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Dear Friends ,

TT – Travelling Together’ (11/12)

April/May 2010

On the last day of term before the Easter holidays, there was an air of great excitement in Class 1 of a primary school in Nuremberg! Out of the 21 lively children only 3 were of German nationality but they were all ears as we started to tell them not only about crocodiles and other exotic animals in Papua New Guinea but also about the main reason for us living out there! We asked, “Why do you think we celebrate Easter?” Spontaneously Khalib (*) called out from right at the back, “**Because that’s when Jesus ‘woke up’ again!**” These children are at an advantage because their teacher knows the living Lord Jesus! We sang a New Guinea song: ‘...HE has ‘thrown away’ all our sin...!’ Shamilah (*) from Morocco looked at us with her big brown eyes and asked, “**What’s sin?**” We were put on the spot! Together with the class teacher who is our friend, we explain that the Bible calls sin by name. With the help of a plain wooden cross hanging up in the classroom we gave this colourful group of children the best news of all times, for great and small, for black and white to take with them into the Easter holidays, and hopefully into their lives!
(*not their real names)

A very busy weekend!

Friday 26th – Sunday 28th March: on the Friday evening Hans–Georg gave a talk on his trip to Ghana to the People’s Mission Church in Nuremberg and on the Saturday afternoon Margret had a meeting with the women. That evening Hans–Georg was the guest of the young people and spoke on ‘New Developments in Mission’. On the Sunday morning we preached and took the Sunday School. In the afternoon we travelled on to see Gottfried, our friend who had lost his **wife and father–in–law in a dreadful road accident** 3 weeks earlier (see TT 10). It was late when we set off back to Austria on the motorway and at 3.30am we finally dropped into bed, dog–tired but very GRATEFUL.

Thank you so much for all your prayers for us during the whole of this very busy month.

‘God willing...’!

Our family minibus started making strange noises on our way to a service and they gradually got louder. We took it to a garage and the mechanic thought it was a problem with the gears. At last he found the cause – something very simple, but more dangerous: 3 of the screws on the front wheel were so loose that one almost fell out! Since then we have said ‘God willing’ with much more conviction when making plans!

Our children...

ANNIKA (13) enjoyed the Easter holidays which included a school skiing trip to Saalbach–Hintertglemm (south–west of Salzburg) and spending time with her little nephew Timo. We have noticed how she is becoming more independent in her studying.

MANUEL (22) has started to enjoy his job again and is now looking for somewhere reasonable to live.

SEBASTIAN (27) is still driving many miles on night deliveries for the organic bakery and is still hoping to find a girlfriend.

DAVID, CLAUDIA and TIMO are looking forward to the new addition to their family in late July – possibly a girl this time?

BENJAMIN, MARIA and LENNY have celebrated Maria getting her Masters degree. Benjamin has been taken on as the warehouse manager.

Some dear friends from the Tyrol have come up with a variation of our surname. In a recent e–mail they said, “Why do you always spell your name wrong? It should be ‘Hope–rich’ – rich in good hope which you share generously with others!” and they added, “Perhaps it is the name written on your white stone (Rev 2:17).” Hmm...an interesting thought!

We are not **lone warriors**, and neither are we strong! Often our hope melts away. **We need your backing**, your faithfulness in prayer, your friendship, your support and your wisdom, without which we would soon become weak and useless in our service for the LORD Jesus Christ.

TT – travelling together with you – that is such a great encouragement. Many THANKS!

“Watch yourselves...!” (Acts 20 v28)

This was the theme of the ‘BEG–Forum’ in Bad Aussee (east of Salzburg), a weekend away for the workers of the Austrian Association of Churches (30th April–2nd May). **We learnt so much**, especially about the significance of our life story, which God has written with us, for our present lives and for our service.

These are some quotations from the speakers:

“Our service is not our first calling, but the certainty of this: I am a much loved child of our Father in heaven!”
“The Lord’s Prayer is exactly in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount and it is in the plural (not I...me...my...)”
“This prayer which Jesus taught us places us in the worldwide fellowship of all God’s children at all times and includes all aspects of our lives...”
We stayed on in Bad Aussee after the Forum as **guests of the parents of a young ‘short-termer’** who is soon going out to Africa, probably Tanzania.

A new area of service...

Our partner mission SIM, (Serving in Mission, www.sim.org/) with whom we have sent many of our young ‘short-termers’ into all the world, came to us with a request: they are looking for a worker as a coordinator for Eastern Europe and the missionary initiatives which already exist there. This is about a possible collaboration for the purpose of pooling resources and manpower. Alistair Hornal, an SIM worker from England will visit for an initial exchange of ideas.

We would like to have God’s clear leading and confirmation in this matter – would you pray with us?

The Eisenstadt Forum

In our team we have a small highly motivated cheerful troop of workers. Often we have new visitors. We keep busy praying, organising, discussing and planning. Our tireless friend **Walter Mauerhofer (who is retired!) has various multi-media lecture evenings ‘In Praise of Creation’ planned in North Burgenland.** He especially wants to invite people to believe in Jesus and whenever possible he invites people to the Eisenstadt Forum.

The Forum is staging its first public event: an evangelistic concert to be given by a renowned choir from the US on Whit Monday (24th May). This will also be a charity event to raise funds for reconstruction work in Haiti.

Please pray for the distribution of the invitations, that they will be positively received and for many ‘prepared’ listeners!

The Arabic-speaking church in Vienna

Rev Bahgat, Pastor and friend, has phoned us with a request for Hans-Georg to preach. As a number of newly converted people (from Orthodox and M*slim backgrounds) have been attending in recent weeks, Rev Bahgat felt it was very important to cover ‘The Lord’s Supper’ as a subject. **Please give thanks with us for the increase at this church and for the safe-keeping of these brothers and sisters.**

Deputation visits

Between 30th July and 4th August we will be in S. Germany again, God willing. We are looking forward to meeting up with our many friends in that region and **having opportunities to present our work.**

Some events which took place in April...

3rd April: Our missionary Raafat Mashraki was ordained in Vienna. Hans-Georg gave the **commissioning sermon.**

7th April: **Evangelistic women’s meeting** in Baden/Vienna. Margret spoke on ‘The Resurrection – witnesses wanted!’

15th–16th April: **Training days for Sabrina and Annika** from the Tyrol in preparation for short-term mission work in Namibia

17th–19th April: **Deputation visit to FEG Usingen/Taunus** (north of Frankfurt am Main)

24th April: **Parenting course,** Moedling. Hans-Georg spoke on ‘The difficulties of being a good father’

Our current prayer requests:

9th May: **Preaching** in the morning at **Siegendorf,** evening service at the **Arabic-speaking church** in Vienna

17th–18th May: Visit from **Alistair (SIM)** from England, possible decisions to be made

24th May: Outreach **Gospel concert,** Eisenstadt Forum

28th May: Foreign Missions Team meeting in Linz

29th May: **Parenting course,** Moedling (Follow-up on ‘Being a good father’ and also on ‘Respect’)

Please pray for our dear friend, **Rita,** who is in a deep spiritual ‘low’ following chemotherapy and is suffering from anxiety and panic attacks.

We know we have experienced God’s safe-keeping and His joy and blessing because you have prayed for us.

We are not alone because you are with us in PRAYER – and we are with you too – TT, Travelling Together!
THANKS once again for your immeasurable service in prayer and support.

May our LORD bless you richly.

With our love