



Germany: Reaching, Equipping, Sending



Outreach with German and American youth in Surinam

2 Tim 2:2 "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". NIV

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." NIV

Representing the heart of our ministry to Germany, these two verses remind us to focus on reaching the lost, equipping them to lead victorious lives in Christ and then sending them out to begin the glorious cycle again. Reach, Equip & Send... and depend on God's power to accomplish it.

To that end, we rejoice over the many wonderful things which have happened since we were last featured in a Bridge Update (May 2003). STEP International, the Missions and Ministry Discipleship Training School we dreamed of, is no longer just a vision, but became a reality in November 2005. We've led four more missions trips, reaching the lost in Germany, Poland and Suriname, plus we've continued the tradition of hosting annual drama camps and winter retreats, drawing up to 250 young people from all over the region. And, as of the first of January, I (Joe) was officially elected as the new Youth Alive District Youth Director, and am responsible for the leadership of our two-state district. Over the next few months we are going to be launching student-led cell groups here in our home church in Pirmasens, plus I will be traveling to South Africa for a set-up trip in preparation for taking a team in 2008. Needless to say, the last four years have been amazing... and the years ahead are certain to be even more exciting!! God has been so good! We are also thankful to each of our friends and supporters who have been a vital part to our work here in Germany. Your prayers and gifts have been God's way of placing tools in our hands to reach a people who need Him so much. That means that you are partners in our ministry... in reaching every heart with the Gospel of Love. Thank you!!

YOUTH ALIVE RHEINLAND-PFALZ/ SAARLAND



Picture the scene. It's a warm summer's day in the public square of a quaint Polish village (Zlotoryja). Directly in front of the City Hall you see a group of teenagers from Germany and America, all in orange t-shirts with "Mission Poland 2005" across their chests. Before them sit 60 to 70 kids who have spent the entire afternoon with the team- playing games, seeing dramas and puppet shows, having their faces painted, and simply being loved on by the "people in the orange shirts."

At the end of the afternoon, a young lady comes forward and explains the simple Gospel message to them through an interpreter. Each child sits almost without blinking, listening to every single word. Then the moment comes. The young lady asks the children to raise their hands if they want to receive Jesus as their personal Lord, Savior and Friend. And... without looking to the left or the right to see what their friends are doing, over 50 of the children shoot their hands up with smiles on their faces! Then, after being led through the "sinners prayer," the miracle happens. Each one of them is accepted as a child of God and a new creature in Him!! New light and life burn in the faces of each child.

It really happened... and it was amazing!!! There were very few dry eyes in the square that day....

You may ask what Poland has to do with Germany. Well... one of the greatest passions of our heart is to see young people raised up and trained into being all that God wants them to be. We believe that God wants to bring Germany back to being one of the major sending nations of the world as she once was.. Has anyone heard of the Moravian prayer and missions movement? That was birthed in Germany! In fact, we are still seeing the direct results of these faithful people all over the world... just because they answered God's call hundreds of years ago. These youth answered the call to a short-term missions trip to Poland, so they, too, experienced God's saving grace begin to truly change a people. The local church, which had only about 20 adults, has several more, plus a growing children's ministry. A whole new generation of people is being reached! A weekly children's ministry exists that wasn't there before! Praise God!

It goes without saying that we took another team in the summer of 2006, and are continuing to maintain contact with the church, as well as pray for them. But Youth Alive is about much more than just missions. Ministering to and with 30 churches, 22 of which have active youth ministries, we also host retreats and drama camps, plus we encourage and support the local youth groups and leaders in any way we can, offering ministry training, personal prayer and counsel, and even sometimes going personally to minister at the various youth meetings. And this year, we're believing God for an increase in the apostolic, praying to see the current youth groups strengthened mightily, and more youth groups started. It is our prayer that every single church in the district will have an active youth ministry!

Our vision to disciple young people who will in turn disciple others can be summed up in four short "steps": **S**EEK HIS FACE, **G**ET **T**RAINED, **E**VANGELIZE THE WORLD, AND **P**RACTICE OUR FAITH (the acrostic works in German too!). And that is what we experienced with our first class of StEP International students. It was ten of the most intense months of all our lives... but it was worth it! We began with a six-month hands-on lecture phase, focusing on biblical studies, ministry skills, language acquisition, and even life-skills, seeking to deepen and better understand our relationship with God, ourselves and our fellow man. During this time, the students also served in the youth, children's and worship ministries here in our local church, and ministered with us at several Youth Alive events.

Taking what they had learned during the first six months, we left for Suriname, South America for a seven week missions trip. We had an amazing time. Different from our normal "typical" outreaches with dramas, testimonies, preaching and praying, we set a longer term pace with teaching and preaching, and two trips into the jungle. We also lead a drama camp, and prayed personally for several hundred people. We saw people saved, encouraged, delivered and healed! One highlight was the opportunity to minister disaster relief first hand. On our first trip



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into the jungle, we arrived the same day that a flood did, the worst in over 50 years. We were the only white people going up the river while all the tourists and non-residents were fleeing. That fact alone opened



the door for us to pray for many people in two of the hardest hit villages, both of which would have normally not been open to receiving us. On our second trip into the jungle, we were able to take much needed supplies purchased with money donated by German churches and bring hope back onto the river. After Suriname, the students continued serving in the local church, and helped lead the mission trip to Poland.

We ended the school year in September with two of our students staying on for a second year to help us with the local ministry and to begin preparation for the next school year which starts in November of 2007.

STEP International is a missions and ministry discipleship training center focused on seeing the truths of the Bible lived out in every day life. It's practical! It's real! We pray it makes a difference in our lives and in the lives of people we meet! But, best of all, it draws us closer to the One who loves us most - Jesus! What a blessing to be able to serve God! **Cont...**

FROM THE EDITOR

I trust that this year finds you rich in God's grace and faith to conquer all the challenges that confront you and family on a daily basis.

This month I take you to Germany and give you an update on Joe and Shelli Sellars' challenging mission work there. They bring the Gospel to a new generation, then they train and equip them to go out into the world as salt and light and bring others to Christ. In the seven and a half years they have been there, they have experienced many exhilarating moments, but also tough times with much spiritual warfare, hostilities from an atheist community, and a real faith walk in trusting God for their daily bread. The Sellars have passion and conviction for what they do, which you capture when you read their report. They are good communicators, so I have asked them to express their hearts in their own words.

The Sellars are in need of broadening their base of financial support. Germany is an expensive country to live in, and with the dwindling value of the US dollar in relations to the Euro, the cost of living keeps rising sharply. Would you consider making a one time gift or a monthly pledge to help them and their ministry? If so, please write on the memo of your gift **8336 German Worker. Please pray for them and their two children Saterra and Jayden, that God will continue to give them grace, wisdom, and strength**

Cont...

Germany: Reaching, Equipping, Sending

Glaubenszentrum Pirmasens is our church home here in Germany. In addition to preaching, serving on the worship team, supporting the youth ministry, offering drama training and simply doing whatever else we can do to help the national leadership, we will soon be starting a student-led cell group ministry, including implementing a "post-modern" monthly worship service. There is such an incredible need in the youth of this city! Most have lost all faith in the local church to provide anything practical for their lives today, but we pray that we will nevertheless see more teens embrace the truth of Jesus and rise up as godly leaders who will truly take responsibility for their generation.

We have seen significant growth in our church, and have stood in awe as we watched several prayer requests for our city being answered, the most noticeable of which are unity among believers and employment opportunities (Pirmasens has the highest unemployment rate in Germany!). An amazing Evangelical Alliance work has really flourished here, bringing together even some of the "state churches" with several of the "free churches" for outreaches, prayer and genuine friendship. This week, eight churches from seven denominations are praying nightly together!!! Now that's a miracle!! Also, we are seeing God answering prayer in the business world as well.



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