how much God loves them, but I was too worried about saying it with grammar mistakes. I've seen elderly people who were weary and needed some encouragement, but those words didn't come out of my mouth because I was more concerned about improper pronunciation than proclaiming words of life.

The problem? Perfectionism, pride, fear of failure, fear of sounding stupid.... The problem is ME and the things I sometimes choose to focus on rather than believing God. He says that He enables, empowers, accompanies,

do drive my life, but I'm learning to breathe the air of honesty and grace, and to see myself as I was designed to be. God said, "I'll give you a passion for My glory." And I imagined this—that I would be an arrow painted on the pavement of the narrow road. No one stops to admire such arrows. They just get glanced at and walked over as the

and has called us to step out in faith to reach hurting people! God didn't call me to Poland because I'm perfect or would ever speak Polish perfectly. In fact, He called me in my complete imperfection to reach out to imperfect people. We so often limit ourselves and what God can do through us because of our wrong thoughts and insecurities. These self-limiting lies need to be replaced with truth. We should remind ourselves everyday about our true identity, the fact that we have the power of the Living God inside of us and that we are called to step out of our comfort zones. What do you say, shall we get over ourselves and get out there? If I do that where I am, and you do that where you are, just imagine...! ●

Julie, Przemek, and their daughter Roksana live in Krakow, Poland.

traveler moves onward toward the Prize. I am repenting of my idolatry, thanks to the far-reaching grace of my Lord, and am learning the joy of being walked on and passed over that people might go to Christ. ●

Kimberly is serving her 18-month internship in Odessa, Ukraine mainly working with girls and young women.



TRANSITIONS

Jan McKinnon

In Physics, "transition" is defined as, "a change from one quantum state to another, with emission or absorption of radiation." That is what I felt like moving back to the USA!

Last December we packed up our Polish apartment and came back to the States not really knowing what was next. I grieved leaving Poland. God used me in Poland and my time there grew me in so many ways. But now in the States, I often feel unsettled:

1. **Unsettled** - what will supporters think? Are we still worthy of support? How will we live?
2. **Unsettled** - what next? Kent loves Africa, will we move there?
3. **Unsettled** - what ministry will I have? There are women all around the world but relationships take so much time.
4. **Unsettled** - adjustments are harder as one ages. I can't handle the stress of a new city, new friends, and all the unknown as well.

I beat myself up, thinking I should be mature and able to handle this more easily. I lose perspective, and believe the lie, "It's up to me to get it all figured out" or "Your worth is in what you do." The enemy feeds me the lie that I will only be happy if I'm settled. But God

keeps opening my eyes: Isn't a life of faith or trust, the life to which God has called us?

So in transition I am learning to trust. When I go to His Word, He speaks daily. James 1:2-4 says, *"Consider it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and endurance will have its perfect result, that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing."* (Settled!)

God has taken the **Unsettled** and shown me that my **Settled** will be only in Jesus:

1. Supporters have been gracious and supportive. God has provided financially.
2. Kent is going to Africa to teach and is thrilled to be "populating heaven."
3. I am learning and growing in my ministry to women. God opened an amazing door to be trained to counsel and coach women. It is beyond my wildest dream!
4. I can't do much about my age! I'm trying to exercise, eat well and, hopefully, age gracefully!

My Grandpa use to say "It's all in the Master's hands!" He had it right—trust in the One who has it all figured out, only He can settle the heart. ●

Jan & Kent live in Minnesota. Jan serves as an encourager to IM's women and is involved with women's ministry in the local church and is focused on ministering to immigrants and the women in her neighborhood. Kent teaches with T-Net International.



SHORT-TERMER COMMENTS:

"It made Romans 8:28 more personal for me than it had ever been before. I saw first hand how God used my trials to bring blessings on my family as well as show the nationals how they can have peace in the midst of their trials. It also helped my faith grow again as I saw God orchestrate every aspect of the camp for His glory and all of our good." Thomas - Poland

"...this week was a piece of heaven for me. To help people, show love, and to touch hearts is more rewarding to me than almost anything. To teach about Jesus and show others God's Word and love is so awesome it is beyond words for me. I benefited in so many ways: personal growth, growth in my walk with Christ, and just a joyous time. This trip was an experience like no other for me." Kevin - Poland

DONATION INFO

If you would like the opportunity to give to our ministry, or if you have been blessed by the ministries of International Messengers and would like to participate in helping us to minister to others, you can use any of these options: Donation by check or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to IM is the most beneficial as 100% of your donation is received by us and there are no extra processing fees taken from your donation. Checks can be made payable to International Messengers and mailed to us at PO Box 618, Clear Lake, IA 50428. Using EFT your donation is automatically deducted from your bank account each month at no charge to you. To set up EFT, contact our office.

If you would like to make donations online using a credit card, you can donate through Network For Good or Just Give. Both of these organizations are non-profit and all receipting is processed through them. Please note that these organizations keep a portion of the donation to cover the fees associated with processing credit cards, therefore IM does not receive 100% of your donation. To donate online go to www.im-usa.org and click on **Donate** in the top navigation menu. ●

TOO HIGH A PRICE



Tillie Cowherd

My mother always said to be careful what you pray for.

Early in May I prayed for more opportunities to speak Polish. It seemed that I was always at home preparing children's crafts and not getting much time with Polish speakers.

About the middle of May I needed a stamp in my passport in order to apply for a new visa, so I went with an acquaintance to Lvov, Ukraine. We walked around the city, enjoying the lovely buildings and perfect weather. When we saw a historic building, my traveling companion said, "Get down on one knee beside me and I'll take our picture." I heard the Holy Spirit say, "Don't do it." But I relied on my own understanding and thought there couldn't be any harm in it. As I started to stand up after the picture, I lost my balance and fell with all my weight on my left elbow. The pain was great when I tried to move it but I thought it was only sprained.

Two days later a neighbor insisted that we go to the emergency room. After an x-ray, a cast was put on it because they said it was a bad break and that I should return the next day for surgery. But the next day the hospital had no available space, so I waited five days for a place in a hospital. The first night two of my "roommates" sang songs to Mary late into the night. The next evening I said, "You sang last night and tonight it's my turn." So I sang a praise song. This was followed by some good spiritual discussion in Polish.

Since I really didn't feel sick I visited with other patients (in Polish) and even prayed with some. It was rather pleasant not having to shop or cook. Finally, ten days after the fall I had surgery to repair the elbow.

Even the recovery had a lot of blessings. One day I prayed for assistance with laundry. About ten minutes later a Christian neighbor called and asked if I needed help. I was also given more soup than I could eat and had lots of guests.

These days I'm trying to listen intently to what the Holy Spirit has to say. I've decided it's too high a price to pay not to be obedient. ●

Tillie lives in Poland where she works with children who live in a shelter with their mothers. She also helps lead a children's club at her church on Saturdays.



FINDING JOY IN UNLIKELY PLACES

Jennifer Droll

After an exhilarating year back in Romania, our family of seven decided to take a vacation to the Black Sea. Our babysitter, a young family, and a young woman from church joined us. We enjoyed our first day at the seaside. Then it hit. Stomach flu! It started with our oldest child, and passed through six of the seven of us. Most of our family stayed back while the healthy ones ventured to the beach. The situation was ripe for complaining, feeling sorry for ourselves, and moping. Yet there was none of that! Doug and I just went about our normal business as parents taking care of sick kids and/or being sick ourselves.

We saw God working in a powerful way. I sat on the front steps, spending time with the Lord while one child was on the mend and before the next child started getting sick. After reflecting on Psalms 111 and 103:1-5, I made a list of things I was thankful for in the midst of stomach flu at the seaside. The Lord blessed my endeavor with item after item!



Among other things, God gave me an awesome, teachable moment with one of my daughters. I explained that God is working to make me more like Christ, and He brings/allows things to do this work in me. Jesus did not always do what He wanted, and if I am going to be like Jesus, neither will I always do what I want. This message really clicked with her. Also, though not as we planned, we did disciple our younger friends. They saw what parenting looks like in the midst of difficulties as we served our children and each other with joyful hearts.

What a rich time we had! Isn't our God good to us—that He takes our circumstances and gives joy and assurances of good coming from them? What joy to be thankful to Him in the midst of difficulties! ●

Jen, Doug, and their five children live in Romania where they are involved in discipleship, evangelism, and church planting. They also have a desire to reach out and minister to the Roma in their area.



We are in need of vans for our missionaries to use while they are home on furlough. Often their schedules require 7-10,000 miles as they travel to see family, friends, and churches. Our missionaries are extremely grateful when we can help by providing them with a low-mileage, dependable van. If you know of someone or an organization that is interested in donating a van, would you let them know of our need?

Any questions about van donations should be directed by e-mail to office@im-usa.org or call 800-243-6763.

ALIEN RIGHTEOUSNESS

I returned to the States recently after serving roughly three months in both Poland and Romania. I remember sharing at youth group in Bircii, Romania about my time spent in Poland. I had them read the following in Romanian. *"Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart."* (Psalms 24:3-4 ESV)

I began to share about changing a man's bandages while I was in Poland. I was tempted to think that it was a very good thing I had done. Then I had them read this verse, *"We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment."* (Isaiah 64:6 ESV)

I shared with them that our deeds are much like the bandage that I removed, covered with blood and rotting flesh. I went on and talked more about Romans 3:22-25 that says that Christ is a propitiation to be received by faith. I continue to pray that God would use that and the missionaries there in Bircii to plant the seeds trusting that God will bring growth.

Raymond Clark

What an encouragement that we need not look to ourselves for righteousness. It is not because of our works that God pardons us. It is for those that continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the Gospel. If we would stand in His holy place, it is not through our righteousness but that of Jesus Christ's.

"For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness." (Galatians 5:5 ESV) ●

Raymond recently went through training at Mountainside Ministry Training and is currently in the States with the goal of finishing his 18-month internship.



TWO STONES

Standing over a giant he was never supposed to defeat, David takes Goliath's sword and kills him with it. Leaving no doubt who won, he cuts off Goliath's head! Sure, maybe this sounds more like a "Die Hard" version of the story you might know from Sunday school. Yet as I'm sitting here reading and seeing this in my head, I'm thinking about all the giants I would love to destroy! I was born a fighter! I want to be tough like "Bruce Willis" saving the day! Then it hits me—you wanna kill the Giant? Let God put you where you need to be! Be faithful and fight for the little things just as hard as the big things. David did! In fact this newly anointed king of Israel was taking care of his father's sheep and killing bears and lions. That's when he got sent to the frontline to take food to his brothers. That's when God put the giant in front of him. David's confidence in God showed. He didn't borrow armor. He didn't even take a sword! He used exactly what God gave him—a sling and some stones. Did it really matter what he used? Or was it more important that he gave it to God?

What do I have? I'm no Jim Elliot! I don't have a theology degree! What have I got? God gave me a

Caleb Torres

Bible and a soccer ball. A ball no bigger than my head has shattered walls like language, age, ethnicity, and time. Because I enjoy competing and kicking the ball around, guys not only listen to what I have to say, but they ask me about life!

The Bible speaks for itself. It's the Word of God. It holds the meaning of life—why we were created—and it cuts through geography and social status. It applies to the world.

God used two stones to defeat a giant. I'm going to keep learning how to slay giants here in Odessa, Ukraine. If you want to join me, visit anytime. ●

Caleb lives in Odessa, Ukraine where he serves with the Light of the World Church and disciples young men using the Bible and a soccer ball.

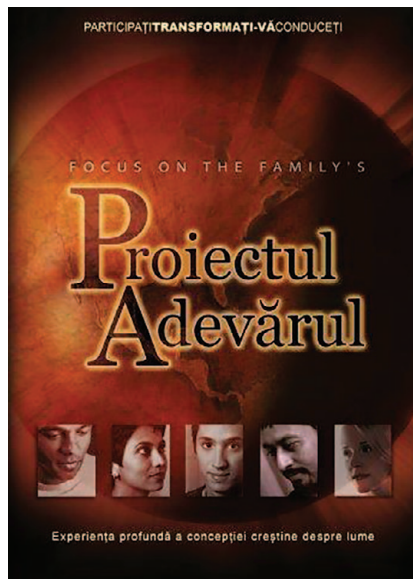




THE TRUTH PROJECT

Tom Clark

The Truth Project is a reality in Romania. Five years ago while back in the States, my wife Jill and I attended a meeting at the home of a supporter. That night we were exposed, for the first time, to Focus on the Family's *The Truth Project*. My heart was broken that night. I was overwhelmed by my need of biblical teaching of this quality and the great need for biblical teaching of this quality in Romania too. During our time serving in Romania I'm continually being reminded of the absolute need to have a biblical world view. For us to share anything less would be a tragedy.



The meeting that night started me on a five-year quest to see *The Truth Project* available to those who speak the Romanian language. The first two years were spent pursuing permission to translate and subtitle this 14½ hour video project. For the past three years translation and video editing has occurred. We are now on the final editing of the DVDs.

We have had the opportunity to use several of the completed lessons during the past year. Interest is high. People are ready to view this series. It was disappointing to have to tell those interested that it wasn't available yet. But, Lord willing, by the time this

newsletter gets to your home that will no longer be true.

Please join us in praying that God will use these lessons to bring about transformed lives as we distribute this biblical worldview DVD set.

We also want to thank each of you who have given to this project. We are still \$3,000 short to completely pay all those who have helped with this, but because they have come to believe in the need for this project to be available here in Romania they are willing to wait for their final payment as we begin selling the DVD sets. ●

Tom & Jill live in Bucharest, Romania. They are both involved with leading weekly Bible studies and they held their first Family English Camp this past summer in partnership with their local church there.



SHORT-TERM COMMENT:

"I have grown so much not only this summer but throughout going to Hungary three times. This summer, I grew more spiritually in being bold for the Gospel. God has given me a love for unreached people groups and for kids across the ocean. This missions experience has helped to open my eyes to the things that really matter in life that aren't necessarily things.
Leisel – Hungary

"My view of God grew as I saw Him provide funds for the trip, answer specific prayers for relationships with students, boldness to share the Gospel, and good weather. I realized how important short-term trips are to encourage and support missionaries, help them do a lot of ministry in a short time, and grow yourself in big personal and spiritual ways."
Elizabeth – Ukraine

GIRLS' RIDING CAMP



Laura Stein



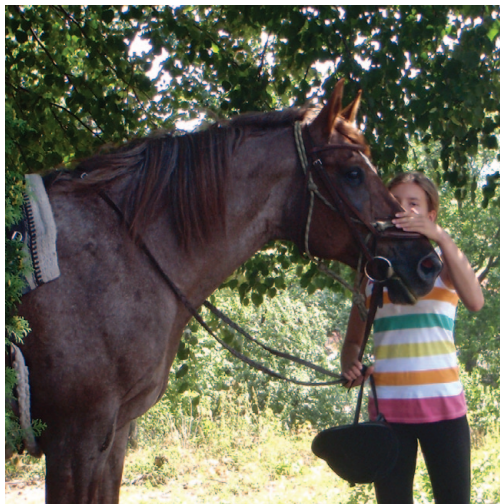
Our first day of camp started on a warm Monday in August. My friend Denisa and I, four of our best horses, and eight young teenage girls were all ready to go. The air was charged with excitement and questions about our upcoming horseback activities, while I was concentrating on organizing our events, and above all, being safe.

We planned to do everything during this camp as a group; we would all pull together with the horse care, cooking supper, and having devotions. Our chosen Bible verse for the week was 2 Corinthians 4:7: ***"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves."*** Each evening we talked about how we could use our strengths, as well as our weaknesses, to honor God. At the beginning of our devotion time, a gift box was passed around, from which everyone chose a little "happy." I picked two girls each evening to choose first, based on my observations of how they were learning to use their strengths and weaknesses. We also discussed how a God-given strength could be used poorly if taken into our own hands, as well as how a quality we perceived to be a weakness could be used to honor God. My goal

was to help the girls learn to channel their strengths appropriately, as well as understand that their weak points could also be offered to God.

Some of the things mentioned to the girls during the week were: courage in riding, learning to use leadership abilities, organizational skills used to plan activities and menus, kind acts used to encourage others, and softness with animals which leads to better communication.

By the end of the week I noticed the girls really felt good about themselves and what we had accomplished during the week. Taking care of their own horses and riding on trails in new terrain were skills accomplished. The girls were aware of their strengths, and perhaps also boosted in their self-esteem concerning their weaknesses. I came away very thankful, both for the growth I've seen in these girls over the past years, as well as our gentle horses who were able to carry even the beginning riders safely on our trail rides. ●



Bevan & Laura Stein have lived in Slovakia for 17 years and are the founders and leaders of the Father's Heart which includes children's clubs, equine assisted ministry, and motorcycle evangelism.



KATKA'S MUG

Karla Thiessen

Our neighbor, Katka, has been a widow for 30 years. Recently she turned 80, which presented an opportunity to invite neighborhood women to our home for coffee. Only Justina came on time and we chatted as we waited for Katka for over an hour while she went to the store to get milk for the cats. When I went to see why another neighbor, Helena, also a widow in her 70s and Katka's good friend, hadn't come at the set time, Helena said she'd already had her coffee. I knew it was just an excuse, but later, when I told Katka, she figured Helena didn't come because she hadn't yet washed her hair this month.



Justina with Katka on her 80th birthday.

Katka feeds five neighborhood cats plus pigeons. She feels our dogs need soup, so she makes them hot noodle soup every other day. She says her prayers every day and tries to be a good person, but she's torn apart by fear. Not yet knowing our Creator personally, she can't understand how I can make it

through a thunderstorm in peace. She hides in the bathroom on top of the toilet with a blanket over her head, sometimes for hours.

In June I bought Katka a mug with the verse *"Don't fear. I'm with you."* I've been praying and sharing with Katka for years. Recently she shared that the verse really helps her as she drinks from that mug every morning. Please pray Katka, Justina, and Helena will all come to fully comprehend God's love for them. ●

Karla, Brad, and family have lived in Kosice, Slovakia since 1991. Their work includes Word Art (language school), Life Art (a ministry to teach life skills to the Roma), discipleship and mentoring, summer family camp, and other outreach opportunities.



FAITH

Andrea O'Connell

Faith. That's what it's all about, isn't it? As we look at each of the students who've come through Mountainside Ministry Training (MMT) in the last two years, that is what we see. Not super-saints or folks who have "arrived" spiritually. We just see faith.

It takes courage to step out in faith ... to put all your weight on that pretty scrawny-looking limb, to walk off the cliff, to leap out of an airplane at 10,000

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ITEMS NEEDED for Mountainside Ministry Training Center

- Vehicle: gently used, preferably lower mileage 4WD mini-SUV, mini-van or car
- WorkTeam: paint building, replace 3' x 40' landscape retaining wall
- Electronics: new laptop/desktop computers, DVD/VCR player
- Kitchen: microwave, knife sharpener, pans without Teflon, 8-foot tablecloths
- Furniture: mattresses, living room furniture (sofa & easy chairs)
- Other: carpet (large portion to replace on stairs and hallway), towels, mattress pads (everything but king), unused pillows

*If you are interested in helping meet any of these physical needs contact
Jeff or Andrea O'Connell at the Training Center
E-mail: jeff@im-usa.org or andrea@im-usa.org
Phone: 866-578-4820*

feet...and trust the Lord to catch you. But, every semester, we find ourselves surrounded by people who would much rather do "the faith thing" than spend the rest of their lives hugging a tree, or building a guard rail along the edge of a cliff, or buckled up tight in their airplane seats and missing the amazing adventure God has for them.

Years ago, a wise man said to us, "You've heard the old phrase, 'God won't give you more than you can handle?' Well, that's a misnomer. It should be, 'God won't give you more than HE can handle!'" (2 Corinthians 4:7) Going to Slovakia with our young family was one of the harder things we've ever done. There were definitely days we longed for the ease and predictability of life in America, but we wouldn't trade those four years for anything. Depending on Him, rather than ourselves, is what it's all about. Believe me, we don't always do this perfectly, but our heavenly Father is always perfectly faithful. (1 Thessalonians 5:24)

We tell the students at MMT, "Missionaries aren't extraordinary people. Rather, successful missionaries are humans beings, of the ordinary type, who put their lives into the hands of an Extraordinary God." ●

Andrea & Jeff O'Connell live in Libby, Montana with their two sons. They serve as the directors of MMT.

MY WORST FEAR

Barb Gorman



"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust." Psalm 91:2

When I share with folks about serving in prison ministry here in Hungary, people often respond with, "You are so brave." What they don't know is that I had a hidden fear of needing hospitalization here. I feared being unable to communicate important medical information in Hungarian. It was also a big deal needing to have someone bring important items to the hospital like drinking water, towels, paper towels for your hands, and toilet paper. Lunch is the one main meal each day in the hospital. Breakfast and supper are nearly the same, with two thick slices of bread along with bologna or liver paste and tea. Four people to a room represents a "private room."

In June I came down with an infection. My friend Eszter called the doctor who said that I needed to go to the emergency room. I was so afraid, but I had no choice. Upon arrival I was very glad to have an emergency room doctor who spoke English. The tests he ordered showed that every element in my blood was bad—so bad that he said it would require a stay of at least five days in the hospital. Being too sick to argue, I followed the urologist, Dr. Sharon, to a room where he started an infusion right away. Dr. Sharon

spoke English as well—I was now two for two! In the morning I was greeted by the head nurse and—you guessed it—she spoke English!

That same morning my friend Peg brought me the things I needed from my house. Another friend from my church stopped by with a liter of water and told me she would bring it daily. The three ladies in my room were very sweet and their families even brought me goodies to eat. I had twenty-four visits from friends in four days!

By the time I was ready to check out, it was only two days before my scheduled return to the States. Dr. Sharon was gracious and even made a CD of all the tests that were done to take to my doctor in the States. Peg brought in the money I needed for the hospital bill, which was just a little over five hundred dollars. It was the same amount I had received from the IRS for my tax refund! I can say it was the best hospital stay ever, because the Lord went before me to teach me this lesson on trusting Him. ●

Barb lives in Kaposvar, Hungary. She serves in her church, teaches English, works with students, and is involved with prison ministry.



SEMPER FI

Ed Kleiman

I keep my mother's driver's license in my Bible case. I taught her how to drive when she was 71. She didn't drive the first 70 years of her life, but she did the last five. I knew she was capable of learning; her age was not a hindrance. In keeping with that understanding, I had hoped to celebrate my 60th birthday in Egypt ministering to the Coptic Christians, but the Men's Discipleship Camp that was planned in July outside of Alexandria was cancelled due to the violent unrest in Egypt.

By God's grace I was able to minister in South America this year, for the first time. Nelton and Bethany Noriega asked me to teach other missionaries, pastors, and leaders in the Genesis church plant there in Iquitos, Peru.

In an email update about my time in Iquitos, I said:

"I wrote my first newsletter 13 years ago shortly after joining International Messengers during a season when the mighty hand of a sovereign God was crushing me. This was easily the low point of my Christian life—but it resulted in necessary character changes in me. I learned to trust and love Christ in a way that would not have been possible without this trial. This low point was the catalyst for the last 13 years of ministry. Everything that God has graciously done over the last 13 years is connected to that season of trial—everything, including my recent ministry trip to Iquitos Peru."

In the middle of my time of teaching, Bethany posted this to Facebook:

Praises rise from His people in Peru as the Spirit of God has been working in wonderful ways! Today we saw the truth of God's Word starting to break through the lies of the prosperity gospel as people began to realize for the first time that, "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Ed was only planning on mentioning trials and their place in the life of a believer, but for the following three hours we took a tour through redemptive history and looked at scripture in context. Here is what some people said:

"We have been lied to when people told us that when we believe in God all our problems go away."

"So if we are ministers of God's Word, it doesn't mean we will get rich?"

"This gospel will not draw hundreds of people."

I think that is the point. It's the narrow gate, not the wide one. The classroom came alive and we could not get enough. I think the Genesis Church will have a DNA that many churches have abandoned. We could be witnessing the start of something extraordinary in Peru.

I am so thankful how the Lord crushed me; that season taught me to be more concerned about His approval than man's. That season taught me to seek, by the Spirit's power, to do God's work God's way, regardless of the cost.

The Christian life starts with God's gracious initiative. People are not saved by decisional regeneration, but by divine regeneration (John 3:3-8; 1 John 5:1). God was saving people the first 1800 years of Church history, and there was no sinner's prayer. Salvation has always been a work of God, not man (Acts 11:18; Eph. 2:4-5, 8-10). However, men continually try to make salvation a work of man, not God. This explains everything we see today! When Billy Graham was asked, many years ago, by David Frost, "What are you thinking about when all those people are walking forward (or praying the 'sinner's prayer')?" he responded, "Only one out of four is genuine."

Of course God uses the preaching of the Gospel and the prayers of His people that people would be saved. But we play a dependent role—God plays the decisive role! God saves sinners. That is the Gospel. And the health and wealth gospel is not the Gospel.



Why title this article *Semper Fi*? I have a friend in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, a marine. We end our conversations with these words, “*Semper Fi*.” *Semper Fi* is short for *Semper Fidelis*, Latin for, “Always Faithful.” This has been the U.S. Marine Corp’s motto since 1883. As Christians, it is our motto as well – but, when we say it, we speak not of our faithfulness, but our Lord’s. There is only One who is *Semper Fi*, always faithful: King Jesus (1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18; 2 Thess. 3:3; Heb. 3:6; 10:23; 1 John 1:9; Rev. 1:5). But because of His faithfulness to us, by His all-sufficient grace, we can be found faithful (1 Cor. 4:17; 11:1; James 2:14-17; Heb. 13:7) – at any age. I recently turned 60, and some would urge me to pursue

an easier life. But because of Christ’s faithfulness to me, and strengthened by His power, I’m more determined than ever that this next phase of my life be lived faithfully. Why not join me?

Remember, friends, the Christian life is a battle—but, He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it (1 Thess. 5:24). See you on the frontlines. *Semper Fi*!

Please check www.praybold.org for updates on my schedule so you can pray for God’s work. Especially, pray for an open door to minister in Egypt in 2014. ●

Ed Kleiman lives in St. Louis, Missouri. He speaks and serves throughout the US and overseas.

COURAGEOUS?

This has nothing to do with the movie. This has everything to do with real life heroes. Let me introduce to you some of Eastern Europe’s most courageous heroes. No, they are not courageous because they came to our Seaside Missionary Training Center here in Odessa, Ukraine. Well, that DID take some courage. They are not courageous because some of them left good paying jobs or growing ministries to come here, although they did. They ARE courageous and they are heroes because they have put their trust, their hope, and their very future into God’s hands. They are the few whom I know who have listened to Christ’s words in Matthew 19:29. ***“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.”***



Mark Huffman

This “great eight” have chosen to leave their normal life to fully trust in God. If you would like to hear more about these real-life heroes, let me know. Mhuffman.usa@gmail.com. ●

Mark Huffman is director of Seaside Missionary Training Center and a church planter/pastor at Living Hope Church, in Odessa, Ukraine.



Seaside Missionary Training Center Class of 2013

Blessed to be a blessing! (left to right)

Carlos – Arabic church planter from Lebanon.

Emma – from Poland, a future missionary to India.

Andre – Odessan church planter.

Anna and Leroy with twins Sarah and Naomi – Polish/American couple planning to do ministry with Muslims.

Daniel – from Poland, not a student, but a male nanny for Sarah and Naomi.

Ola – from Poland, wants to be part of a church planting team in Poland.

Ewa and Artur with 2 year old Jonathan – Polish couple planning to do rehabilitation ministry with drug and alcohol abusers.

If you participated in a short-term trip in 2013 with IM and haven't had an opportunity to complete your camp evaluation form, please take a moment and fill out the online form now available at:
www.im-usa.org/resources/eval



HOMEGOING

James Owenyi

Infant son of James and Mary Owenyi,
 IM Staff in Jinja, Uganda

4-21-2012 – 10-29-12



God accomplished much through the willingness and heart of our staff and short-termers in 2013. We sent a total of 305 short-term workers to serve at a variety of outreaches including the following at right:

2013 Short-Term Ministries Report

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 4 Construction w/ministry | 1 Professional English Camp (Business) |
| 3 Discipleship Camps | 2 "Redeem the Summer" Internships |
| 5 English Day Camps | 3 ROL Care Home Ministries |
| 6 English Language Camps | 2 Softball English Day Camps |
| 10 Family English Camps | 12 Staff Care and/or Teaching Ministries |
| 1 Homeless/Addicted Outreach | 2 VBS Ministries |
| 1 IM Staff Conference | 1 Women's Conference |
| 1 Kids Camp | 1 Women's Quilting Ministry |
| 1 Marriage Conference | 1 Youth with HIV/AIDS Camp |
| 1 Orphans Ministry | |
| 1 Men's Ministries | |

The average age of our short-termers in 2013 was 42 years old, and 56% of our short-termers were alumni. Our oldest short-termer was 86 and our youngest was 9 months old.

We give God all the glory for another blessed year!

Career Ministry Summary

There are 156 adults (72 North American, 84 nationals) serving with International Messengers in Canada, China, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Hungary, Nepal, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Thailand, Uganda, and Ukraine in the various ministries listed below. There are 33 adults (20 full-time, 13 part-time, plus many volunteers!) working with IM in North America to assist them in whatever ways they can.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ❖ Adult evangelism through Bible study & discipleship | ❖ Ministry to people with HIV | ❖ Planting & pastoring churches |
| ❖ Children at risk ministry | ❖ Ministry to elderly | ❖ Refugee ministry |
| ❖ Cooking class outreach | ❖ Ministry to the homeless/addicts | ❖ Roma ministry through adult education |
| ❖ Evangelism through English teaching | ❖ Missionary Training Centers in the US, Uganda, and Ukraine | ❖ Therapy using dogs & horses |
| ❖ Jail ministry | ❖ Outreach to businessmen | ❖ Translation of discipleship material |
| ❖ Marriage & parenting outreach | ❖ Outreach to and education about sex trafficked people | ❖ University student outreach |
| ❖ Medical ministry | | ❖ Women & children at risk ministry |
| ❖ Men's accountability ministry | | ❖ Youth Ministry |

*Discipling the local church through training and sending – Calling the local church to **Ministry as a Way of Life***

- ☐ I/we would like more information about IM's ministries planned in 2014.
- ☐ Please send an application for short-term / long-term (circle one) involvement.
- ☐ I am an alumnus and would like to return to the following camp in 2014:



PO Box 618
Clear Lake, IA 50428-0618

In Canada
PO Box 11022, 1945 McCallum Rd
Abbotsford, BC V2S 0E4
CANADA

- ☐ Please send more information about IM's automatic donation program.
- ☐ I would like to financially support _____ \$_____ per month / quarter / year
- ☐ I am interested in receiving my receipts by e-mail.
- ☐ Please contact us about a vehicle we might have ready to donate to the mission.
- ☐ Please do not send this annual International Messengers newsletter (continue to send individual missionary prayer letters).
- ☐ Please remove me from all newsletter and prayer letter lists.

Comments: _____

Name: _____ Member # _____ Phone: (____) _____
(appears to the right of your name in address block)

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____



Please cut along the dotted lines and mail to IM at the address above.

How do you
grow together?

Go Together



Strengthen relationships while serving together,
experience faith in action, and allow God to
work through you to change lives on a
short-term missions trip with your son,
daughter, or entire family!



INTERNATIONAL
MESSENGERS



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Enhancing Trust



International Messengers is looking for opportunities to serve you! If any of the opportunities below is something your church would be interested in, please call the IM office at 800-243-6763 or e-mail office@im-usa.org.

Darwin Anderson,
President:

Missions Conferences
Missions Concerts
Elder Retreats
Men's Retreats
Evangelistic Marriage Quests
Pulpit Fill
Mission Committee Vision
and Encouragement

Brent Howland,
Vice President:

Pulpit Fill
Missions Conferences
Men's Meetings
Mission Committee Vision
and Encouragement

Darlis Anderson:

Women's Ministry/Banquet Speaker

Ed Kleiman,

Prayer Conferences
Men's Conferences
God's Work – God's Way Conference:
deals with prayer, Gods' Word,
and reaching the lost
Teaching on the Importance
of the Church
Missions Conferences

Other:

Connecting Missionaries with your
Church when they are home
on furlough.