



NEWSLETTER EASTER 2018



*“We have Easter every day, we just celebrate it once a year. “
Martin Luther*

“The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!” - with these phrase people all over the world greet each other during these days. In most Western European countries Easter 2018 is already a past event. We just celebrated it this weekend. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday we will the parents and kids from all three day care centers to celebrate the true reason for Easter and remember what happened about 2000 years ago. The preparations for these celebrations run - the kids learn poems and plays, they repeat the dances and songs they have learned for this special day. And I recognize how fast time goes by. It seems that we just celebrated Christmas together and now it's already Easter! Time just flies, and therefore it's such a joy to have these Easter holidays to calm down and rethink and meditate about the reason of our life, no matter which date we celebrate this occasion. In the following we want to share some moments from the last three months and we want to thank also in the name of all our kids, youngsters, volunteers and workers for your attention, support and help. THANK YOU SO MUCH!



As already mentioned we had three wonderful Christmas celebrations in our centers in January and an amazing gathering in the home for elderly. Anyway the highlight was our first service of the year for all the kids and youngsters regularly attending our program. We all came together to praise God for the new year and ask Him

to bless us in 2018. Thanks to our dear friends from Germany and Luxemburg each child could take a lovely present home, packed in a shoebox showing them that they are valuable and loved. A BIG THANKS TO EVERY GIVER!



Giving is a theme I am thinking of a lot over the last weeks. Giving = showing love. Love can be shown in many different ways and in ministering sick, excluded and disadvantaged people it is essential to speak the "Language of love" this person understands. Dr. Gary Chapman has defined five languages of love which

helped our team many times to find ways to show our kids, youngsters and their relatives that they are valuable and loved: words of affirmation, acts of service or practical help, gifts, spending quality time and physical touch. Especially during the last weeks I found out that visiting a doctor together also might be one love language. Many of our kids and teenagers suffer from physical or psychological problems, which also negatively influence their school performances. Sadly, most of these issues are ignored by their parents, either because the treatment costs money, or they don't have time or they simply do not pay attention.

I was shocked that a 12 year old girl saw a neurologist after many years for the first time, although she is can't say a word without stuttering, is therefore extremely sad, depressed, and tensed up. Fortunately, the mother agreed to have her treated and the girls showed her thankfulness with a big hug and tears running down her cheeks. When I explained her, that she is worthy to be treated, she was sobbing we could barely calm her. We can only imagine what is going on inside this little beautiful girl, but I am thankful that she is now under medical treatment, our speech therapist works with her and she is visiting one of our centers regularly.

With another young lady, who had obvious problems to concentrate and behave properly we also started to investigate. The NMRI showed that she has a brain damage due to hypoxia during the birth process. It took 17 years to find the reason for her difficulties. Now we can

help her to give her the right tasks according to her possibilities and help her to develop her strong points. In our day care center she is well accepted and our workers and volunteers patiently help her to improve her life skills.

These are only two examples of many - situations and circumstances can be changed. Thanks to your financial support we can care not only for the Spirit and the soul, but also for the bodies of our visitors.

Since some time we also provide support for some underprivileged families in the village Petrivka, who's children are still too small to come to our day care center there. These families live in unbelievable poor conditions - the toilets are in the yard, no shower, eight people live in one room, the cook on one small electric hot plate and wash their cloth in a small pot. In the same house we support a young woman and her three year old son. She lives with her boyfriend, who is almost 30 and never had valid documents or a passport. This woman will have her second child in June. Unfortunately, both of them never learned what it means to be a mother or to keep a house clean. They do not know how to live according to a budget or how to apply for certain support. Both came from poor excluded families themselves and now repeat somehow the life of their parents. Now we try in very small steps to help them to learn to improve their living conditions. We accompany them to state and medical institutions and try to widen their perspective. Thanks to humanitarian aid, which we received from Germany we have very good friends in a maternity clinic, so it's already sure that she can have her baby under good conditions, which is especially important due to a chronic disease the mother has.



In the middle of March - during spring holidays - we organized our traditional fair. We have this event every six months where the kids can exchange the points they have collected during the last half year into presents. This was as always a highlight for them and many took skateboards, bicycles, toys and sweets home as a reward

for this hard work. The points they collect every day they visit the day care center. They get them for regular school attendance, doing their homework without complaining, following the rules in the centers and for helping to clean and keep the center in order. To buy all the nice things they can "buy" at the fair is also possible thanks to your support.

Because even in Odessa winter was long this year we still were not able to start the construction work of the wall we will build around the piece of land, where we are going to build our "House of Refuge" in the coming years. In the next newsletter I will tell more about this important and big project. But we want to thank everybody who



already supports this vision and encourages us to go forward in this direction.

In only two months the long summer holidays will start and this is going to be the most intense time for us as always. Right now we are preparing 15 young Ukrainians to start their international voluntary service in other European countries in September. Furthermore, we prepare our big summer camp, some smaller outreaches in Petrovka and Moldova, and our first family camp and of course our trip to Germany with about 40 kids and youngsters at the end of August.

We wish you all a blessed spring and thank you very much for your support!

Slavik and Nicole, with Rebekka and Sarah and all the kids and workers at Living Hope Odessa