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## TT – ‘Travelling Together’ (71)

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

Dear Friends,

June 2015

During our first ten years here in Austria, we were in central Eisenstadt, surrounded by three very busy roads and only rarely did we hear the birds singing... Now that we live on the outskirts, between the castle park and the forest, we are able to enjoy a whole ‘choral ensemble’ of birdsong. Even before sunrise the **cuckoo** is busy, then there is the drumming of a **woodpecker** and the **blackbirds’** flute-like singing, the **robin** joins in with its trickling song, **goldfinches**, **sparrows**, **tits** and the excitable **chiff–chaff**, the cooing of **doves** – only to mention a few of the ‘participants’ in this magnificent choral symphony. And we mustn’t forget the **nightingale** which starts its wonderful song in the vineyards behind the houses, when all the others fall silent... We just sit there and listen and enjoy this unbelievable ‘soundscape’ – what a wonderful gift! And it really is an inspiration to us in our very busy everyday lives... just to be still and listen...

**How are things with you? Do you have ‘full stop’ moments like this when you can pause – listen – and take it all in?**

### Looking back over our church holiday (30<sup>th</sup> Apr–3<sup>rd</sup> May)

Together with a neighbouring church from Vienna Neustadt there were over fifty of us including children. Poellau in the state of Styria proved to be an ideal place for ‘time out’. Our speaker, Christoph Windler took us through the topic of “**Vision – for my life and for my Church**” and we had time to reflect on God’s promises and His plans and goals for us. In groups we sought God’s vision for our FORUM church. Independently each group established that we are a warm–hearted, inviting church with a desire for diversity. The Eisenstadt FORUM is in the special phase of growing together, but also there is change. We want to see both: outer and inner growth! It is clear to us that in spite of our small numbers we want to be faithful to the Lord Jesus and to God’s Word; we wish therefore to build and nurture links with our neighbourhood in love and truth, and gladly invite people to come to faith.

**We are praying particularly for more church members who are ready to serve and take on responsibilities and in general for new motivation and joy for the FORUM.**

### 17<sup>th</sup> May: the first church members meeting

We have worked and prayed for this day, would you believe it, for the past two years... What makes a Christian church: worshipping God, proclaiming God’s Word, Baptism and Holy Communion, discipleship, world mission... to name only a few ‘building blocks’! There is also the church leadership made up of Elders, Deacons and Church Workers who are using their individual God–give gifts for the benefit of the whole church. We talked about the church members’ expectations of the church, as well as what the church expects from its members. PLEASE keep on praying for us that we will not lose sight of this vision. We are aware that **this really is only the beginning** of – we hope – much bigger things!

### Call–outs with the Emergency Response Team

As you probably remember, we trained some years ago to work with the Red Cross Emergency Response Team. In recent times the calls for assistance have mounted up, coming via the emergency services central switchboard. Recently we’d only just got back from church when we received another text message on our mobile. On this occasion there wasn’t anyone available to help in a neighbouring area, and they were asking us to step in. **We are sent as a pair to help in situations where there has been a sudden death**, to support the family members during the first few hours. It is about being there for people in their initial pain and shock, helping them to start thinking about funeral arrangements and putting some measures in place to help those who are left behind. This happens in conjunction with the police, doctors and funeral directors. We have been called out to help many times now in this challenging work.

**We see this area of service as a good opportunity to help our local community – as people who have hope!**

### Holiday...

Soon – God willing – we will be off to the ‘far north’ where we will have a holiday at the home of a dear old friend who lives up near the border between Germany and Denmark. On the way we will stop in **Leichlingen (Rhineland)** from **4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> June** where we will visit friends and preach and report on our work at our second sending church, the ‘**Kreuzkirche**’. On the way back we would like to visit some other faithful missionary friends that we have know for many years.

**PLEASE could you pray for safekeeping for us on the long journeys there and back (Leichlingen is exactly 1000 km (625miles) from Eisenstadt, and the north coast even further), and also for refreshing days by the North Sea.**

**We are so GRATEFUL to see God at work in Austria and to be able to be part of it.**

**It is lovely that you are also with us in this and you share in our life and in our service. MANY THANKS for your friendship and for your support! We wish you God’s richest blessings.**

Yours in His service,



*Hans-Georg, Margret & Annika*

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