



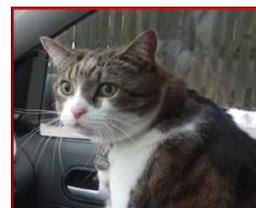
Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2016-17

Dear Friends and Mission Partners,

In this newsletter, we would like to do a short summary of 2016.

One of the things we are grateful to the Lord is for our little apartment that we moved into in October, we just love it and now Obi has a big balcony (which makes him a happy cat).

During the Christmas and new year holiday we took the opportunity to walk around the neighbourhood to get to know it better.



In a new church plant you always have to think about how to build bridges to the local community and how to reach out to new people. In many ways it depends a lot on the people and giftings that are in the core team of the church as much as your target group, which depends then very much on the demographics of the area. We have great gifts with children's ministry in Emmaus Church so it is not surprising that our outreach is going in that direction. And, as Åkersbergas' demographic is very much young families, children's ministry has become one of our major bridges to reaching out.



The children's ministry has been in a build-up since 2015 and in August last year we launched a little children's choir called "the Treasure". Our children's worker Kaisa, who for now is volunteering her time to the church, started this little choir in one of the local neighbourhood areas using the local community hall. The little children's choir has 12 children, which for now is our limit of how many children we can handle in the hall we are renting. We would like to explore this ministry and see how we could use it both to do something for the local community but also to reach out

with the gospel. What we have found out is that there is a lot of untapped potential here for the future.

We recently had our follow up service after Hallåvån, which is an alternative Halloween celebration for small children and their parents. It was also an opportunity for the children's choir to sing and participate in the Sunday service for the first time and to invite their parents and grandparents to come to a service for the first time. So, we organised a family Christmas service where the children both sang Christmas carols and did a play about the nativity story. Our children's worker Kaisa gave a very good talk for the children with a very clear gospel message. We also had a short sermon about what Christmas is and why we celebrate it.



In Uppsala, in October 2015 we started a bible study group with the intent of studying the gospel and reaching out to new people. We started with the CE course but finished 2016 with a training course in personal evangelism. We started with four people including us and since then the group has started to grow. Some people came to see what we are about but after one or two times did not return, but many others stayed and got convicted by the gospel and so the group has grown. We now have an average of 10 people coming every time, which is very good. Our contacts outside this group is much larger and we hope that in 2017 we will grow further and maybe start another outreach group, beginning with the gospel. "Bible study group" is not an adequate name for what we are doing as every lesson has a gospel and discipleship intent.



The lessons are divided in two major parts. In the first part we introduce the theme or bible text we are looking at and in the second part we split into smaller discussion groups of three to discover answers in the bible text. We end with a summary and prayers. From August, we worked through Acts 17 and specially looked at Paul's gospel presentation to the Athenians and then traced that presentation to everything Paul and Jesus taught about the gospel. Through a short but effective bible overview we traced back every step of the biblical gospel back to Genesis. This was very effective as every participant took time to look at the gospel through the scriptures and make their own first hand opinion. We ended this season by collecting questions both from what they have themselves and also questions their friends ask about the Christian faith.



In January, we will start to work through these questions - we got more than 30 difficult questions to wrestle with. We are in no way experts in Christian apologetics or in answering difficult questions but I think it is the church's responsibility to at least try to engage with the questions people have and there is a lot of help available in good books and resources on the internet etc. But our goal is not only to give plain and quick answers, which in some cases is not even possible, but to train people to keep conversations going and try to understand why people think like that or what's hiding behind those questions. If we just throw out finished answers we are at risk of losing a possible relation and so we need to keep a dialog going on so we too learn something about other people and, in that way, learn to give better answers and have a better understanding. It is going to be an interesting period.



We also want to take this opportunity to thank you for your love and support, your prayers and intercession for us and our ministry. It means so much to us.

With warmest greetings,

Chris and Lotta, Mission Partners

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the children's choir, that we will be able to grow this ministry and reach out with the gospel in the local community.
- Pray for the gospel seeds that were planted during Christmas services in Emmaus Church, that we might see some growth and harvest.
- Pray for the bible study group in Uppsala and for the upcoming bible studies and difficult questions we are going to work through.
- Pray also for the gospel seeds planted in Uppsala, that they might find the good soil.

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