



THE HOPPY HERALD

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STUDENT MINISTRY IN LEIPZIG AND HALLE, GERMANY: 17TH NOV '09, No.13

Dear Friends,

Ministry under construction

This semester has been a time of adjustment for me. The arrival of four interns has meant more responsibility and increased workload, resulting in less time for other things. Added to that I'm leading two other projects: a regional day on the topic of 'Bible overview: God's big Picture' (which I'm really excited about!) and our vision project 'Campus meets Berlin' (in March). Matthew's presence has also affected my work situation at home and made a few changes necessary: different and more effective periods of work; and different rooms (sometimes I've had to flee to the kitchen!)



New priorities



At the moment it is my job to look after and disciple Titus in Halle and Roopa here in Leipzig as well as overseeing the general training the four interns receive. Added to that a team of eight requires more time for communication and more organisation. As a result I've noticed that I've got less time for evangelism and discipleship with students than I used to have, which is sometimes frustrating. It's at those times that I need to remind myself that firstly I chose to prioritise those things (team & interns) this semester and secondly it doesn't necessarily mean less discipleship and evangelism are taking place...

„And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.,,

This verse from 2 Timothy 2:2 is a foundation stone for Agapé concerning multiplying discipleship: Paul („me“) passes on his knowledge onto Timothy

(„you“) who is charged with entrusting it to „reliable men“ who will be „qualified to teach others.“

In the past I was a 'Timothy' (quite literally!) who entrusted what I had learnt from a 'Paul' (e.g. my team leader in Hamburg, Frank) to other 'reliable' students. However this semester a new link in the chain has been added: The interns are the 'reliable men' (and women!) who are qualified to teach 'others' - i.e. students.

As a result it doesn't mean that less discipleship is taking place, but actually more, because more people are involved! Furthermore I see the interns are often in a better position to achieve something than I am: Titus in Halle has much more contact to the students in the group there than I do; Roopa has a much stronger gift for evangelism than I do and can use it to greater effect. If I am able to encourage and equip them in the limited time I have then that really is effective ministry!

The new semester

Here are a few highlights from the current winter semester in Leipzig and Halle which you can be praying for.

Evangelism:

'Study Successfully' seminar; Christianity Explored Course; Dance course; Surveys; 24/7 Prayer; Christmas Outreach; Campus meets Berlin

Discipleship:

Start-Up course for new students; Regional day, New year retreat;

Matthew's dedication

At the end of September we dedicated Matthew at our church, the Leipzig English Church. After much deliberation we chose to dedicate him in order to ask for God's blessing on his life (and his walk with the Lord) and to ask that God's will would be done in this life, whatever that might look like. It was a really nice day and the first time since our wedding that all our close family from both sides were together. [T]



The search for a new flat begins

Our living room has four main functions: Study, guest room, recreational area and play room (for Matthew!) The most common and frequent conflict is when Tim is trying to concentrate on work and Matthew is trying to concentrate on screaming! (or I'm playing children's songs). Therefore we're keen to move house to find a place where Matty has his own room and Tim has his own study. The big day will be sometime in the new year though we don't know where we will be living yet or even in which area. Should we move to an area where mostly 'good' families live? Or does God want us where we can be a witness for others who rarely see an example of a 'healthy family' - i.e. father, mother and child living happily together. The reason why this is something I've been thinking a lot about recently can be found in the next paragraph!

An answer to prayer at the front door

A few months ago I started praying more for our neighbourhood and our house, that God would use us somehow. Up to now we all we've had were two Christian postcards on our front door to 'out' ourselves as Christians.

A few weeks ago the kids from the flat across the hall (they are 12 and 8 years old) knocked at the door, asking if they could play with Matthew. Since then they call a couple of times a week asking to come in. From the questions they ask I notice that we are probably the only (or even the first) Christians that they know: 'Do Christians celebrate new year?' 'Do you eat sweets?'

They say that they don't believe in God and don't want anything to do with him. Nevertheless they enjoy coming round, even when Matthew is asleep. I believe they're interested to see how we live as a family and how we bring up Matthew. Both of them have hardly any contact with their biological fathers.

In any case I'm amazed at what God has 'laid at our doorstep'. Sometimes it's not that easy to welcome them in, since they often don't just want to stay for half-an-hour but rather several hours if possible, and at times when I'd rather do something else or have some peace and quiet. Therefore please pray I'd always know how what to do and that God would use our family to be a positive witness for Jesus. [B]

Matty's Minutes

Hello everyone, this is the first entry of my new column, Matty's minutes! At the moment my first teeth are coming through - ouch! That's why I'm keen to grab anything within reach and stuff it into my mouth (including Daddy's arm! Yum yum!)

I'm not yet able to crawl, which is sometimes frustrating, and then I cry, because I can't reach everything (you know, so I can put it in my mouth etc. etc.). Other than that I've started to laugh which always makes Mummy and Daddy really happy - they can't get enough of me!! :-)



Prayer requests

Thank you...

- for the four interns: That they received enough financial support to start and that they're really motivated!
- that Christianity Explored courses are running in both Halle and Leipzig

Pray for...

- the right flat for us: If possible in an area where Matty can grow up safely, where we can be a witness as a family and where students can reach us easily
- good relations with the student leadership team and also our search for new leaders.

This Christmas we're heading to England again to Tim's parents (Matty's first flight!). This year we won't be spending new year at a retreat but will be in Berlin with Bianca's parents.

Since this is the last prayer letter for this year we'd like to thank you all for your giving and your prayers for us in 2009. We have been so blessed through you!

We wish you all a peaceful and blessed Christmas and a good start to 2010!!

Yours,

*Tim Bianca
& Matthew*

(the Hoppys!)

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