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# SWISS NEWS

Newsletter № 90

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## Dear Friends

For those who had to quarantine, lost their job or were affected by Corona in other ways, time may have gone by very slowly. To me it seems as if it was flying. I just realised, that half a year has passed since our last newsletter. Time to give you an update.

### Kiev Kids

Thanks to in-house schooling the orphanage got through this difficult year quite well. Twice they were able to organise a camp with the children, once for hiking and once for skiing. The large summer camps, in which participate, apart from their own kids, many children from disadvantaged families, could not be organised due to the pandemic. Especially for children suffering from domestic violence, the pandemic means increased difficulties, since they often are defenceless to their tormentors.

The trainings for orphanage workers are being continued in online sessions, but hopefully in person training can begin again soon.

### Video books

The first few chapters of the video book “Jesus – our destiny” by Wilhelm Busch, in sign language, are already online. Up until now Volodya and his wife avoided the virus. Please continue to pray for their protection, since both of them are persons with a higher risk.

Financially, the project is already covered.

### Translation ministry

Due to my new job at the saw-mill the translation ministry progress has slowed down. For a while I had to interrupt it almost completely, because my back problems prevented me from sitting any extended time in front of the computer. But now I am back in action.

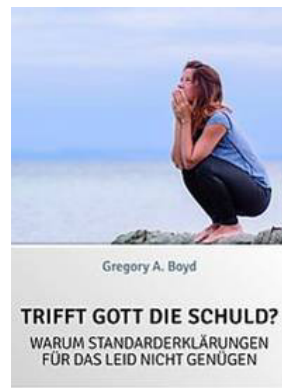
Victor, my translator, was sick with Covid and was out of business for a month, but thankfully has recovered and is now back to translating Wayne Jacobsens book “Finding church” into Russian.

Currently we are working on a series of blog posts by Greg on the topic of prayer for German speakers. In our newsletters we regularly share prayer requests. Speaking to a number of Christians I realised that for many it is not very clear, what difference prayer makes and how much it influences the world. Do our prayers really effect what comes to pass in the world around us? Or, as some say, do they only change us?

We continue our work on a new edition of the German version of “Letters from a skeptic”. We want to see Greg’s bestseller available at least in electronic form, and maybe even as a reprint. From the German publisher we already have the green light to use their text (which we are now heavily editing, since not all of that translation really matches what Greg wrote), but the communication with the

US publisher DavidCCook is not really working. When we produced the same in Russian, we managed without bigger problems. Hopefully we can sort this out soon.

We are happy, that someone else has been “supporting” us and translated Gregs book “Is God to blame?” into German. We have translated the book into Russian already and are grateful that someone else has took on the tedious job of the German translation. Meanwhile we continue working on sermon translations and studio recordings into Russian and German language.



### New job at the saw-mill

It is now 11 months since I started to work at the saw-mill in Erlenbach, a village in a neighbouring valley. By now I have learned the job quite well and am able to handle the complex machinery. Of course, there is still occasionally something new popping up which I have not seen before. After the Christmas break, we needed several hours to get rid of much ice, before things could operate again. I enjoy working on small improvements here and there, which will increase productivity. Overall the huge machinery runs well, but there is always room for improvement. Thinking of and finding solutions that will not only work but also won't cost too much is something that I really enjoy doing.

Unfortunately my old friend, the lumbago, returned in spite of the change of job. And this time it was very persistent. I couldn't get rid of the pain in my lower back and the hip for many weeks. At times I had to turn around my office chair and hang over its back in order to continue working. Finally, during the Christmas break, and with the help of some physiotherapy I was able to overcome the blockage. I hope, to be able to get the muscles trained to a level that will keep my daily life free of the struggles (and the newsletter free of such news).

### Nature und industry

The saw-mill is located on a narrow, but over 800m long plot of land, sandwiched between the river Simme and the railroad tracks. Large buildings, many stacks of boards, huge heaps of sawdust, bark and wood shred, and almost endless piles of logs, in the midst of noisy machinery, screeching saw blades, trucks, forklifts and other vehicles, all that doesn't seem exactly inviting for animals. But during our daily work we are often amazed how adaptable nature is. With that I don't mean only the [Grey heron](#) and other water birds in the nearby Simme, which are ignoring the noise. My

very work place got selected by some birds as feeding and breeding place. In the piles of bark they find plenty of beetles and larvae to feast on. [Great tits](#) and [Western yellow wagtails](#) often search for food. [Black redstarts](#), [Eurasian wren](#) and [White wagtails](#) even breed in the midst of the noisy machinery. The Black redstarts raised two broods in the same summer just underneath the roof of the building. By far the best place for their nest was chosen by the White wagtails. Covered by a protective metal shield against the rain, they raised their chicks on top of an electric engine for a conveyor belt – heating and massage included! ☺

In the ponds underneath the log piles, which are kept humid by a watering system, frogs and toads find a home. Doing maintenance work, my colleague got startled by a fox, which nearly run between his legs.

## Our youngsters



Both our kids can continue their educational work. Dan has plenty of work in the postal delivery, and the flower shop where Darja works, was permitted to remain open during the second lock-down. They are doing reasonably ok.

The whole pandemic of course also makes youth ministry in churches much more difficult. Our kids didn't have very close connections

even prior to the crisis and now that was further weakened. Dan is not very interested in spiritual things at the moment. As parents you realise, how much every human being has his own will and walks his own journey, and how limited our options to influence are. We would be thankful, if you could join our prayers for them from time to time.

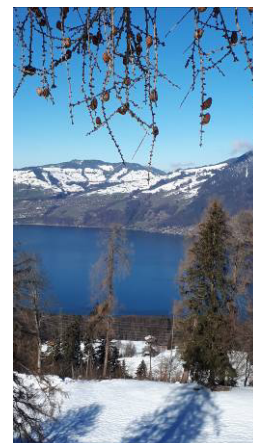
## Hobby

After the lockdown in spring we were able to continue our season in Snooker. We caught up with the qualification rounds that had to be postponed. Apart from his qualification for the Juniors Swiss Championship Dan also reached the top 16 of the league B and was qualified for the final round. And both of us had qualified for the final round in the "6-Red" discipline, a fast variation of snooker (with only 6 instead of 15 red balls). But shortly before the championship finals could start, everything was over. The virus caused the next lockdown and the championships were cancelled. Now I am valiantly continuing my training at home, while Dan – typically for a youth his age – seriously considers dropping the hobby, in spite of having the potential to win titles. As a father I of course struggle in such moments and am irritated with all the computer games and technology. But we all choose our own journey in life and I'm learning to give him room to walk his own.

## Corona conform



A wedding anniversary can also be celebrated at home, with a tasty meal, picked up at a local restaurant, offering now take-away during the lockdown. And to take a few steps in nature is of course also permitted. ☺



Tetyana had to get used to being home alone at lunchtime on most weekdays. Every evening she prepares food for us, which we can then warm up on the next day in the microwave at our respective workplaces.

She frequently meets with some of her Russian speaking friends, now mostly one-on-one. Of course they also hope for the end of the pandemic so they can meet as group again.



*Larch trees in their beautiful autumn colours in the Loetschental valley, as winter was closing in on us. Since then we of course also got our share of snow.*

Be blessed! We would love to hear from you!

*Erich & Tetyana with Darja & Dan*

## Prayer requests

### Give thanks for

- the successful adaptation to the new job
- the fact, that we are coping well with the crisis
- the improvements in our health

### Pray for

- the translation ministry
- the translations of the book "Finding church"
- the video book "Jesus our destiny" for deaf people
- protection for Volodya and his wife Larissa
- Darja and Dan