

Winckles Family Update

Thanksgiving 2020

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by **prayer** and **supplication** with **thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **just**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is any **excellence**, if there is **anything worthy of praise**, think about these things.*

Philippians 4:6-8



COVID-19, lockdowns, quarantines, cancellations, postponements, hospitalizations, restrictions, unrest, protests, riots, and more. What a year this has been! No one expected when the year began that this is how it would turn out. But there has been no better time to cling to the words that the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Philippi — praying, giving thanks, and thinking about praiseworthy things. We are focusing on these things in our churches and we would like to focus on these things as we review this year with you.

We put up a leafless **Gratitude Tree** at the beginning of November, and asked people to write out their expressions of thankfulness on a leaf and add it to the tree. On the first day of use it gained several leaves. One woman wrote, “I found my church home after many years!”

We hope that through the remaining weeks of this year the tree will become filled with leaves and that the ground below it will be covered as well.

New Opportunities

The ministries of our churches here in Hungary have had to change during these past months. Hungary went into a total lockdown starting in mid-March and which lasted until the end of May. Conferences, retreats, concerts, outreach events, worship services, and other gatherings had to be cancelled or postponed. Since we couldn’t meet together in person, our ministries moved online. We used Zoom, Skype, Facebook Live, and YouTube to connect with our church constituents. During this time we were able to connect with others who have not been part of the church fellowship, but who regularly watched the devotionals and services. *Pray that we would be able to find ways to maintain connections with these people.*

Wesley János
és az első
metodisták



A metodisták története
1703-1860

Another result of the lockdown time was that Larry was able to write, in Hungarian, a 10-part devotional series entitled “John Wesley and the First Methodists.” This has been well received not only in our churches but also in the Hungarian Methodist churches. Larry is currently in the process of writing a follow-up series that will be titled “B. T. Roberts and the Early Free Methodists.” The hope is that these two series will not only provide devotional inspiration but also help answer many frequently asked questions about the church.

The total lockdown was lifted in June and we were able to gather together once again at the Budapest Ministry Center, so from June through September we met outdoors in the garden for our worship services.

In October our worship services moved indoors and some of our regular fall programs restarted, observing social

distancing and requiring masks. But with the recent resurgence of the virus, as of November 11 the lockdown has been reinstated. We are thankful for the faithfulness of our leaders during these challenging times. *Pray that we would be able to find more ways to connect with people, especially retirees, who have been isolated at home for months and are experiencing loneliness and depression.*



God’s Timing for Family Time

Our summer travel plans changed frequently due to COVID-19 cancellations, but we eventually traveled to the States in mid-August, enduring a 2-week quarantine that ended just prior to the birth of our newest grandson, Harvey. He joins big sister Goldie and big brother William and his parents, Andrew and Christy in Adrian, Michigan. We rejoice that we could be with them during this time, as well as visit Peter and his fiancée in Wisconsin! Larry was also able to make a quick trip out to North Dakota for his mother’s 90th birthday, but because of COVID-19 concerns the celebration had to take place through a window. Katie’s mom was hospitalized during

our visit, and Katie was able to offer support for both her mom and dad during that time. Upon our return to Hungary we had to undergo a 10-day quarantine as well. We are thankful for kind neighbors and colleagues who help supply us with daily needs during the quarantine period. *Pray that we will be able to support and encourage our family members from afar during these difficult times.*

Our Colleagues in Budapest

Pastor Péter now serves as the pastor of the Budapest church and continues as the administrator of the Bread of Life Foundation. He seeks out opportunities to connect with people in the community and with the local government. He began growing and giving away house plants throughout the summer months as one means of connecting, and he continues with his music ministry in the church and in the community. Péter is supported through the Hungary CPD fund. Donations to this fund may be made at <https://give.fmcusa.org/hungary> *Pray that Péter would be able to balance the many competing demands on his life, ministry, and family.*



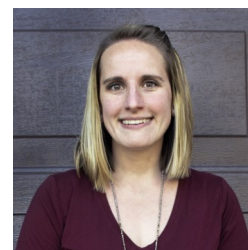
Pastor Zsuzsa completed her degree in social work and is now working on completing her degree in theology. In addition to this she is serving as assistant pastor in the Budapest church and coordinating the Set Free Movement in Hungary. Restricted access to the children's homes and shelters, both in Budapest and in Győr, curtailed regular Set Free programs at those locations. The restrictions have recently been lifted slightly, so limited contact has been resumed. Zsuzsa is supported through gifts made to the Hungary Set Free Coordinator EMP. Donations may be made at <https://give.fmcusa.org/donation/hungary-set-free-coordinator> *Pray that additional doors of ministry would open up for Zsuzsa and the Set Free ministries in the coming year.*

Other Prayer Opportunities

The three biggest challenges that we have faced this year are with our family, personnel, finances.

Family: Our aging parents have come to the point where they need extra care. Larry's mom is in a nursing home and has dementia, Katie's mom has recently had hip surgery and is in rehabilitation. Both are 90 years old. *Pray that we might have wisdom as we try to encourage, counsel, and support them from afar.*

Personnel: Erin Kingsley from Spring Arbor, Michigan was to have joined us this fall on a two-year mission assignment. But the pandemic has made it difficult for her to connect with churches and individuals to gather ministry partners. We are thankful that she hasn't become discouraged and given up hope. Contributions to her support may be made to her support account at <https://give.fmcusa.org/donation/df-vihukingsley> *Pray that opportunities would arise for her to speak about her calling and to gain partners in prayer and finance.*



Finances: Contributions to the Hungary Church Planting and Development account (Hungary CPD) are down, partly due to the effect that the coronavirus has had on church giving. The Hungary CPD is what funds the Budapest Ministry Center and allows Pastor Péter and Pastor Zsuzsa to serve. *Pray that funds would come in to allow continued ministries in 2021.*

Our partners

We are grateful for the many people who prayer regularly for us and for the ministries in Hungary. Prayer is essential! We are also grateful for those who partner with us financially, and for those who come and help serve. We look forward to our partnership with you continuing in the coming year. Our support page is <https://give.fmcusa.org/winckles>

May you have a blessed Thanksgiving, a hope-filled Advent season, and a joyous Christmas! May you sense God's presence and guidance each day!



With thankful hearts,

Larry and Katie Winckles

Serving in Europe with Free Methodist World Missions
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Write kwinckles@gmail.com and ask to be added to our weekly prayer email list.