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## TT - 'Travelling Together' (74)

**"ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO ACCEPTED US TO THE GLORY OF GOD."** (Romans 15 v7)

Dear Friends,

September 2015

In recent days you have no doubt heard through the media about the **deeply shocking events** which happened very near here, namely in Parndorf. On the way from Hungary to Austria 71 refugees, including women and children, died a dreadful death through suffocation! The pictures of the refrigerated lorry full of corpses simply abandoned on the hard shoulder by the traffickers went all round the world. The press conference which followed on 28<sup>th</sup> August succeeded in putting Burgenland and its state capital Eisenstadt on the map for the saddest of reasons.

### Asylum seekers in Eisenstadt...

At the end of July 160 refugees were 'allocated' to our city. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August we welcomed **two young men** at our FORUM church service. We have kept in personal contact with them, which isn't difficult as they can all be reached by mobile phone. One evening we invited them round for a meal and in the meantime **three of their friends** have come along to our church services. They are all living here in tents, right next to the state police headquarters and the appearance of our city has changed through the presence of the asylum seekers. Recently we visited the well-known **reception camp in Traiskirchen** (20 km / 12 m south of Vienna); it was hopelessly overcrowded with hundreds of people of all colours all packed together in a small area in little tents behind high fences. A small group of Christians are selflessly attempting to meet the psychological and spiritual needs of the refugees. They have been doing this anyway for many years; only now the need is so overwhelming and the team is smaller than it used to be, but they are not giving up and in the midst of it all the LORD is doing WONDERFUL things! We have heard story after story of how former refugees – now integrated – have been impacted by the Gospel and now wish to work alongside them. We were very moved and it has spurred us on to **find creative ways** that we as Christians can support them in our city.

### What experience do YOU have in dealing with these matters?

### The arrival of Autumn...

The school holidays have finally drawn to an end and we have spent much of the past two months with our grandchildren. It has been such fun to run around with them in the nearby Castle Park... Walking with **Lenny (6)** with his backpack up to the viewing point and enjoying a snack up there... His brother **Sammy (2)** loves picture books and toy cars! **5-year old Lina's** favourite Christian kids song is "Volltreffer" ("bull's eye") and **Timo (8)** has discovered the 'Bible App for Children' on our mobile with its exciting picture stories. Little **Miriam (4 months)** laughs and chatters away. She is finding her voice and discovering that she can make a lot of noise! They were all there when we had a family gathering on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September for our joint birthday party and when we gave thanks to God for our 60 richly filled and exciting years: **"HIS mercies never cease, great is HIS faithfulness"** (from Lamentations 3 v 22-23). And what a great time we had! PTL!

### We are sending three more missionaries from Austria out into the world!

On 6<sup>th</sup> September **Sophia** was being blessed and sent out to Peru to work long-term as a teacher. On 13<sup>th</sup> September **Priska** is being sent out for a period of short-term service in Malawi in Africa. Hans-Georg will preach at the valedictory service. Prior to this Priska came to us for two days of preparation 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> September. **17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> September Natalie** from Dornbirn is coming to us for preparation for her nine months of service in Spain. It is so important that the training which we provide for our missionary candidates should be a genuinely helpful for their onward path into unfamiliar territory. **17<sup>th</sup> September: the BEG Foreign Missions Team (TAM)** is getting together for an important strategic planning meeting. Among other matters we will be thinking about a new organisation structure.

### A whole range of things happening in September...

**Funerals:** One was on 9<sup>th</sup> September in the north of Vienna and the other one took place on 10<sup>th</sup> in a town near Eisenstadt. Even when we first met the families to arrange the funeral we sensed that we would need a lot of support in prayer and we were very moved by the individual life stories!

**A new co-worker family:** From 19<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> we are expecting a visit from a young Austrian family who would like to work full-time with our FORUM church. We will use this time to get to know each other and to seek God's direction.

**Emergency counselling: 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>:** As last year we will have the opportunity to take part in the international emergency counselling convention in Innsbruck. We hope to have new and valuable inspiration and useful advice.

**And finally: 27<sup>th</sup>:** We are looking forward to a visit from the **Romanian Baptist Church in Vienna**. They will take our FORUM communion service.

**We would like to say THANK YOU to you! This is so important for us! We can share both lovely things and serious matters with you. What a help and an encouragement this is for us! THANK YOU from the bottom our hearts for your support in prayer and for your gifts which make it possible for us to carry on our work here!**

Yours in His service,



*Hans-Georg, Margret & Annika*

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