

Newsletter July 2010

Dear brothers and sisters

Soon our family will be leaving for vacation. On Saturday, August 21, we will be spending for a few days in the first of three apartments during our trip to the beautiful regions to Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland. The three lodging places where we will stay overnight will be near the Bodensee (near Munich), at the lake of Como (Italy), and at the Lago Maggiore in the sunny and warm part of Switzerland. We are looking forward to our stay in some of the most beautiful regions in this part of the world.



Grillfest

On July 3 we had an outreach event, that we call the Grillfest, for which we invited friends and relatives. Everything for that event was planned by a group of people of the congregation. The house that we rented for that purpose was located in the hilly area near Thun. The arrival time was between four and five o'clock in the afternoon. We bought meat for the evening and cooked it on a grill. Many members brought different salads and desserts. Lena fixed once again a Russian salad. After we had eaten, I started to speak a few minutes about true friendship. Then we sang a song before I got up again and spoke for a few more

I am speaking to the invited people at the Grillfest

minutes. The devotional type of lesson with songs in between each of the teaching statements, took about thirty minutes. Then some ball games were played before we ate a dessert. We concluded the evening with a prayer. There were a total of eight visitors at the Grillfest. One lady in church asked me if I was satisfied to have only eight people come to which I responded to her that I was more than satisfied at the number of guests for the Grillfest. I wish we could have that many guests every year. This is the first year we have done the Grillfest. We plan to have it each year so that it creates a good and non-threatening event for non-church members. In December we will have the Knusperfestli which is another possibility for us to invite friends and relatives. We have had the Knusperfestli as a gathering for decades, but this year we want to use it for the first time as an opportunity to bring short Christian messages across to our friends. It is becoming a new vessel for non-threatening evangelism.

Our regular guests Daniel and Tine stop coming to church

We were sorry to hear that Daniel and Tine, who were regular guests in church for three months, decided to stop coming. Why? This is also a question that church members wonder every time we have guests that leave a few weeks or a few months later. As always there is more than one reason. One Sunday morning in July Tine went with her little son Ben to Sunday class. Tine was very glad about the Sunday class that was started just for her son. The lady that taught that Sunday morning had her daughter assist her. Tine rebuked the child that was trying to help because she was sure that the girl had used a curse word. She and her mother denied it. Tine was shocked at the bad influence on her son in Sunday class and that this mother did not even admit that her daughter used a curse word. The couple stopped coming to church the following Wednesday night. Lena and I visited Tine

and Daniel encouraging them to come back. At this point we became aware that other things bothered them. They did not find the Sunday morning an appropriate time to pray for one another, as we do it during worship every Sunday morning. Instead they would only want to bring praise to God. A few weeks earlier they had also asked me if we liked to invite a speaker that they had heard that warns Christians from the spread of Islam in Switzerland. I tried to understand their concern, but I also told them that I was not worried about an invasion of Islam in a secular country like Switzerland. I also pointed out that Islam would be a new opportunity to teach Muslims about Jesus. There are other reasons why Daniel and Tine left the church. I notice that whenever people come to this church, they usually come with a lot of baggage from their church backgrounds that does not make it possible for them to join this congregation. This was unfortunately true once again.

News about People

Marcel had two back surgeries within one or two weeks. He will not be able to work as a prison guard until at least September 10. After that he will start working part-time. Peter has been unemployed since January. He is starting to study in a daily English program hoping to have more chances to get a new job. Angelica's pregnancy continues to go well. She is expecting to give birth to her child at the beginning or in the middle of September. Elfriede lost the vision of her left eye almost totally. She also continues to suffer from tinnitus, a constant sound in one of her ears.

Asking For Your Prayers:

- The health of Elfriede, 81, and her being able to move to an elderly residency soon
- Lena's mother who finished undergoing chemotherapy to fight breast cancer
- Peter who has been unemployed since January of this year
- Regina's husband, Peter, who is looking for a full-time teaching position for ethnology
- Babies: Ilja's, Robin's, Elena's and Jeanette's health and continual growth
- Angelica who is expected to give birth to a child in September
- Anna, 20, who continues to attend church on Sunday morning once or twice a month
- Teenagers of church members – Mathias, 18; Benjamin, 14; Rahel, 13;
- Ueli, a church visitor, who went to serve in the military service for several months
- Margrit and Johanna who remain indecisive

Any Funds Can Be Sent to Our Overseeing Congregation:

Park Avenue Church of Christ
5295 Park Avenue
Memphis, TN 38119

Grace and Peace,

Ivan + Lena

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