

CROSS CURRENT

FALL 2013

The Smith family ministry newsletter



Cross-current: 1.) a current that flows across another current. 2.) a conflicting movement, tendency or inclination.

Why cross-current? Because the gospel of Jesus Christ which brings us near to God flows against the direction of the world running away from God. (for we are not of this world).



We praise the Lord for Almir Pehlic who was ordained as a deacon in the Protestant Reformed Church on Sunday December 8th. As a deacon, Almir will assist Pastor Jasmin in our Zagreb church plant as well as begin work in planting a church in Karlovac. Almir is a student who is finishing his bachelor's at the Bible Institute in Zagreb and has been accepted into the M.Div. program at Evangelical Theological Faculty (ETF) in Osijek through whom he will do extension classes.

Almir has a great mind for theology and a big heart for people. He passionately wants to reach people for Christ in both Zagreb and in his hometown of Karlovac. Almir attended the **Global Leadership Summit** with Tom in November. He also went with Tom & Ana to a meeting with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (**BGEA**) to discuss the possibility of having an evangelistic festival here in Zagreb in the next two years. Almir and Tom organized evangelism outreaches through films and poetry readings in our church this fall.



Pastor Jasmin Koso along with Bishop Jasmin Milic graduated from the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Osijek this fall earning a PhD and a Bachelors of Divinity, respectively. In addition to leading the Protestant Reformed Church in Croatia, Rev. Dr. Milic also teaches at ETF and also directs their distance learning program. Tom will likely be teaching a class for ETF at their satellite site in Varazdin/Cakovec in the Spring semester.

At the end of November Pastor Jasmin met with Croatia's President Josipovic as part of the Croatian Christian Coalition to discuss the referendum to define marriage as a life-long relationship between one man and one woman. The national vote was held on December 1st and passed! Now this pro-family, biblical definition of marriage will be written into the Croatian constitution. It upset the extremely liberal media and the ruling SDP government politicians.



Mirjana Koso & Ana with Christmas wreathes



Christian Coalition with Pres. Josipovic & Jasmin Koso

At the beginning of October, Tom began holding weekly worship services in English in our church on Sunday evenings. Previously, we had English services once a month. Both foreigners living in Zagreb as well as visitors come to our services. In November, we had guests from Indonesia, Northern Ireland, and the Netherlands. We organized a Reformation Day service on October 31st, which was well attended and a special evening service with Rev. William Jerdan from Chicago who visited us along with his wife, Diane.



Other highlights

- Dr. Milic came to Zagreb and participated in a live round table discussion about defining marriage in a public library
- Ana and Kristina attended the fall “Breakfast for Women” breakfast and took some friends along.
- Ana and Kristina attended a Christian Women in Ministry conference in Brela, Croatia. This conference was for the Balkan region. They met ladies from Bosnia and Slovenia as well as from other parts of Croatia. They made new friends from San Diego, CA who were the official hostesses of the event as well.
- Tom attended a “gypsy” wedding in Kapelna, Croatia, which was officiated by Bishop Milic. The couple are new Christians and are part of a mission outreach in their village. Dr. Milic says for \$6000 dollars, we could buy a house and turn it into a church (this is a prayer matter)



PRAYER REQUESTS

- More open doors to communicate the gospel in Zagreb
- Tom’s ability to speak & understand Croatian better
- For God to provide more new people to our church
- Jasmin & Almir to develop vision, wisdom & maturity as young pastors
- The ETF Cakovec teaching opportunity for Tom to become clear so he can begin preparing for the spring semester.
- Raising money, so Almir can begin his church plant in Karlovac as well as work on his Master’s degree through ETF (\$4000)
- Money to be raised to buy a house in Kapelna (\$6000)
- More financial contributions. Our support has **dropped by 25%** in the past 3 months. Some of our supporters have either lost jobs or have reduced incomes.
- Planning for summer 2014, to visit supporters as well as look at colleges for Kristina and see Katherine and Evelyn.



Tax deductible financial gifts and support may be sent to our agency:

ITEM, Inc.

P.O. Box 31456

St. Louis, MO 63131—0456

Gifts should be made payable to ITEM, but PLEASE DESIGNATE to Tom Smith

The ITEM office may be contacted at 314.-909-7676 or iteminc@att.net



Quanak Thrift Shop Christmas party