

***Dear Friends,***

We are so glad to be able to share our lives and our experiences with you again. May this 'BURGENLAND NEWS' encourage you particularly to pray with us.

Here are the main points:

- "...the police are coming to our house..."
- The steepest church tower in Europe
- The eastern Mediterranean region and central Asia
- Additional help in Eisenstadt: John and Liesi Doss
- Hanna from Brixen, South Tyrol
- Visiting the Arabic-speaking fellowship
- Seminar: '16 Personality Factors'
- Weddings
- Preview of the coming weeks
- School, work and future
- THANK YOU!

If you've managed to read it all (or even if you haven't!), then please send us a quick note. We suggest something like the following:

- 'Lovely to hear from you again'
- 'Many thanks'
- 'Keep it going!'
- 'We would love to continue praying for you'
- 'Please come and see us'
- 'We would like to visit you'
- 'Thank you for sharing with us up till now, but we do not wish to continue receiving your newsletter'
- 'We wish you God's blessing for the future'

OR whatever else you would like to say!

We would WILLINGLY pray for you – please share your prayer requests with us – thank you!

Below you will find our newsletter – to be printed out and passed on – PLEASE share it with your prayer partners. We look forward to your reply.

THANK YOU for your interest and we hope you enjoy reading it.

Best wishes

**The Hoprichs**

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**BURGENLAND NEWS**  
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Early November 2008

In the middle of a SKYPE chat with friends in a central Asian country, the friends then said the following:  
*"Hans-Georg, I've just been told that the police are coming to our house...  
Must quickly burn our sensitive material. Can we chat again later?"*

Dear Friends,

Through our many different areas of service in our 'free' country of Austria, we have often come across people in the past few weeks who have had to drop everything and flee from their country because of death threats against them. The father of a family from the Middle East stands there with tears running down his face and asks, "For how much longer???" **For over 30 years the Christians in his country have been heavily persecuted** and to become a Christian is to face the death penalty! In a foreign church in Vienna we meet a young student who earlier had prepared tracts to give out, but who had been **intimidated and threatened so much** that he had no option but to find the quickest way out of his country...

Also in Austria's past there have been long-lasting times of extreme persecution. The worst was the time of the **Counter-Reformation** which **lasted over 150 years!** Protestants and members of the so-called Anabaptist movement were given the choice: "**Your faith or your homeland**". Only gradually is this dark chapter in the history of this country coming to light. Although this has been hushed up in the history books, interesting and informative articles are now appearing in current Austrian magazines – even Annika's school magazine had a very good contribution about the '**Hutterites**' (see below). On 5<sup>th</sup> October in Niedersulz, east of Vienna an Anabaptist museum has been opened with much involvement from our BEG churches, looking back on this time of brutal persecution (<http://museumsdorf.wordpress.com/>).

### The steepest church tower in Europe

You will find it in the beautiful village of Maria Alm am Steinernen Meer in the Salzburg region. We were shown a board on the village sign commemorating a major event in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century: the exodus of the Protestants. In 1732 a quarter of the population of Maria Alm left and settled in East Prussia – see [www.maria-alm.at/de/chronik.html](http://www.maria-alm.at/de/chronik.html). We passed through this idyllic village on the way back from meetings in Saalfelden (**Women's breakfast meeting: 'Keeping in Good Health, that's the Main Thing...!'**) and Kitzbuehel (**preaching: [www.efk-kitzbuehel.at](http://www.efk-kitzbuehel.at)** 'Downloads') in mid October.

### The Eastern Mediterranean Area and Central Asia...

We've had a long standing invitation to visiting our fellow-workers abroad. A good opportunity has arisen for Hans-Georg to go together with 2 colleagues. Early in November he is flying to the eastern Mediterranean area and from there to central Asia for 2 weeks. For the first few days in the eastern Mediterranean area, he will be accompanied by a language student, the daughter of colleagues here who definitely wishes to take on a literature/translation project in this region and wants to look round the area.

#### PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- **Safe-keeping on the lengthy and dangerous journeys**
- **The right contacts during this time**
- **Wisdom in meeting up with our fellow-workers**
- **God's guidance and encouraging conversations**

Many of these fellow-workers are in very difficult situations. We recently had an e-mail from the worried mother of one of our fellow-workers there who asked to come and see us to talk through her fears and misgivings. That is also part of our work which is actually increasing.

**It is a MATTER FOR PRAYER that we would always manage to have the right priorities before God.**

### John and Liesi Doss

**We are so happy to be able to introduce 2 new friends to you, a young couple who have moved to Eisenstadt.** John is American and he teaches English to business people ([www.beburgenland.com/](http://www.beburgenland.com/)). Liesi comes from Styria, but her Mum is from Canada. Liesi works as an orthoptist at an optician's. Both have been praying for Eisenstadt and for Burgenland for a long time. They have been married a year and in the summer they moved from Vienna to the St. Georgen area of Eisenstadt. They are still settling in and have got involved in youth work. We are so happy to see them enthusiastically making contacts and being open to other possible areas of service in the future. All our children get on really well with them. Recently they came with us to a funeral in their part of the city, the first time we'd ever been there. **PLEASE PRAY that John and Liesi will continue to settle in well and that they will find their place in God's plan for Eisenstadt and the surrounding area and enjoy fulfilling it!**

## Hanna from Brixen, South Tyrol (over the border in Italy)

In mid October Hanna was the first person from her church to be sent out. She has gone on a short-term mission to Peru. We had the privilege of taking part in the service. While we were there, the name Jakob Hutter came up again in conversation. He gave his name to the 'Hutterites' (see above) who lived in the Pustertal area, quite close to Brixen. His eventful life ended on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1536 when he was burnt at the stake in Innsbruck.

Hanna is one of a total of 10 short-termers that we have been able to prepare, send out and oversee this year. There have never been so many in one year. We already have a number of enquiries for 2009.

In September 2 returners came to us for debriefing, one from central Asia and one from N. Africa, as well as Gudrun, a social education worker from Innsbruck, who has now gone to Cluj in Romania. She is helping in a mission office and working among gypsies and is involved in women's work.

Recently we had a visit from a mission leader from Switzerland. His work focuses on **Papua New Guinea** and for several years Austrian have been able to do a community work placement there (as an alternative to military service). David from Villach is in PNG right now.

**The door is now open for short-termers to work in PNG as well.** We've really delighted about that! We also spent an afternoon getting to know Philipp Eschbach, the new leader of OM-Austria and had a valuable time sharing with him.

**We are unceasingly GRATEFUL to you prayer supporters as you are setting things in motion and none of us know how far they will reach!**

## Visit to the Arabic-speaking church in Vienna-Donaustadt

Hans-Georg was invited to preach at this church and we sang a song as a couple in the service. The afternoon and evening with our Arab friends was a very special time, also the wonderful fellowship, fascinating hospitality and of course meeting new brothers and sisters. Together with eastern way of worshipping God, especially with its unique Arabic music and songs, **it was food to our souls!** We felt so much at home in such a strange, yet such a warm atmosphere and way of thinking.

We do appreciate so much having contact with people from other nations – it lifts us and inspires our current work here.

At the end of December we going back for another service there – we're really looking forward to it.

## Seminar: '16 Personality Factors'

Hans-Georg attended this seminar in Darmstadt, Germany in September, having been motivated by the DMG and with financial support from the BEG. The test presented at this seminar provided a very important 'tool' which will help him when assessing individual candidates and finding suitable places for them. The results of this test are completely practical and helpful in counselling also and we recommend it for anyone who has to work with people:

[http://www.aem.de/download/16%20PF-r\\_Sept%2008.pdf](http://www.aem.de/download/16%20PF-r_Sept%2008.pdf)

## Weddings

2 former short-termers have got married, one at the end of August and one in September – and we had an invitation to both weddings – what a privilege!

**Chen Fei** from the Chinese BEG church had a reception in the legendary 'Cobenzl' restaurant with its marvellous view over the city of Vienna. We were very moved to be included with their extended family and to meet Chinese brothers and sister from many different parts of the world.

Then **David** got married to **Eva** in Pielachtal. We've never been to such a big wedding! Both have now completed their medical studies. When David came back from Angola after 2 years' medical work, he was given the following testimonial:

**"Send us more like him!"**

## Preview of the coming weeks...

**31<sup>st</sup> Oct. – 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov.:** Interview and training with Clemens, followed by his valedictory service in Mistelbach (north-east of Vienna) **6<sup>th</sup> Nov.:** Hans-Georg flies to the eastern Mediterranean area, staying there till **9<sup>th</sup> Nov.**, then travels on from there to central Asia and will stay there until **23<sup>rd</sup> Nov.** After that there are **preaching engagements** in churches in **Krems, Neusiedl, Bernstein** and in the Arabic-speaking church in Vienna (see above). All these are God willing!

## School, work and future

**ANNIKA (11)** needs your prayers as the grammar school is demanding and she sometimes struggles, especially with her homework.

**MANUEL (21)** has found a fellow sports enthusiast in John Doss. They go jogging together and the conversation often turns to spiritual things.

**SEBASTIAN (26)** is using his holiday to visit his grandmothers, friends and to go to a youth meeting in Marburg.

**DAVID and CLAUDIA** are thinking of building a house! Little TIMO is a lively cheerful little fellow – simply adorable!

**BENJAMIN and MARIA** often meet up with John and Liesi – their joint wish is to set up a regular house-meeting for young adults which they could invite their friends to.

## THANK YOU!

Your phone calls, e-mails, personal letters and all the other important ways you have been showing your support in recent months have been such an encouragement to us. We are for ever grateful for your prayers – God hears all of them.



Together in His love,

Hans-Georg & Margret Hoprach & Family