

Newsletter November 2010

Dear brothers and sisters,

This past fall we made efforts to reach out in new ways to our community. In this newsletter we will be pointing out some of these efforts.

Special Sunday Morning Designed for Visitors

At the last Sunday of October and in November we had a series on three Sunday mornings for which we invited guests. On the first Sunday I spoke about God as “The Perfect Father.” November 14 was about God “Like A Mother Who Takes Care of Me” and for my speech on November 28 I gave the title “A Family in Which Everyone Cares for One Another.” As many as 8 guests were on the first Sunday at the assembly. Most of the guests came to the meeting because church members invited them. Some of the visitors, however, came because of three large advertisements that we put in the local newspaper. Rösli, 82, who was invited to church for the last Sunday by Lucia, an elderly church member, has continued to come regularly to church since that Sunday. Danielle picks her up every Sunday morning and takes her home after the assembly. The church members appreciated this special opportunity to invite people for three Sundays of the year. We got the impression that there is a need for another Sunday morning series in 2011 that will especially be designed for visitors.

New Ministry: Serving our Foreigners in the Community

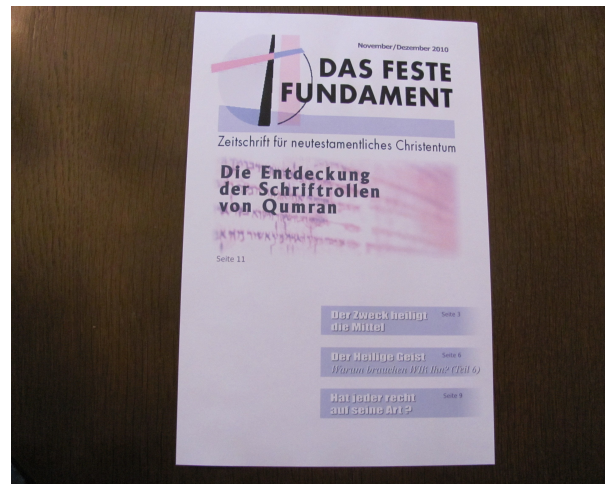


This past spring I was thinking about how I could start to teach German to foreigners in the community and talked to some members about it. A few months later my father worked for his company, which installs kitchens and doors, when he met a man from Eritrea, Africa. He asked him if he were interested in having some free English lessons. The man from Eritrea gladly accepted. The next Sunday morning, which was on the first Sunday designed for guests, he came to church taking his cousin with him. It is his cousin with which I started to read the next week from the Gospel of Luke in German. His name is Teklosien. He has a

Reading with Teklosien from the Gospel of Luke in German wife and two sons, four and two, who are still in Eritrea. They want to flee the country as soon as possible to meet up with Teklosien in Switzerland, where they want to ask for refuge. Teklosien also told me a wild story about how he was handcuffed to be imprisoned and how he fled from soldiers and their driver. When the soldiers left the car leaving him and the driver alone, he got a good opportunity to flee. The soldiers entered a house to arrest a man, but before they could do that, the man jumped out of a window of his house. The driver saw that and ran after him. That is when Teklosien, who was only handcuffed jumped out of the car and ran off into the nearby woods. Teklosien is allowed to live in Switzerland because he is no criminal, but rather a victim of a harsh government. If he tried to go back to his country, he would immediately be arrested. Eritrea is a small country East of Ethiopia and North of Somalia. Survival is often difficult and the level of corruption is high. Teklosien came to Switzerland in November of 2008 and has been living in Thun for about a half a year. He has an Orthodox Christian background. We also are in contact with Teklosien's cousin whose name is Missginne. Missginne is the man that my father met at the booth.

New Ministry: Writing for the magazine „Das Feste Fundament“ („Firm Foundation“)

In January of 2010 two young men from Germany took on the task as new editors of the magazine „das Feste Fundament“ (“Firm Foundation”) which has been the major magazine among Churches of Christ in the German speaking part of Europe for a few decades. As far as I know it is currently the only magazine of Churches of Christ in this part of Europe. I was asked to write articles on a regular base for this magazine. The first year the editors would like for me to write articles on archeology. My first article which I contributed, was for the November-December 2010 issue. It was on the discovery of the Qumran scrolls. It can be read at the following website: <http://www.gemeinde-christi.de/dff/index.html> . The second year the editors asked me to write a series of articles on topics about church history. I am glad that I can now serve as a writer for this Christian magazine. By the way, I will also publish this year on our local church website a New Testament survey that has the title “With Big Steps Through the New Testament” which I once taught in the congregation in Thun. The Old Testament survey “With Big Steps through the Old Testament” is already available for download on the Church's website.



The Qumran article in the magazine “Das Feste Fundament”

News about People

Marcel is in recovery from his third back surgery. However, he started to have more back pain again. We do not know at this time how successful the surgery was, but it seems that his problems with his back will need a lot more attention by doctors. Marcel will not be able to work for at least some months. Our prayers are for Marcel's health. Elfriede needs our prayers just as much. She continues to suffer with tinitus on both ears and her liver does not work properly anymore. This winter she also caught a severe cold.

Asking For Your Prayers:

- Strengthening our confession of Christ in the world
- Teklosien, my German and Bible student, and Missgine from Eritrea
- Marcel who is recovering from his third back surgery
- 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
- Regina's husband, Peter, who is looking for a full-time teaching position for ethnology
- Babies: Ilja's, Robin's, Elena's, Jeanette's, and Joline's health and continual growth
- Anna, 20, who continues to attend church on Sunday morning once or twice a month
- Teenagers of church members – Mathias, 19; Benjamin, 15; Rahel, 13;
- Ueli, a church visitor, who studies electrical engineering in Biel, 40 miles from Thun
- Johanna who is still hesitant about coming to church regularly
- Tino and Mo who are traveling

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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