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BURGENLANDUPDATE
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June 2008

Dear Friends,

At present the eyes of all Europe are fixed on our country – Austria as one of the two host nations of the Euro 2008 football championship and the cities of Vienna, Klagenfurt, Salzburg, and Innsbruck are now the focus of attention in the media in a positive way for once after all the tragic events of recent times. English language television has created a new word, ‘Austria-bashing’, born out of the news stories of scandal and the way the international media has exploited them.

Building relationships and what can come out of it

This country which has become our home and its people have become dear to us over the years and we are glad to have so many opportunities to make and nurture relationships here. We saw this again just after we had returned from a church holiday in Germany. We were called to take the funeral of a great-great-grandfather. Markus his great-grandson remembered being in Manuel’s class and his brother Christopher did his joinery training with Sebastian. Nicole, the great-granddaughter, was a trainee in a shoe shop in Eisenstadt and, while shopping for shoes, Margret had a conversation with her about our experiences in Papua New Guinea and was able to give her an evangelistic leaflet. Nicole reminded us herself about it when we were all together at a restaurant afterwards (‘wake’). Nicole’s mother (the granddaughter of the deceased) has even been to a service at our church in Siegendorf, near Eisenstadt.

Nothing goes to waste, God is at work, HE has time and patience. We should sow the seed ‘in hope’

Our grandchild’s first birthday would have been a good occasion to build relationships and we would have loved to have had a celebration. Sadly our little Timo was unwell at the time and was running a high temperature, so we had to postpone the party.

Between the various services we use the time to invite our missionaries round and also those who want to become missionaries – this is another way of building relationships.

We had a visit from **Raafat** our Egyptian internet evangelist (<http://arab4jesus.twoday.net/>) together with his friend and fellow believer Baghat, the leader of the Arabic fellowship in Vienna. In the summer Baghat will be finishing his theological studies and is seeking direction for his future and support in every respect.

Also there is **Christian and his fiancée Claudia** who met at Bible College in Germany and would like to know where to go after their wedding and church experience work. Claudia comes from a missionary family (Japan) and they can see themselves working full-time on the mission field – but HOW do they go about it?

You are building relationships with us...

...by e-mail, snail-mail, phone calls and especially through your prayers and practical support for our work. We are so GRATEFUL and we feel the effect of your prayers. For example we sensed that because of them the 3 church holidays were greatly enriched. We got to know many new brothers and sisters and enjoyed a time of good fellowship and sharing. Margret really enjoyed telling the children the stories of missionaries Mary Slessor and John Paton.

Christian lecture meeting in Eisenstadt

As we have now been in Eisenstadt for 10 years, the town is very much on our hearts and we use every means to make Jesus known to the people here.

On 12th June Margret had the opportunity to give her talk ‘Joy...Don’t Get Robbed!’ at a guest house. The organising team gave out lots of invitations. There were many new faces. It was such a PITY that we couldn’t speak to them all in person! In spite of the football there were about 50 people in the audience – we’d never expected THAT many! Margret was able to speak very freely. Since this wasn’t just for women – it was advertised simply as a Christian lecture meeting – 5 men also came along. Hans-Georg had a really good conversation with an old soldier.

PLEASE PRAY that the message of lasting joy will have an effect on many who were there and that it will inspire them to follow JESUS.

Relationships with our Chinese brothers and sisters and Sunny's baptism

We have previously mentioned our visits to the Chinese evangelical church in Vienna. When we came back recently from one of the church holidays, we found a special invitation waiting for us: Yap Chi, a dear Chinese brother and leader asked Hans-Georg to baptise his son Sunny on Sunday 15th June as part of a big open air service. Three of the churches in Vienna met together at Muehlwasser, a calm tributary of the old Danube, where David (our third born) and Claudia (his wife) were baptised 2 years ago.

Hans-Georg also had the privilege of baptising Hanna, a young lady from Krems who he already knew from the short-term work. Although it was forecast to be wet and cold, the LORD gave us a wonderful morning in the open air with the 3 churches. It only started raining at about 3.00 in the afternoon when everything had been packed up and everyone was on their way home. God is SO good!

We had so many conversations with various brothers and sisters that we missed lunch, although we had everything with us! In all, 15 people were baptised, some of whom were very young.

Foreign Missions Department

The team is meeting again under Hans-Georg's leadership on 20th June. They are seeking URGENTLY for more Austrians. **We could do so much more if only we had more workers!**

Gradually the last of the 'short-termers' are coming home from their year away. Livia has enjoyed it so much that she is staying on in Peru for another 6 months.

We will arrange to see all our 'returners' for debriefing. It isn't easy to find a convenient time, especially this year when so many are travelling out and we are off at weekends to valedictory services all over the country.

PLEASE PRAY that we will be able to meet all these challenges – and find some rest in between!

Missionary weekend in Voecklabruck (Upper Austria) 27th–29th June

28th June: **Ladies' breakfast** – Margret. **Young people's missionary evening**

29th June: Hans-Georg is preaching at the **Evangelical Alliance Day in Voecklabruck**.

Afternoon youth service at Gmunden am Traunsee including the **valedictory for Anna** who is leaving to go on short-term service in Poland

PLEASE PRAY for all these busy weekends that we may have strength, the right words and simply for God's special blessing on all these events.

Preview of the summer months

The early part is full of visits from short-termers:

4th – 10th July: Beate and Sylvia, Anna and Simone are coming for interview and for training. Their destinations are Argentina, Poland and Ethiopia.

13th July: Simone will have her valedictory at a youth service in Koestenberg, Carinthia (Hans-Georg is preaching)

14th, 15th July: Gabi is coming from Salzburg for debriefing – she has been in Ecuador.

18th – 25th July: As in recent years we will be **guests at a Christian Hotel (Hotel Hari) in Adelboden in Switzerland** and will lead the worship during this week (Time of fellowship in the evening, Margret will give some talks specially for the ladies). This will be rounded off by a **family gathering on 26th July at Herrenberg in Germany**. We will be celebrating the **80th birthday of Margret's mother** ('Grandma Ludwig')

2nd – 9th August: We will be at a church holiday in the Allgaeu region (S. Germany) with the Nuremberg People's Mission. Hans-Georg is taking the Bible studies and Margret is leading the children's work (primary school age).

From there we travel to Feldkirch in Austria (Vorarlberg) where Hans-Georg has been invited to speak at the **valedictory service for Beate**. Then we will meet **Priscilla in Bregenz** (also in Vorarlberg) **for debriefing** following her time in South America.

On 13th August Sylvia will have a valedictory service in Enns (Upper Austria) before going out to Argentina. This is to be held in a house fellowship group (which meets regularly and is aiming to become a local church).

Evelyn Gisler, daughter of our DMG colleague here in Vienna is coming on **16th and 17th August** for an interview and training and will have a service on 31st August at our Floridsdorf local church before going to Canada

THANK YOU!

Your participation and intercession is very valuable – how could we do our work here without you?! May the LORD, who sees what is done in secret, richly reward you for all your prayers and support.

We wish you all a happy and relaxing holiday time – may it be a time of refreshing for body, soul and spirit!



Best wishes

Hans-Georg and Margret Hoprich and family