

Jim and Becky White
Missionaries in Germany

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March - April 2018

But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (John 18:39)

Ladies Retreat... Our Ladies Retreat scheduled for the first week in March had to be cancelled due to the flu. The flu seemed to be stronger and more dangerous this winter. Hospitals filled quarantine sections, and some of our members spent as much as two weeks in intensive care. Christians who had spent time in intensive care praised our Lord for His love and present help in times of need.

Easter... Through sermons, lessons, plays and concerts, we can show how much our Lord suffered to purchase our salvation. Children have school vacation for two weeks and Gypsy custom gives us 9 days to work with an Easter theme. This year there seemed to be more thanksgiving by Christians than in previous years.

Fellowship among the local churches is necessary for their growth and protection. Isolation can lead to dangers such as false doctrine and chronic discouragement. Fellowship helps keep the churches active in spiritual activities such as evangelism. We encourage preachers and choirs in the winter season when they are not travelling to minister in other churches. This year the church from Essen, Germany travelled to Nürnberg, a distance of about 300 miles. The members in Nürnberg were excited to be the hosts for the weekend of special services, and the musicians and choirs from Nürnberg and Essen combined to lead the joint congregation in singing unto the Lord. Three men, who serve regularly in Essen, took turns preaching.

Missions vision... For several years the Sinti have had a missions outreach to a group of Roma Gypsies in Romania, sending truckloads of food and supplies and spiritual support by several of the Sinti preachers. This year the churches in Germany have already sent a second truckload of supplies for the mission in Tinca, Romania.



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From the first day of our association with German Sinti, Walter Stevens, an American Gypsy, has been a valuable resource and counsel in our ministry. His visit in April was equal to a homecoming, as his visits to Germany have always been blessed with salvation results and spiritual growth in the churches. This visit is his first since his wife Dolly died and our people found many ways to show their love to him. They provided a room where he could have privacy which was much needed because they tried to feed him every hour! When he left us, he flew to Romania just in time to meet the second container sent by the German churches.

In April, just before Brother Stevens' visit, Missionary T.J. Tilley and Brother Cberry from Kenya, Africa, visited the churches in Nürnberg and Bayreuth, sharing Brother Cberry's desire to reach "his people" with the gospel. This was very helpful in that our people immediately saw the similarities in that missions work to the vision of the Sinti in missions. This was very beneficial in helping the Sinti develop a world-wide missions vision, and there was a thanksgiving for those who see the preaching of the gospel as the premiere ministry of the local church.

Prayer Requests...

1. Thank you for your prayers for our health!
2. Upcoming large annual tent meeting – August 10-24 in Germersheim, near several communities with a large population of Sinti who no longer travel (Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Kaiserslautern).
3. Grandsons on the way –
Our daughter Mary and husband Roy in August in Oklahoma
Our daughter Carrie and husband Matt in September in Germany
4. The church in Würzburg is presently challenged by the loss of their building and has not found another physical location. It is important for the development of the church and its leadership for the Sinti themselves to resolve this problem.
5. Please keep Bruce, our son and co-worker in the Sinti ministry, his family and the ministry in Würzburg in your prayers! Even during a furlough, the challenges in ministry are always present, but Bruce needs to raise more financial support and, after the important summer tent meetings, will be taking a U.S. furlough. Bruce recently had knee surgery and, while recovering, is unable to drive or work in his German secular job. The doctor has assured them that Bruce's leg will be sufficiently healed to make the flight by that time. Their plan is to fly to the USA on September 11, 2018, and they have purchased tickets. It is always difficult for one with a critical leadership role in ministry to take a furlough, and Bruce is the leader in the Bible Institute and 2 significant Sinti congregations (Würzburg and Kirkl). We ask prayer for Bruce and his family while they travel and for the continued success of the works under his leadership during their furlough. Please pray for the men of the church to become stronger in this time.

If you wish for Bruce and Joanna to present their ministry in your church, you may contact them through us or at wsharvest@aol.com.

Thank you for your faithful support!

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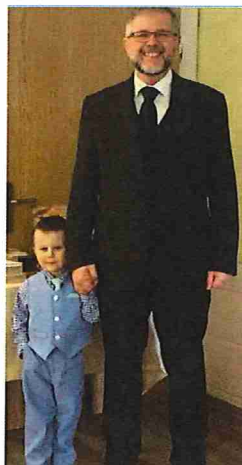
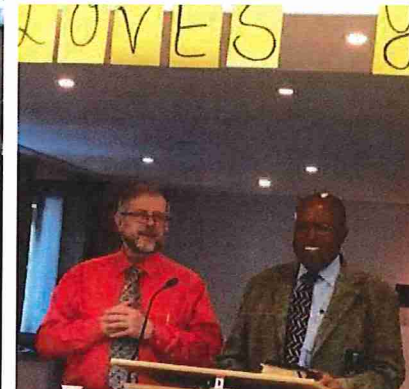
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January – February 2018

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First 2018 Salvation... On January 10th Becky and I won our first soul for Christ during a visit in the home of Matscho, a young married man with one son. In the last four years, Matscho has stopped smoking, drinking alcohol, and drugs through strong discipline. He enjoyed coming to a church where many of his cousins attend but failed to see his need for salvation. During our visit, he recognized his lost condition and called on our Lord for salvation. The church in Bayreuth has prayed for his salvation since last August. Everyone has reason to rejoice!

German Holidays... We have three holidays with school vacation in the first months of each year: Fasching, Easter, and Pentecost. Over the last 700 years the Sinti in Germany have adopted these holidays into their yearly schedules. We utilize this time to reach our families before they begin the yearly travels.

Fasching actually begins in Bavaria and parts of Austria on November 11 at 11 minutes after 11am; however, most celebrations do not begin until New Year's Eve. They continue until midnight on Tuesday when Ash Wednesday/Lent begins. "Fasching" (similar to Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans) gives people a time to sin, and the biggest parties, balls, and parades are held the last five days of Fasching. By giving into the cravings of the flesh, people indulge their hedonism. We teach and preach against this practice, and our churches have no activities that relate to Fasching.

Lent (*46 days before Easter which would be 40 days of fasting excluding Sundays*) is a time of fasting for many in Germany to show mourning and repentance to God for the "sins" committed during Fasching. With their activities, they are in danger of being deceived through "doctrines of devils." If "fasting" is practiced as atoning for one's sins, this is "deception," so we do not practice Lent! During this time, we preach much about salvation by grace through faith.

Our Christian Alternatives...

Our Family Retreat begins on Thursday after Lent begins. Children are free from school, so most families have time to attend. We have three meals a day, and at 2pm, we serve coffee and cake (we do not fast on purpose). Our Lord blessed and answered prayer. This year we had more attendees than rooms available. Older couples helped us by staying in nearby hotels. Some come to the retreat because they want to get closer to the Lord, some just for fellowship with their family, and we pray for our Lord to reach everyone. This year was special in that there were almost no discipline problems. There were no visits from the police and no one had to be asked to leave. Becky and I worked with the children so that all the parents could attend classes and sermons. Counseling appointments were between classes, and we were always busy. Marriages were helped, family fights were ended, and most of us enjoyed a closer walk with the Lord at the end of the retreat.

Married Couples Banquet is a celebration in which a Bible principle related to marriage is taught. Three husbands who attended have not yet made a public decision for Christ, so we

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gladly changed the program to make more room for the Gospel. These men are “good



husbands” and, although they do not hinder their families from attending church, they have never shown an interest in the Gospel or the church. Pray with us as we draw in the net.

Illness... attacked our Churches after Christmas. We were shocked at the number of people who had to be hospitalized this year due to flu, pneumonia and depression. A very aggressive type of flu required many to be quarantined. Wela went to the doctor with back pain. She had pneumonia and spent 10 days in ICU and another two weeks in quarantine to avoid contact with anyone who may have had the flu. Gitano went to the doctor thinking he had a cold. He was diagnosed with pneumonia and spent 14 days in intensive care. The Churches stayed in prayer for all our sick, and our Lord gave us grace. As I write this letter, we have no one sick with colds, flu or pneumonia, and those with depression have been discharged.



Our New Granddaughter... Naomi Rose White (Sam and Julie’s daughter) was born on February 27th. She was born in her 34th week and, with God’s grace, she overcame all her physical problems and is now home. Thank you for your prayers.

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