



Schönbrunn Palace (Schloss Schönbrunn)

Vienna Tidbits:

Almost 30,000 people will take part in the VCM (Vienna City Marathon) this year. This is Austria's biggest sporting event with over 70 countries participating this year. Over 250,000 spectators will come out to watch these men and women give it there all as they run 42k to the finish.

Prayer Requests:

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

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Vienna Team Newsletter

REFLECT, REEVALUATE, REJOICE

Strategy and Goals

In 2004, the four families of our mission team came together with a shared desire to expand the kingdom of God, and even during those early stages we recognized the benefit of having a team retreat during which we could spend time planning, studying, and worshipping. During the last weekend in March, we caravanned to Schwarzwaldeckhaus—a large cabin in the Austrian Alps—and held our first team retreat since moving to Vienna. Our goals for this retreat included several tasks: deepening and furthering our evangelistic strategy, setting specific benchmarks for the immediate future, and spending time in worship and Bible study.

To help guide our discussions concerning evangelistic strategy, we watched some videos of a church planting workshop conducted by David Watson, a missionary with more than 20 years of experience. David Watson urges missionaries to conduct evangelism that leads not to a single church plant but to church planting movements. Throughout his videos, Watson shares his church planting methodologies, based upon his own experiences as a missionary, which he feels are necessary in order to initiate a church planting movement. While some of what he said was not in any way new or groundbreaking to us, there were many things that challenged our established ideas of

evangelism. One thing I found particularly challenging was to not make any assumptions about people's definition of a Christian. We naively assume that our definition for "Christian" is the same as everyone else's and this is not always the case. We intend to continue studying and talking about David Watson's methodologies, as well as those of other missionaries, as we look to be as effective as possible in planting the church in Vienna.

We also spent time setting specific goals. We outlined goals we'd like to accomplish within the next 3 months and within the next 6 months. Based on these goals, we are able to draw a "roadmap" from where we are currently at to where we want to be. The main goals for the next three months include, the completion of intensive language study, the beginning of a team worship service in German, and developing more and better contacts among our Austrian friends and acquaintances. The goals for the next six months are incomplete at this time as they are largely based upon what we accomplish over the next three months. Still, we do have some generic goals in mind to help guide our direction as a mission team.

The retreat did not answer all our questions about the future, but it provided us with a great step forward in stretching our thoughts and pushing us to examine our plans for the next few months. ~ Brian and Jake

“Let the children come to me...”

Remember back to times you spent at a special place where life seemed to stand still for a little while—where you enjoyed the beauty and peacefulness of God’s creation, the company of people close to you, the excitement of the unfamiliar, and a special connection with God all at the same time. Our retreat at Schwarzwaldckhaus provided that atmosphere, and the kids had a blast! Kim and Amanda planned fun activities and interesting Bible stories for the kids. God provided the snow. The adults played the role of Bible storytellers and actors in the stories.

From the outset we wanted the retreat to be something meaningful not only for the adults but also for our children. The balance of playtime and prayer time, sledding and singing and eating and acting worked well. Outside in the snow

we built a massive snowman, sledged down the hills, made snow angels, buried each other in the snow, and had



Abby and Caleb enjoying being pigs!

snowball fights. Hot chocolate followed by a great meal were the rewards for a hard day’s play in the snow.

While the time outside with the kids was memorable, our time together inside lead us to our powerful and merciful Creator. Through devotionals and Bible stories, we all tried to create an environment where the children could and would come to Jesus (Luke 18:16). Not only did they enjoy choosing their favorite children’s songs, but the kids also will never forget the stories of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and the prodigal son (with pink pig noses). Since the retreat, the story of God’s deliverance of his faithful servants from the wrath of King Nebuchadnezzar and the fiery furnace has been requested and retold many times over. I believe our children learned that God is the one, true, powerful God who can deliver us from any situation, but that regardless of the outcome we must serve Him wholeheartedly all the same. ~ Josh



An intense session on goal setting!

Times of Devotion

Living as a missionary in Vienna, it is easy to slip into a rut of making the church (and church planting) little more than a “nuts-and-bolts” type of discussion. When planting the church is your job, it’s not difficult to begin thinking about what is necessary in order to accomplish the task and what steps are required to be successful at your job. This type of thinking isn’t by any means bad, but it is easy to focus on the nuts and bolts of a church service or Bible study and forget about worshipping the Father in spirit and truth. During our team retreat I was able to set aside questions such as “Is this appropriate for the Austrian cultural context?” and refocus upon what is truly important. Our team held several devotions throughout our retreat through which we encouraged each other and offered praise to God. Not only did these times of worship help to rejuvenate me personally, I was also reminded of what a blessing it is to gather with brothers and sisters and worship the creator God. ~ Brian



Jake making sure to keep a close eye on the kids!

“We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.” ~ Colossians 1:28-29