
SWISS NEWS

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Erich and Tetyana Salzmann

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Dear friends

More than half a year has gone by, since we arrived in Switzerland and slowly we are getting used to it, even though it still feels at times like being on vacation.

Settled in

Slowly but steadily our new place of residence starts to feel like home. Especially Tetyana has already made quite a number of friends, among local people as well as among Russian speaking people. The kids are also doing better and they have found a few new friends. As a family we are starting to get connected with the Free Missions Church (Freie Missionsgemeinde). Darja is attending their Teenie-Club and Dan their Boyscout group. Only in terms of the apartment we are not so sure. We might start looking for something better. The constant cigarette smoke from neighbours' apartment is limiting the enjoyment of the otherwise beautiful scenery, when sitting on our porch.

Trip to Ukraine

Just as planned, we were able to make the trip to Ukraine during the kids' spring school holidays. We were able to accomplish a number of things.

Video bible: I brought Volodya the necessary financial transfer, so that the recordings can go on uninterrupted. Meanwhile, they have reached the book of Second Chronicles. These Old Testament books are a real challenge. Especially all the many names are difficult to translate into sign language, since there isn't a separate sign for every name. It is therefore necessary, to basically "write" the letters with the fingers in the air. The problem is, that this requires more time than the underlying audio recording. Because of that, additional pauses have to be inserted into the audio, so that video and audio will remain synchronous. The sound is deliberately included, since there always will be situations, when deaf people and people able to hear, will study the bible together.

Children with cancer: Thanks to a donation and a pharmacist, who granted 40% discount, we once again were able to bring Daktarin oral gel for the kids. It was great to meet one of the boys I had seen the last time, who was just about to be released from the hospital. Many of the children do have good chances of healing, if they get proper treatment.

House church: We enjoyed spending time with our friends, with whom we have shared life during the last four years. So far, they are doing reasonably ok, in spite of the crisis in the country.

Tracts: On behalf of the mission agency that is just across the street from our house, I had 5000 tracts in Russian language printed in Rivne, Ukraine. 1000 of these went to Germany, where they will be mainly used in a prison ministry.

Tent transportation: KievKids are organising children's camps in summer. For that purpose they have obtained these large Indian tepees. The challenge was to get them to Ukraine without paying horrendous custom fees. We also took one of these large packs with us. If you cross the border with just one pack, it is possible, to get through without paying. From Rivne we sent the tent further to Kiev.

Private issues: During our stay in Rivne I was able to sell our Ukrainian car. I got even more money for it than I had to pay for a replacement here in Switzerland.

It is still difficult to sell our house. Probably we will have to lower the price still further, if we really want to sell. Right now it is extremely difficult to guess, whether the situation will continue to worsen, or whether it will start to improve within a reasonable timeframe. We need wisdom in this. In the summer we will make another attempt to find a buyer.

Why does God allow this to happen?

Most people will sooner or later ask this question, usually when some accident, a disaster or a crime happens. As long as everything goes well, people hardly ever ask that question. A friend of us, who sits in the wheelchair, has asked this question many times too. God, why? Why me? People around him tried in various ways to explain his sufferings. Starting with classical clichés, like "God wants to teach you something" or "there must be some sin in your life", all the way to radical charismatic would-be healers, who said, he didn't have "enough faith" or thought they needed to cast out demons.

It is interesting to see the parallel to the book of Job. Job blamed God and sought the reason for his suffering with him. Job's friends blamed Job. Unlike the reader, neither Job nor his friends had even the slightest idea about what was going on in the invisible spiritual world. At the end of the book God spoke. He rebuked both Job as well as his friends, and said that his friends did not speak right about God. He points out that they have no clue about the complexity of the creation and about the battles that go on in the invisible world, and that only he, God, can deal with all this. The book of Job challenges us not to look for the particular reasons for suffering and evil with God or with the victim.

On this whole topic, we have now finished three sermon translations not only in Russian, but also in German. They show us the heart of God, especially also in times of suffering. The sermon "[Held](#)" shows, where we should locate the reason for suffering and evil, and which stance we should take when confronted with it. The second sermon is called "[A letter to Henry](#)". In this sermon Greg Boyd speaks about the death of little Henry and about how important it is to have a truthful picture of God, to which we can cling in the midst of suffering. The letter, which Henry's mother wrote on the day of his death, is especially touching. The

third sermon is actually a testimony. Jessica Kelley is the mother of 4-year old Henry, who died from a brain tumour. In "[Triumph by testimony](#)" she shares in a deeply moving way, how she coped with this situation, and how a renewed picture of God helped her to get through that crisis. Please have a look at these messages. (Just click on the sermons name above, to get to the English original. Russian: www.zanovo.info, German: www.ueberdenken.org) Most of us know people who go through deep suffering, some of us are ourselves going through bigger or smaller crises. These messages can be a tremendous help. Please share them with others via Email, Facebook and other channels.

Meeting with advisors

In order to not be totally on my own, I have established a small team of advisors, who stand by my side. Up until now, that happened remotely, from a distance. Now for the first time we met in person. Three of my advisors freed a Saturday to talk about a few questions and issues. Among other things we discussed the idea, to increase the involvement of a Ukrainian in the translation work. Until now he only did book translations. The idea is that I would look for a small job of about 20% that gives me a supplementary income. This would be more than sufficient to pay a Ukrainian 100%. Doing so, we could almost double our efficiency. The advisor team thought this was a good idea, but felt, that our current income was so low, that we should use the extra income for the family, and try to find the extra \$200 support for the Ukrainian. First of all, I will now try to find a suitable job. I would appreciate if you could pray about this.

Family news

We are glad that Darja has now by her own efforts managed to enter the better level of the upper grade school. (In Switzerland, from 7th to 9th grade, there are three levels of school. A fairly low one for kids who are not all that good in important school subjects, such a mathematics and languages, a better level for those who cope well with these subjects, and an extra level for the "little geniuses". Darja got into the better level, which means all the doors for later studies remain open.) This was one of our goals when moving to Switzerland. Only in French she will still have to make some extra efforts. The move to 7th grade means another school building, and a new class, in which only a few of her current classmates will join her. We are glad that the girl she had the best relationship with is also in her class. Because Darja will no longer be the only "new" person in the class, there will be more of a "level playing field". Dan's class will also change. In their school, fifth and sixth grade are in the same class. That means, that the older half is now leaving (together with Darja), and the next younger ones will join them. That means that Dan belongs to the older ones and the younger kids will respect him better. At least with one of the boys he had made friends now. He is also attending the Boy scouts at the church, and participated in their tent camp on the Pentecost weekend. There he is welcome and that is helping him.

Tetyana is getting medical treatment. The blood pressure is now fairly much under control thanks to regular medication. It looks like she will have to take these pills for the rest of

her life. The physiotherapy helped some, but not decisively and we will have to see what else can be done.

I am doing pretty well health wise. Only my right arm is causing me some problems. That seems to be from all the work at the computer. I am experimenting with how I can change my position, so that the problem will disappear again.

Gradually we are getting to know more people, some from our neighbourhood, others from the church.

Dan got to know a fisherman. Since then we have already twice eaten fresh trout. Once we invited the man for lunch. He appears to have personal problems. Please pray for him.

An elderly neighbour invited Tetyana to their house group. Already during her first visit, Tetyana realised, that she has a lot to give to these elderly ladies.

Recently Tetyana helped leading the worship at church. And now she has started to give vocal training to some young people. There is still much potential in this area.

Summer in Ukraine

Our rhythm of life is turned upside down. After it has been the other way around for many years, we will spend this summer in Ukraine. Probably we will be there most of July. Since I do my work at the computer, it will be no problem to continue the translations, no matter where I am. Of course our house church and the other house group at Volodya's place will once again be part of our programme.

And, as mentioned above, we will try to sell our house.

Many thanks to all of you for your support.

Greetings

Erich & Tetyana with Darja & Dan

Prayer requests

Give thanks for

- settling in well
- the good time in Ukraine in spring
- the progress of the kids at school

Pray for

- all our new contacts, especially the fisherman
- good progress in the translation ministry
- the upcoming trip to Ukraine
- Tetyana's health
- a buyer for our house

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