

Jim and Becky White
Missionaries in Germany

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January – February - March 2021

This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)

As revealed in world news, Germany has been one of the most aggressive nations in responding to the coronavirus pandemic, placing a number of rigid restrictions on gatherings, travel, and even leaving your house for a walk. In addition to other severe restrictions, Germany has imposed shutdowns which include limitations on gatherings and curfews, German law enforcement enforces the restrictions.

Although our congregations were enthusiastic and supportive of the online meetings that we were compelled to move to during the shutdowns, with subsequent waves, online meetings have not been a good alternative for some of our congregations. We noticed in the second wave that the level of participation was falling off. We began to hear that “Live Stream has outlived its novelty” and “Zoom meeting reminds us that we are locked down”. The lack of personal contact increased the fear and depression levels among the Gypsy believers.

For these reasons we continued to have church services in Bayreuth as much as was permitted by the German government. Although the number of active covid cases in the region rose to some of the highest in Germany, causing one of the hospitals in Bayreuth to close for over two weeks, no one in the congregation became sick.

For our age group, government restrictions prevented us from leaving the house except to go to doctors or hospitals. To continue to have church services, we established a policy for Bruce to take over all of the church services in Bayreuth whenever the infection rate rises to more than 200 per 100,000. Since the Sinti culture would consider it shameful for Bruce to allow his father to be in a dangerous situation, this is viewed favorably by the Gypsy congregations.

Our Lord has led us to follow these restrictions which has resulted in more interest in the Gospel!

We have now moved into the third Corona wave. Although the Sinti have had many deaths during the pandemic, they were not all due to Covid infections. Cancer, heart disease and other terminal illnesses have taken some of our people. Strict pandemic rules requiring six feet distancing and restrictions on travel have limited the number of people who could attend the funerals. In normal times, Sinti would travel from all across Germany to attend a funeral of a relative or someone they respect. Because the Sinti are a close-knit family people, restrictions on this aspect of life are especially onerous and have caused much harm.

We plan to celebrate the end of the lockdown with a baptismal service in Bayreuth. Last year, because of covid restrictions, although we were blessed with salvations,

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we had very few baptisms. As soon as the contact restrictions are lifted, we will be baptizing all those who have confessed Jesus as Savior.

The Third Corona Wave...A new Preaching Station...Our Lord has opened a door for us in Nürnberg. A believer, who is going to be out of the country for one year, offered us the use of his house for outreach purposes. We are limited by the government to ten people per meeting (third wave rules) and German officials are strictly monitoring all gatherings. At present, seven men are meeting on Wednesday for prayer. Our goal is to start a Saturday preaching service in addition to the weekly prayer meeting. This will allow us to reach an additional ten people at this preaching station that God has provided.

Prayer Updates:

In a previous prayer letter, we told the story of Heinz, who was recently saved at 81 after having become blind as a result of a bomb explosion of his home during World War II when he was 4 years old. This photo taken on the day of his salvation shows his joy at becoming a believer in Jesus Christ.



- Continued protection from Covid-19 for us and the congregations
- We are in a third lock-down; this one is scheduled to go until January 10th
- Local tent meetings this summer – we are restricted to 100 people
- Camp grounds prayer meetings and preaching services
- For Joanna's dad and grandma (and Joanna)
- For Jim's mom

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