



**PEOPLE TO PEOPLE
INTERNATIONAL**

- Reaching out to a hurting world -

March 2015

News Bulletin

A missions update from People to People International



Newsletters

Youth playing string instruments in the service in Tinca, Romania.

Greetings in Jesus' name!

The first month of spring is here, it is a fantastic feeling. Finally, we are headed towards more daylight in our part of the world. Part of this newsletter is written while on the road. I am planning for two upcoming trips in April and June. I will be bringing teams to Romania and Moldova. In Romania the team will be helping in various projects at Caminul Felix. The needs are great and it is with united efforts that we can accomplish so much more. In Moldova we will be doing evangelization, visiting schools, handing out food parcels and participating in services. This year will be intense when it comes to travel, which is both inspiring and fun, but also involves a lot of work. We will probably get back to this later on in the spring and summer.

By way of introduction we also would like to express our deepest appreciation for all that you do for us personally and for the ministry. Thank you for your prayers and financial support. We are very thankful for both of these "services", which enable the work to continue. Many people are suffering and live a hard life. By the help they receive from our ministry, it makes life a little easier.

Don't be afraid, fear not!

In this newsletter I would like to share a few thoughts that recently I have been meditating on. And some time ago I also listened to a message about fear and anxiety that also ministered to me. The Bible and the teachings of Jesus are full of references and teaching concerning fear and anxiety. In Jesus' teaching it is a central and frequent command:

Don't be afraid! There are no less than 366 Bible verses that encourage us not to be afraid or fear (can differ depending on the translation or paraphrase). Fantastic, one verse for each day! It is also the most common injunction in the Bible. In one of these Bible verses from Mark 6, Jesus is coming walking on the water and the disciple's became afraid. But Jesus explicitly tells them not to be afraid. We read:

"Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I don't be afraid." Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed".

This invitation is addressed to us and his contemporaries that we are not to be afraid, feel anxiety or fear. But we all know, it is easier said than done. The characteristic of these feelings is that they often have to do with things that have happened or things that may happen in the future, not the present. We are worried about things we cannot do anything about or influence. A lot of time and effort are spent unnecessarily; it becomes an imaginary worry, a figment. Worry has very

little to with the present. Therefore, most of the things we worry about very, very seldom happen. There are studies that show that only a small percentage of what we fear or worry about really will happen. I will use an example from my life. In my line of work I fly on a regular basis. Of course, there is an underlying anxiety “what if the plane crashes”. But according to studies, presuming that you fly daily, you have to fly for 19,000 years in order to be exposed to a crash. Still accidents happen. Personally I cannot let this stop me from serving in the calling God has placed on my heart. Instead I plead the blood of Jesus over the plane I fly with. I so to speak hand over the plane into the hands of God and know I can rest assured whatever happens. I don’t need to be afraid or feel anxiety over the fact that the plane actually can go down.

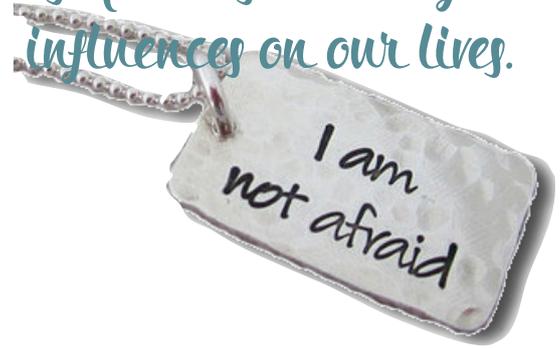
Of course, we can be faced with real, maybe unexpected, sometimes life-threatening situations which can cause much and immediate worry – even fear. But our worry and anxiety can sometimes be imaginary. Regardless, these emotional states can create far-reaching consequences and negative influences on our lives. They hold us back and limit us simply because we don’t dare to confront our fears or the things we are afraid of.

What can we do about it? Maybe we have to ask ourselves if there is a real reason as to why we feel the way we feel. Are they real or is it an imaginary feeling? For sure it may be for a legitimate reason that we sometimes feel anxiety or fear! What is there in your life that you can connect to those feelings? Both fear and anxiety are an inner emotional state that can prevent us from doing what we need to do, both in life and in the Kingdom of God. Sometimes they are connected to an irrational way of thinking and acting. In fear of what might happen, we refrain from continuing. We are held back instead of letting God care and have control over our whole life.

We also have to realize that we are born with an emotional life. It is something that God has placed in us. Our emotions are what ultimately make us human beings. But we cannot always let our feelings have their way and rule over our lives and existence, nor over our faith. Feelings such as fear, anxiety, sorrow, shame, anger, disgust, bitterness and jealousy are inherent in every human being. But sometimes one of those feelings takes over and becomes more dominant in our lives. Our emotions can shoot our life to shreds, and cause our boat to capsize. We so to speak, fall prey to our own feelings. Sometimes we end up in severe conditions such as depression or anxiety. If this happens we may have to seek professional help. Along with this I also want to believe that we, through prayer and intercession, will find keys that

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can help us along the way. I strongly believe in the power of prayer and counseling for our recovery. When we share our inner feelings, something happens to us and our inner man. One of our well known authors in Sweden said: “*When we bother to tell each other about the existing sinkhole, everything that is not good, the distance is reduced*”. When we dare to speak about what plagues us, soon we will notice that our perspective shifts. It is by not refraining from telling or ignoring our problems that they will disappear. Rather, they will wear us down and reduce us as humans. Instead we will disappear, not our problems! To say it does not feel good makes it actually feel a little better. When we no longer belittle ourselves and dare to approach the pain, *we* will grow, not the pain. Herein lays the perspective shift.

Alternatively, we can turn our attention to someone who needs our help. Herein lies one of life’s paradoxes; the person helping another person, at the same time helps himself. When we dare to approach someone else’s pain, our own pain will not have the same meaning. It can be good and healthy that, for a moment, we do not think about why we feel the way we do and what can be done about it. The Bible is a book for all times in life where we can find answers for everything that concerns this life. The Bible is a rich source to draw from when we wrestle with what makes life difficult to live. To overcome fear and anxiety is also a matter of courage. Courage is to do something about it! Maybe one way to put it, is to say this: “*Courage is doing what we are afraid of, until we are no longer afraid.*”

Fear and anxiety is a state of mind that affects all of us in one way or the other. Areas where God might need to touch us and bring healing. Sometimes we need to get professional help to come to terms with the problem. Regardless what we choose to do, it is good to not let what needs to be exposed remain hidden. When it is brought out into the light, it loses its power over our lives. Whatever you decide to do there will be consequences in your life. There is a way through the difficult times and there is healing to receive, regardless of whether it is through prayer and counsel or both. If this has touched you in a special way, my prayer is that you will find a way through your problems. That God might give you courage to move on. God cares about you regardless of your situation. God bless you!

A short greeting from Pastor Florin Popa

As many of you know we support the work in Tinca, Romania, through Pastor Florin Popa. In Tinca there are two churches where Florin serves as the Pastor. The one mentioned in his greeting is a Roma congregation. At the end of this month I will go to Oradea, Romania, and meet with Florin and other partners with whom we collaborate. Among other things we will talk about the needs among the Roma people in Tinca. For some time we have felt that we would like to help them in some way through Pastor Popa. We have understood that the needs are great so we like to get more information in order for our help to meet the needs in the best way. We will get back to this later on in our newsletters. Now a few words from Florin:

Peace from God

During the past week we have had evangelization on six different occasions in the church in Tinca. It has been a blessed time. Many people from the village came to church these nights. It gave us confidence that we are on the right track with the work of the church. These nights were associated with a lot of work. Each night we had invited different speakers and singers. With the result we see, it was worth all the efforts. I am looking forward seeing you soon when you come to Romania.

Florin Popa, Pastor

A few testimonies from Moldova

It is amazing to see that more and more people are touched by the work the church does in Glodeni. During the past months the Pastor and his wife have seen how people have been touched by the church's work, not least through the social work done by the church. It transforms the people to the core. Jesus 'words about feeding the hungry, give warmth to the frozen and visiting the sick brings blessings. These actions of love have changed people's hearts. Today there is openness to the gospel and the work done by the church. The church is met with respect from both society and the authorities. A closer collaboration with the social authorities has also started. All these efforts are done in order to help the people.

Dear friends,

We thank God for his love and care. Through both of the projects Food parcels and Daily Bread we see how people are drawn to the church. The needy people are hearing the gospel being preached and as a result they are giving their lives to Christ. Recently 20 people experienced the love of God for their material needs which led to confession of their sins and salvation. I am so happy that they now know God and that he knows them. Two of the people who now come to church are siblings Vova and Nastea, 13 and 9 years old. Here are their testimonies:

My name is Vova Chekhov and I live together with my mother, sister and brother. We are three siblings and all of us come to church where we are being fed and encouraged which we lack at home and in school. I remember how it used to be; all of us were hungry. We had hardly any clothes, we often cried and asked ourselves: "Where is God? Why don't you care about us?" I pray that God will forgive me for all those thoughts, because today I know that God loves me and cares for me.



Pictures from the campaign in Tinca, Romania. Many new people came to Church to listen.



Two siblings, Vova to the left and Nastea, top picture, receives help through the food package project.



us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/ptpint>

My name is Nastea Chekhova and I am 9 years old. I have difficulties to express my thoughts, because in my family we never talked with each other. In school I felt abandoned by both teachers and classmates. But one day I heard about the church. Today I am happy and feel very good. I pray that God may bless you and me: thank you for helping me. Today I know that there is someone who cares for me and thinks about me.

Today we are thankful for the work we have in our church and for the support we get from our friends in other countries, including Sweden. This support enables the people in our city to get to know Jesus Christ.

*Brotherly
Igor Lazar, Pastor*

Project of the month

By leaps and bounds, we approach the conference in Poland which will be held in May. The interest for the conference has been on everybody's lips for quite some time. We know it will be a few amazing days together. Most of it has already been said about why we are conducting this conference. Therefore we would like to give voice to some of the participants from the last conference. Piotr, one of the people helping us with the preparations, writes this about the importance of such a conference.

We are very much looking forward to the conference in May. I know it means so much to our pastors and their wives. At our latest pastors' gathering when I mentioned about the conference, everybody applauded eagerly and enthusiastically. To be able to get away for a few days with good fellowship and good teaching is something beyond the ordinary. We still remember the blessings the last conference brought to us. To be able to help organize such a conference is a blessing for me. I would like to use this time to thank our pastors in Poland for the time spent for the Kingdom of God. Many of them are forced to work a secular job besides being the pastor of the church in order to support their family. Therefore a conference like this is so important. Thank you for standing alongside with us in the work.



Piotr & Chrystyna Cieslar

*Piotr Cieslar
Regional Leader
AoG in Poland*

The conference has provided an amazing time for recovery. We have learned so much. We have been reminded about God's grace and that it is possible to overcome any hardship we meet in life. We learned that the marriage is not a contract, it is a spiritual covenant. But the greatest thing was to be a blessing to my husband. I was made aware of the changes we need



Arthur & Justyna Witek

to make in our marriage. We would like to express our deepest thank you to all who made this conference possible. We want to thank the teachers who, through their teaching, made us aware of God's love. This conference has been a great encouragement for us. It was God who brought us here and we have learned so much. Thank you for valuable knowledge conveyed during these days.

Artur & Justyna Witek

We would like to thank you so much for this conference for pastors and their wives. Thank you for the inspiration and encouragement not to give up on our calling. We can hardly wait until the next conference. Even though I am among the oldest pastors, I have always been looking back on these conferences and felt inspired, encouraged, and spiritually renewed to go on in my ministry as a pastor. I wish we could have these conferences more frequently.



Stefan & Teresa Kusnierz

Stefan & Teresa Kusnierz

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. We are well aware of the many things that demand our attention and that the time is not always there to take part in all the information we receive. We hope it has been an inspiring reading and that it has blessed your life. Once again we want to thank you for your prayers and generosity. We know it means a lot to all those who stand as recipients. We pray that God will bless you today and the days to come.

Am Laria Peter Chen

Visit our website

In addition to our periodical Newsbulletin we also have a website filled with additional material. Here you can read about our ongoing projects that we support, watch video clips and read back issues of our newsletters. You also find our brochure and other documents for further reading. There is also interesting historical facts about how this ministry started.



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