

P C

PROTESTANT CHURCH

H Z

"CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP"

BANJA LUKA

Newsletter May 2013

VISITING KOSOVO

In April a number of us visited Kosovo. It was an amazing experience, because that is the place where in 1389 the battle of Kosovo happened and where Christians were fighting against the Ottoman Empire (Turks). Nowadays Kosovo is still not safe as Serbs and Albanians (Muslim) fight over the country. The bombing of Serbia in 1999 was over Kosovo. Kosovo although claiming independence from Serbia, is not recognized by some countries and Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of them. It wasn't a pleasant feeling to go there and we were feeling a little bit uncomfortable but when we got there God changed our feelings completely. The best thing was that our brothers from Albania who become Christians took us to the place where the battle of Kosovo happened and in that group there were Serbs, Muslim, Albanian's, Croat and Finns, but as Christians we prayed for Kosovo, for Muslims, for Serbs and for reconciliation in this region. Only God could put us together and give us His love for each other. God is good.



Pastor Siniša and
Ljilja in Kosovo

CHURCH BUILDING

We are still using Education Cultural Center "IHTUS" for Sunday services and we are really thankful to God for this lovely place, but we are praying that God is going to provide some building that will belong to the Protestant Church "Christian Fellowship".

Please, pray with us. We need your prayers, God's wisdom and His guidance.



Sunday worship service in EKC Ihtus

CHRISTMAS PACKAGES...cont...

In January a group from Samaritan's Purse from England came to visit us, so we took them to the Roma village, Devetina, where we are already working with people. We also sang Christmas songs and shared the point of Christmas. The children were so happy to receive Christmas packages, because the poorest children are most of the time forgotten by society.



CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS

In February and March we held a series of workshops for children and we spent 6 wonderful weekends with them. We held it in three different cities: Banja Luka, Čelinac and Prijedor and over 80 different children attended these workshops. We called the workshops „a photography course” because through photography they were learning about themselves, about family, friends, relationships, environment. Each weekend we tried to show them God's love and God's perspective towards these subjects. We are really thankful to Mia Rouhotie who came to Finland and helped us run these workshops.



Having fun at the workshop

PASSOVER DINNER

In April, between Protestant/Catholic and Orthodox Easter we decided to organize a "Passover Dinner". The idea came from our colleagues David and Irena Symon, so in cooperation with the student organization EUS we held a Passover dinner for students and we had a blessed time together. 17 people attended and each of us was responsible for people at the table where we were sitting. Irena did a wonderful job of explaining to them all the symbols from the Old Testament and at the end pastor Siniša Stojković shared more about Easter and Jesus' resurrection and how important it is for each of us. He prayed at the end and it was so touching because in Orthodox circles you can't hear very often that someone prays. So it was a new experience for them and they loved that night and we spent several hours together and now our prayer is that they really heard what they were supposed to hear and I pray that God is working in their hearts and their minds.



Sinisa and Ljilja and their table



The passover plate



Irena explained about the different symbols as we went through the meal

TEAM FROM YWAM UKRAINE

In April we also held two Cultural Evenings. Thanks to our colleague Belinda Chaplin and her organization YWAM (Youth With A Mission) we were visited by a wonderful team of 9 international people from different countries. They were involved in different activities that we do over here and they also prepared and held two cultural evenings. The English evening consisted of cucumber sandwiches and scones and then a Pub Quiz on English trivia! Over 30 people attended each happening and it was a great opportunity to meet new people, explain to them why they are here and at the end share gospel with them. They did a wonderful job.



Pub Quiz at the English Cultural Night



Welcome „Bread and salt“ at Ukrainian Cultural Night



The team using puppets at the Children's Home

FINNISH VISITORS

At the end of April and beginning of May we were blessed to spend 7 days with a group of 16 people from Finland who visited this area. They came through our Finnish colleagues and their organization Fida International who is supporting the Educational Cultural Center IHTUS and the Child Sponsorship Project. Their focus was on the children whom they are supporting and we had a wonderful time with them. We kept visiting different places and families, we prayed with them and for them. At the end we had a lovely program for the sponsors in Banja Luka, including a Serbian folk dancing group who danced and sang for us. The children did a wonderful job of preparing everything and the sponsors were touched by all attention they got here. This was their first time to visit the Balkans and they promised to pray for us and our work and that is the most important thing. We really need prayers and God's guidance in everything.



All of the sponsors and the sponsorship children with the dancing group after the program

Prayer requests...

- CHURCH BUILDING - pray with us that God will show us His will towards His Church and building here in Banja Luka
- BELIEVERS - pray for the Church members and those who are almost ready to make a step and become believers
- CHILDREN'S CAMP - pray for the financial situation, for enough volunteers to help us, for wisdom and God's protection
- PARTNER ORGANIZATION - we just found out that Fida International - our main partner is leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina in two years time. Pray for new contacts, new Church workers...

We want to thank you for all your help, prayers, encouragement and your giving and loving hearts but the most thank you for doing God's work together with us.

John 16:33

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

And once again, thank-you so much for all your prayers, love and support for and all of us here at Christian Fellowship Church in Banja Luka. We continue to be grateful for all you do. May God bless you all.