



News from Elim Christian Center Poland

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Elim Christian Center.
Ken & Giselle Herweynen

Dear Family and Friends,

Sorry that this letter has taken so long in coming! It's been so long since our last letter that this letter is almost the length of two! It's been great to catch up with some of you through your newsletters and we appreciate hearing from you. We also send our love and our greetings to you all. May this year be one that we all use wisely, seeking more of the Lord and His lovely presence in every day.

We give God glory for all He has done this last year. These last few weeks have been particularly blessed and special for us. It's been a great opportunity to use the Christmas season for the Name of Jesus!

God led the Mission to run 10 programs in the last few weeks, where so many families had the wonderful opportunity to hear about Jesus. God gave us a great Evangelist this year, who presented the Gospel in a powerful way at 3 of these meetings where packages were being given out to families in need. Many parents responded by raising their hands at the invitation in several of the meetings, and many also stayed behind for the coffee afterwards where we could meet them. God used the **Samaritan's Purse Shoeboxes** (and from Wilsek in Germany) to draw in parents and children, giving many the opportunity to hear great challenges from the evangelist to turn their lives to Jesus.



Singing in Various Institutions.



Evangelism to 170 families at Bethel.



Packages for the Needy



Evangelism in town of Wlen.



Shoebboxes for the Handicapped and the Poor.



We also experienced God's hand on the other Christmas programs. God held back the snow from the hills so that we could get to the Institutions that house over 150 elderly, handicapped, or forgotten people. We felt the blessing and the presence of the Lord among us during the programs, while sharing a meal together, reading scriptures, singing, and sharing the Gospel message of Jesus with these dear people. There were many tears and hugs, and the Lord was evident.



Visiting the people in the Institutions.



Enjoying the gifts.



Marila, encouraging these dear people to trust Jesus

We thank the Lord for His evident presence in the other programs as well, at the Hospice, at the Hospital, and at the Children's Home. Later, many families and singles came to the Elim Mission dining room to share in a Christmas meal together with us. There was a sweet feeling of fellowship during this time. We were about 70 in number, and it was a really relaxing and special evening. Our Christmas programs were topped off by a touching presentation from the children in the Church on Christmas Day, and we once again felt the presence of the Lord amongst us.



Abandoned Children, now living at the Children's Home, very thankful for their special gifts.

God provided love-packages for all of the above programs through caring Churches, Chapels and Groups that live on the American military bases in Germany. We are so blessed to see God's love in this.

One story of how God provided for the food-packages this year is worth telling as it so unique! One American lady (Pamela) living on a base in Germany felt led to raise money so that the Mission could give out food packages to the poor this Christmas.

She arranged a 'cake-sale' to be held outside the Post Office on the Military Base. As the sale began, there was a 'package scare' at the Post office, and the place was instantly shut, with all those who were nearby being held. The lady could not understand why the Lord would allow this on the very day that she had planned to raise money for His work.

As it turned out, a man who was passing by the P.O. had also been gathered into this group and was held for the next few hours. As he waited for the time to pass, he became curious about the cake stall. God had placed a Chaplain near him, who was able to explain all about the Mission work at Elim. By the time they were released, the man had decided that he was to donate \$1000 towards the needs of the poor through the Elim Mission! That, along with the sale of the cakes, and one other donation, was enough to make 32 large food packages for the poor, supply 9 tons of much-needed coal for those in need, as well as help out with other needs at the Mission at this time! What amazing and unique things our God does!



Pamela & her team, making food packages.



Some homes in the villages.

Many Camps and visitors came and blessed the Mission grounds this year. The highlight for us in camps every year is still the 6-week Leadership and Discipleship Camp (L & D Camp), where older youth from all over Poland come to be trained in serving the Lord with their whole heart. Our town and our church and Mission benefit so much from this ministry, and we are always refreshed by their presence and the results of this camp. Each year through this, souls are reached for the Lord in our region, and our church people are also trained as they work along side, serving God in the community.

From these past L & D camps, there are now 8 full-time Missionaries serving the Lord, as well as many serving the Lord in some sort of leadership back in their own home churches. What a wonderful thing to see here in Poland!

Vacation Bible Schools. This year we decided to divide VBS into two groups because of growing numbers and the big age differences. It was the first year to try a VBS specifically for the 'youth'. Our church Youth Leaders had lots of fun being involved with this, and it was a great step for them as they took upon themselves the running of it. We felt that separating these age groups was very effective and we hope to try it again this year.



Vacation Bible school (for Children).



Vacation Bible School (for Youth).

Praising the Lord through Song

Each day, 6 bus trips were made into approximately 25 villages surrounding the Mission, as well as other transportation provided by cars and vans. God enabled the hire of a large tent, which could seat up to 500 people. Not only did the Lord bring in hundreds of children and teenagers, but He also brought around 50 parents to attend the VBS this year.

Thank you to those who prayed with us for the VBS this year, and for those who helped towards it. We were blessed that God touched the hearts of Americans in Germany to help cover the expenses of running such a large VBS. It was beautiful to see that the remaining funds that were lacking came as a 'quiet' love-gift from an unknowing Polish man, who humbly said, 'I would like to plant a seed in this VBS'. His envelope contained the *exact* amount, which only the Lord knew was lacking!

Tom and Joy Weeks are the people who led me (Giselle) to the Lord so many years ago through a ministry that they had begun for children through camps and Vacation Bible Schools. The impact that Tom and Joy weeks had in my life through their ministry became the inspiration that God used to begin many ministries to children here in Poland, (the above Vacation Bible School being just one of them). My first

spiritual father, Tom Weeks, has recently gone home to be with his Saviour Jesus. I know that without their ministry, many children (including myself and, in turn those whom are now being reached in Poland) would not have come to know Jesus. We give thanks and glory to God for the life of Tom Weeks, and for his faithful and loving wife Joy. I am challenged and moved by their faithful service and love for the Lord.

The English-School Ministry was held once again on the church's property throughout the year. The L. & D. Camp held an intensive 4-week course during the summer, with around 90 students registered. Each lesson was followed by a Bible Study. Our church is continuing this ministry with year-round, free English lessons, which are held once a week and also followed by a Bible Study.



We are especially pleased by how the Lord is using this type of ministry to draw in also the educated and business people to hear the Gospel (seeing that much of the other work done through the Mission tends to reach out to those who are mostly poor).

Another Mission helper came to join the Elim Mission a few months ago. Justyna came to know the Lord 2 years ago through the English-school Ministry, and has since been baptized. This summer, after attending the 6-week Leadership & Discipleship camp at Elim, she asked if she could serve the Lord through the Elim Mission for the next year. Justyna is a very sweet and dedicated Christian who helps the Mission in secretarial work, with guests, and with many other ministries at the Mission. Her mother, Marysia, came to know the Lord soon after Justyna did, and now comes to Elim 2 days a week to help out with the clothing ministry. We are blessed to have them both serving here.

Our town needed a large fire-truck, and many hospital beds. Roel and his team (our friends in Holland) were able to locate these things and channel them through the Mission to the town. It thrills us to see how the Lord can provide for such needs. Another Dutch group was recently able to bring many food packages,



which the Church could distribute personally. We have also asked the Government to help us find the poorest families in the area, that we may share these packages with them as well. We see God using these events to make known His Work in this town, and build up the trust of the town's leadership towards His church and Mission. The Town Leaders now request the presence of the Church in many important official gatherings. We see how great God is and how He is using these material things to lift up His Name in this town.

A few years ago, our town leadership would not allow us to bring the Evangelism Bus to their large Festivals. But since the Church has been working closer together with the town, we were not only invited by the town leadership to use the Evangelism Bus, but were once again allotted 2 hours on their festival stage, where we were free to present a Christian program. God is so great!



Rejoicing in front of stage.



Two hour program on Festival Stage; songs, skits, testimonies.



Face Painting and Reptiles brought crowds to the Mission Bus; free coffee and a chat opened many doors.

A baby was born in the spring (Nathan Tomasz) to Tomek and Gosia Kulanica. He is a beautiful, happy baby, and is a great joy to his parents, his grandparents (Marian and Malgosia), and to all those at Elim. On 10 October, **Wiktor Zabski married Ania**, a lovely Christian girl from this region. Wiktor has been on the Elim staff for a couple of years doing the Church bus driving, leading a Home group, overseeing the Mobile Evangelism Bus, helping with mission maintenance, etc. Ania has been involved in the Leadership & Discipleship Camp at Elim for several years, first as a participant, then later as a leader. She is completing her studies in Social work. Ania and Wiktor requested to come on staff as a couple after the wedding. We are very grateful to God for this blessing to the Mission work. Please pray for Wiktor and Ania, as they serve the Lord as a couple, and raise support for their service.



Justyna (center).



Ania & Wiktor.



Tomek with Nathan.



Several of our Missionaries have moved to different apartments within the Mission. Among these, Robert and Aneta have moved from the Bethel Church property to live and serve at the Elim Mission. They are now able to help Pawel and Judy with the ministry to guests, and Robert is a good aid to Marian with the maintenance work. Tomek and Gosia have moved from Elim to Bethel, and Tomek has officially become the Church's Youth Pastor. Tomek & Gosia oversee the English School Ministry, as well as much of the church's administration. We feel blessed by the loving hearts ready for service.

The Nativity Project is the sewing project that supports many of our church's needier families. This project is in its 2nd year. It is now sponsoring yet another two families, giving a total of 20 Christian families that are able to live on what the Lord provides by the donations for these Nativity Sets that they make.

These Christian women who sew the Nativity Sets also believed that the Lord was leading them to give a regular amount each month from their sewing to help support our newest Missionary couple. It is so beautiful to see these families who, but for the Nativity project are in great need themselves, giving back to the Lord so kindly.

These families also have chosen to bless many other people in their community with help in different ways, sharing over and above their tithe for the Lord. Widows and the fatherless have received regular help, in and out of Poland. We have seen through this giving that the Lord is maturing His church through this project, giving His people (who were once so reliant on 'hand-outs') His heart and His love for others. We feel very privileged to see this happening.

We are also grateful that through the Nativity Project, support is directly provided for the work of the Church and the Mission, in addition to these families.

For those of you who may be wondering how *you* may become involved in helping with this Nativity Project, please write to me (address listed at the top of the letter) and I will send you photos and give you the details. (We are praying for people to come on board to help out with this.)

We Particularly want to thank those who have given throughout the year so that this Mission could continue to function! Thank you to all of you who have been involved in any small or big way. Thank you to those who have kept this Work in their hearts and felt called to pray, thank you to those who have given of their time, and thank you to those who have given materially. You all are indeed a very important part of this Mission and we are so very grateful! We thank God for each of you.

Herweynen Family News

We now have another addition to our family since Wiktor left to marry a few months ago. Gabriele Woolever is from the States, and is teaching English in Lwowek. She fits well into our family, and the girls in particular adore her, as we all do. Gabriele likes to be involved with the Mission whenever she can, and is also loved by all there.

Richard has finished secondary school now. We are so thankful for the help he has been with the girls' schooling on the days that I have been busy at the Mission. He also gives a hand at the Mission and continues to play the guitar in the Church's music group. We have to get used to the idea that soon he will be leaving too (this April). We try to absorb all we can of him while we can, looking at him when he's not looking, spoiling him a little when we can, and giving him lots of hugs and kisses regularly.

Katie is doing well with her music and her horse. Both Katie and Sarah have to get up before breakfast, and go out into the cold outdoors through the snow to feed their animals. Both girls love being involved with the programs for the sick and elderly, and in the various outreaches. We are thankful that it brings them much joy to be involved in the Mission's activities.



(Agata), Sarah & Katie at our Town's festival. Richard on guitar, (center). Katie, visiting the elderly

Ken's mother is not well at the moment, having been diagnosed with cancer. We are thankful that the outlook after surgery is good, and that she is a woman of solid faith and trust in the Lord. She is a godly woman with a great heart for the Lord and for others. Thank you to those who remember to pray for her.

In general, Ken and I are doing well. We are so thankful for the beautiful friends and staff that the Lord has given at the Mission, and in the church. We know that we have been given a privilege to be called to serve our Lord here.

Thank you to all of you who have been so faithful to remember us in your encouragement, your prayers, and through your support. We appreciate this love and faithfulness!

May God bless you each one. Please write us to let us know what is happening in your lives. It makes us feel so much more in touch with those we love. **Love from Ken, Giselle and family**

Praise God for His blessings over all the Summer and Christmas outreach programs.

Pray for the Gospel to change the lives of those that have now heard and responded.

Praise God for His provisioning for this last year's programs, and for the other Mission work.

Praise God for the new Staff members. Pray for them.

Pray for the weekly outreach to the Hospice, to the various Institutions, in the English School, etc.