



Schönbrunn Palace (Schloss Schönbrunn)

Vienna Tidbits:

Austria is a member of the UN, but it is also part of the Schengen Agreement. It does not have any border controls with other countries that are part of the Schengen. 31 countries have signed the agreement so one could travel from Italy to Lithuania without stopping.

Prayer Requests:

Hensal: Prayer for new relationships with Austrian Families
Rusher: Prayer for an impact in Vienna
Lockwoods: Prayer that Jesus will be shown through acts of service
Haskew: Prayer for continuing opportunities to speak about faith

February 29, 2008

Volume II, Issue II

www.viennateam.org

Vienna Team Newsletter

FAITH: WALKING THROUGH OPEN DOORS

For the month of February each family will share an aspect of how God is using them in specific situations to further the Gospel.

- **HENSALS**

Since September Kim and I have been advancing through the language program at DeutschAkademie. Kim recently graduated from the basic to the intermediate level, and I have completed their program. I am taking the corresponding upper-level German exam that tests my competency in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing, and speaking. We thank God for our progress in learning and communicating in German.

Through the Inzersdorf congregation here, God has presented a variety of opportunities for both service and encouragement. There is a new youth center in Vienna and we helped assemble newly-purchased furniture, hang curtain rods, and mount shelves. About a month ago, I was asked to preach for the Inzersdorf congregation, and I recently shared some thoughts from Colossians in preparation for communion.

God has also blessed us through meaningful friendships with people living in our area of the city. We have developed a good friendship with an Austrian family who has children similar in age to ours. The wife of this family has helped Kim in countless ways: explaining the Austrian culture and helping her learn the language,

giving her a German cook book, cooking meals, inviting us into their home, and so much more. The husband of this family has also invested time and effort in me by helping improve my German as we discuss the Gospel of Luke together. The kindness and generosity of these friends has been a great encouragement and answer to prayer.

Our prayer continues to be that God will use our language acquisition, service opportunities, encouragement opportunities, and our friendships to His glory—that many more people in Vienna will come to know Christ and devote their lives to Him.

- **RUSHERS**

Throughout the month of February, Alisha and I have been presented with many new and exciting opportunities for our lives and work here in Vienna. We have both signed up for a language exchange program where we meet with a native German-speaker for an hour. The first half-hour is devoted to speaking in German and the second half-hour devoted to speaking in English. Unfortunately, I've yet to find a language partner, but Alisha has two and both of them are interested in discussing God and spirituality. We both feel that these language exchanges provide Alisha with a great avenue to reach out to new people and she looks forward to each time she is able to meet with her new friends.

Also, throughout the month of February Alisha and I have been examining the ways in which we can become more involved in the life of our new city. We are looking for

opportunities that will allow us to not only make contact with the Viennese people, but will also place us in a position to make a profound impact upon the fabric of the city.

Particularly since the fall of the Iron Curtain, human trafficking has been a serious issue for women of eastern European countries. Because Vienna rests in the geographical heart of continental Europe, prostitution and human trafficking have been hotly debated issues among Vienna's citizens and politicians as many trafficked persons either end up here or stay here for a short period before being moved to another city. Indeed, it was this month in Vienna that the United Nations held a three-day conference called "The Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking". We were unable to attend the conference, but we do have a lot of its literature and research; we are working to familiarize ourselves with this issue and how it impacts Vienna. This opportunity is unique, we believe, because we can not only help stop a tremendous evil, but we can also show the Viennese people the tremendous, positive impact Jesus and His followers make upon a society.

• **LOCKWOODS**

Recently, I was visiting with our neighbors down the street. It felt good to comfortably engage in a German conversation as we walked to the bus stop. I have always found these neighbors unusually friendly: they always smile, greet us, and ask how everything is going. I didn't fully understand why they were so friendly until they reminded me of an event that occurred shortly after we moved into our apartment last August.

I was walking by their metal recycling business one day while they were trying to move a trailer of material into their driveway. Normally, they simply back the trailer through the gate while it is still attached to their car, but on this day there was no room to maneuver, so they were doing it by hand. I walked by and could see that they were having quite a bit of difficulty, so I offered to help. We quickly managed to get the trailer over the curb and through the gate. They said thank you and I went on my way not thinking much more about it.

Now, six months later, they brought up the event and said they knew that I wasn't from around here because most

people wouldn't offer to help them. I was thankful that even such a small act of service could make an impact, and I was thankful for an open door to continue speaking with them about my life. I hope to share with them further that I am willing to help people not because of where I come from but because of the One I serve. ~ Lockwood

• **HASKEWS**

David said "I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side." I wonder if he ever tried to learn a new language? February has been a month of overcoming fears. *First*, in January I decided it was time to become more involved in German worship at Inzerdorf and begin to expand my German Bible/Religion vocabulary as well. So with some trepidation I asked to be added to the worship assignment schedule. This resulted immediately in several prayer assignments (the first in February) and a communion assignment in a few months. *Second*, due to high demand, I had to switch my German class time from 9 a.m. to noon. This was not just a change in time but also in teacher and classmates. It is amazing how we cling to anything familiar in the face of difficulty. I was very fearful of this class because I did not know any of the classmates or teacher. Would my previous German knowledge be sufficient or would I be laughed out of the class? I began to ask, "Why so many changes? Why bring these fears upon myself?" Several comfortable options were available for these situations: wait till I know more German before trying to pray and take a month off of German so I could go at 9. As in every situation if we turn our back to fear and rely on our faith, God's will, will be seen. This month I have had the opportunity to speak about my faith and work in Vienna to this German class more than any other up to this point. As a matter of fact, several have expressed interest in hearing me speak when I have a role in the worship service at Inzersdorf. Coincidence? David finishes Psalm chapter 3 with "From the Lord comes deliverance. May your blessing be on your people."