

Update from Silesia

A Newsletter from Tim and Renata Hinrichs
Missionaries to Poland with East European Missions Network

Summer 2008



Well, this newsletter is way over due since it should have come out at least 2 months ago but with all the events of the end of the school year... we didn't manage to get it out. But thank you for remaining with us in prayer and we hope that you haven't forgotten about the ministry we are continuing to be involved in here in Poland. So where do we begin? We'll have to go way back to May...

In May we celebrated **THE 10th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIBLE SCHOOL**. Actually, it won't officially be 10 years until October when classes start but because of planning issues, we celebrated a few months early.

We organized events which went on for the whole day, from morning until evening. The main focus was to give honor and glory to God for what HE has accomplished over the past decade in the Bible school. Has it *really* been a decade already??? And so the day was filled with worship, prayer, time for fellowship at the table, and sharing of ministries by graduates. About 150 attended coming and going throughout the day.

One of our graduates prepared a drama, a few others are involved in clown ministry and did a skit. Some shared multimedia presentations of their ministries in their home parish. Others were simply interviewed on the spot as Renata wandered around the sanctuary with a microphone. We had a lot of fun. We even organized two music teams who led us in times of praise and worship as well as prayer.

Pastor Don Richman was able to come for the day and share a Bible message with us. To have him share was very special since he has been teaching every year since we started. I was also able to preach a message based on the theme verse of the Bible school: **Psalm 119:140** "Your word is very pure, Therefore Your servant loves it."

If you would like to see a seven minute video presentation of the history of the Bible school, we put it on youtube. You can see it at the following link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JtpnawRz6c



10TH ANNIVERSARY WORSHIP TEAM

For fun, we thought we would share with you some of the recent statistics compiled for the anniversary:

Of the 219 students from the last 10 years...

- 184 are from Poland
- 54 are serving as volunteers in ministry in some way
- 35 are from outside Poland
- 29 are in full-time ministry
- 23 are studying theology
- 14 were over the age of 50
- 3 went on to full-time foreign mission work (for at least 1 year)
- 1 graduate who is also on the staff as a teacher at the Bible school



10TH ANNIVERSARY GATHERING

We thank God for **MEN'S MEETINGS** which started this spring in our congregation. As is often the case in many other places, Bible studies and gatherings for women are very common but not for men. This has been a great lack in our area as well and much overdue so we started with a men's breakfast in May and then a men's grill in June. I guess it was a much more popular idea to grill than to make breakfast. To sum it up, we sang and worshipped together, prayed, and were led in Bible study. We had a special guest (Steve Jankord from Sioux Falls) for the first meeting and then in June I spoke. We pray that this is just the start of something long-lasting for ministering to men. [Pastor Michael Brandt also visited our Bible school at that time and was a great encouragement for our students!]

Lately, it has been amazing to see how many **WEDDINGS** of friends or graduates have been taking place. We already count on going to six weddings this year and that doesn't mean just the church ceremony but the **all night reception**. Polish weddings are amazing! Three of those weddings I've been able to personally be involved in either preaching or actually conducting much of the wedding. We've also been doing some premarital counseling as a couple which is something new and really fun for us both.



GRADUATION AT TE

Another group of students finished their year (or years) in Bible school as they **GRADUATED AT THE EVANGELISTIC CRUSADE** in July. Thank you for standing with us for them in prayer. Seven of the nine daily students finished all their exams including our Ukrainian family who have already returned to their homeland to ministry in summer camps. We also saw many finish the two year course on the weekends. Included among those graduates are our first students from NE Poland in Mrągowo. They patiently attended our live broadcast of classes over the internet and so we are excited that they will get their diploma's in a few weeks time. We were also able to make connections with future students who will come this fall. Please continue to pray with us that God would open the doors for those new students that we don't even know about yet.

Besides graduation, of course the rest of the Evangelistic crusade was filled with lots of seminars, concerts, and of course evangelistic meetings. As usual, it was an encouraging time for us all. I was able to lead a series of seminars on being a man of God's heart based on the life of David. Our faculty were also leading daily seminars on various topics which are taught in Bible school.

We praise God for **A NEW TEACHER** for our Bible school. Through much prayer, the CME board approved our request to have Bartek Cieślár teach at the Bible school starting this fall. He graduated from our Bible school five years ago and has just finished seminary and been ordained. We praise God that he put the call on his heart for Bartek to teach Old Testament classes. He will be a big help for me in bearing some of the load! In addition, he was just married in July (another wedding!). So we need to keep him in our prayers as all these

changes will be a challenge for him as he also serves as an assistant pastor in Żory, 45 minutes away.

The summer continued for us with a wonderful **ENGLISH DAY CAMP** in Dziegiełków for elementary school kids. A group of Americans from Oregon arrived to help lead the camp and boy did we have a fun week although it rained almost every day. But that didn't matter as we had great fellowship and ministry together. The theme was "Set a guard over my mouth." And so every day we focused on a different way to use our words in a godly way. I was the main morning Bible teacher and Renata co-led one of the classes. Of course, Peter was also in the camp and had a blast.

PETER is growing so fast now, we're wondering what is in the water. But he finished 3rd grade and has been very happy to arrive at summer break. At the beginning of the summer, a large construction company moved in next door to us and began building a large Walmart style store called Tesco which is all over Europe. It's been non-stop action all summer and of course lots of noise and difficulties getting to our house. For Peter its great news. For the rest of us, it's sad to lose the quiet.



PETER ON THE TRAIN IN THE ALPS



TIM AND RENATA ON VACATION IN THE ALPS

God blessed us with a **CABIN IN THE ALPS**. Through a friend we were offered a vacation at a cabin in the heart of the Alps for cheap. We couldn't believe it and we were left breathless for 7 days at the amazing scenery near Interlaken Switzerland. (We caught our breath when we arrived home again). We were also surprised that cattle do roam the mountains with big bells filling the air with amazing "music." Peter especially loved the mountain goats that climbed the cliff up to our yard and of course our train trip to a nearby mountain village.

In the middle of August, I will be leaving for the **BIBLE SCHOOL IN SERBIA** once again. You might remember that I helped teach there last summer for two weeks. This year I'll be returning to the one-week Bible school for lay-workers. It's largely ecumenical and we work mostly with Slovak and Hungarian background Serbs. We expect around 30 participants and four main teachers. Please pray for good contact and effective discipleship as we work intensely for those days in Opovo Serbia.

Thank you for your support and prayers!

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