



Belvedere Palace (Schloss Belvedere)

Vienna Tidbits:

This month Austria voted for the 183 seats in the National Council. This is done by a nationwide popular vote every four years. Five political parties won seats in the National Council. It was considered quite a shakeup as the two main parties both lost significant seats.

Prayer Requests:

Empower us to fulfill the task we have been given

Current and new contacts

Praise—Jackson Calhoun is doing better!
www.jacksoncalhoun.com

Darla King (Kari's Mom)
She will find a job.

September 30, 2008

Volume II, Issue IX

www.viennateam.org

Vienna Team Newsletter

STRATEGY

Though living in Vienna is filled with its own set of unique challenges and struggles, each member of our team is excited for what God is doing through our lives. We are proudly moving forward in our service to Him as we progress in our evangelistic strategy to reach the people living in this city. God is blessing us with strong relationships with our friends and he is constantly blessing us with new friends and contacts.

We feel that we are really beginning to gain some traction in our efforts and look forward with anticipation to all of the things developing before us.

Mission Statement

An integral part of strategy is a continual evaluation of what is being accomplished; Is it working? How are we moving forward? As we asked ourselves this question (as a team) we found that our team has plenty of motivation for ministry but we did not have a concise way to describe our mission in Vienna. We had goals but no direction, plans but no reason, ideas but no consistency. What we needed was a mission statement—a statement that the team could take ownership of, that would become a part of the team culture. With that in mind we embarked on discovering a team mission statement—a statement that would encompass our ministry in Vienna.

“Connecting the people of Vienna to the story of Christ through service and love with a community of hope, purpose, and redemption.” We inaugurated our mission statement with a devotional in the park with singing and praying. Please continue to pray for us as we encompass this mission and strive to fulfill it in Vienna.

Kids Class

One thing to which we are giving special attention is the establishment of a solid children's ministry. One of the challenges of a home-based ministry is knowing what is appropriate for a children's program and how to implement it. These challenges include issues like holding a children's class in an area not designed for a children's class (like a bedroom or basement) and how to appropriately teach the Bible to children of different age groups. Obviously, there is a lot of trial and error that occurs, but in October we will begin a program that we believe will be very effective in addressing the challenges of a children's ministry in a home setting. Ira has designed and built a puppet stage that is light and easily transportable so that moving the stage from one house to another may occur relatively painlessly, and friends from the States have donated some puppets for our use. Also, we will begin a program called "Stickers through the Bible" in which young children learn the Bible stories and then are given stickers with characters (such as a whale

for the story of Jonah) from the stories to place over the text in their Bibles. We will keep you updated on the further development of our children's program, and we ask for your prayers that God will use this to bless the children living in Vienna.

German Presence

Two aspects of our strategy that have recently taken on a greater significance are acquiring office space and developing a German presence/organization. Over the past 14 months we have worked from our own homes, and during that time in extensive language training this arrangement made sense and caused few inconveniences. Now that we spend time together as a team on a more regular basis and need to collaborate more, a shared office location would be a blessing and should advance our mission. Such a permanent presence would allow us to regularly come together for planning, meetings, and potentially Bible studies as well as serving to legitimate our work as Christ's ambassadors. Recently, we have spent time viewing the area around a few potential office spaces, praying for the people living in that area that they will be reached with the Gospel, and asking for God's guidance in making the decision of where to have our office.

On several occasions when meeting someone here in Vienna for the first time and answering the question, "What do you do?" or "Why did you come to Vienna?", we have attempted to describe our involvement with the existing churches of Christ in Vienna and our plan to establish a new church in the part of the city where we live. Most of the time they understand what we are saying (from a linguistic perspective), but they do not always understand the idea of planting a church or what that really means as far as a person's daily work schedule might look. In an effort to legitimate our presence in Vienna as well as associate ourselves with an organization that serves the community and provides us the opportunity to invite others into service with us, we have decided to create an organization with a German name. Over the last few weeks, we have shared the potential names with several of our Austrian friends and language partners to get their feedback. We are grateful for their

participation in our efforts to share the story of Christ.

Please pray for our team as we take these important steps in our strategy—that God will provide the appropriate office space and that a new German presence will better enable us to serve as Jesus did. ~Brian, Jake, Josh

TEAM PRAYER MINISTRY—UPDATE

Last month, we described a specific aspect of our strategy that involves corporate prayer for the relationships and friendships that we have made here in Vienna. Bringing our requests, hopes, and praises to God in a unified and focused manner has blessed our team and our relationships with the people of Vienna. Some of our families have experienced a deepening in relationships with their friends and neighbors. This included more opportunities to share conversation in an informal setting over coffee or a meal. Some neighbors have even offered to setup language exchanges where we can practice German and share more about our lives and our faith. Other team members also received several new opportunities to share in language exchanges with college-age students and young professionals that are interested in improving their English.

These new contacts and opportunities to deepen relationships with existing contacts encourage our team as we continue to seek God's direction and wisdom for the ministry here in Vienna. As always, we are indebted to the supporting cast of friends and family from around the world that join with us in praying for the lost. The collective voice of prayer offered for the work here in Vienna has brought us encouragement during difficult times and opened doors that we had not anticipated. We challenge you to continue praying for our team, the people of Vienna, and your friends and coworkers within your own community. ~Ira