



Advent Greetings Dear Friends in Christ,

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The waiting time of Advent is here, and a favorite hymn particularly stands out to share with our mission here in Germany.

Come, Thou long expected Jesus.

Born to set Thy people free.

From our fears and sins release us: Let us find our rest in Thee.

Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,

Dear desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

Indeed, Christ has died for every nation to give the gift of eternal life that in faith, is ours. God opens the door by His Holy Spirit to bring the comfort of the cross to weary Iranians that recently, publicly protested the oppressive regime in their homeland and ask, "How long?" The condition of the declining world points the way to the manger and Jesus Christ who shed His blood for all the world.

We prepare our hearts for Jesus and gather to hear the Gospel of Luke with a live nativity that tells the story. A story that brings true rescue from sin, death and the devil. A story of grace that brings peace everlasting! A story where we have a few eager actors from their beloved land of Persia that want to play the part of kings that travelled from the east...possibly Persia! A blessed Advent to all.

These past two years have seen our mission grow in faith, language and constant challenge. When we arrived in May 2018, our ability to communicate was very minimal yet the Holy Spirit always works beyond our sight and uses what we have. To welcome friends on the beginning of their faith journey is quite an extraordinary thing. Many hours were spent in catechesis through Pastor's instruction as well as our three-language introduction of the complete Gospel of Matthew. Developing trust over time has brought us more than we ever could give. **Wunderbar!**

Recently, we helped one of our local refugee's brother, who was imprisoned in Istanbul without proper travel papers. He had to flee Iran when the religious police raided the home church that he was attending. The Turkish authorities were going to send this refugee back to either **death** or **imprisonment**. We helped our refugee obtain assistance from the German Red Cross tracing service. We then helped the refugee to gain legal representation in Turkey from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The imprisoned brother must have this legal representation, or he would most certainly be deported to Iran. We just received word that the attorney has started the asylum process. **Good news!**



die Taufe "the Baptism", St Petri

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This December, we welcomed eight new brothers and sisters in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. We celebrated in grand, German style, typical of baptisms here with a delicious Persian dinner, famous Dresdner stollen and lebkuchen. A brass choir accompanied traditional Advent hymns where Christ is proclaimed. There was even a Chrismon tree, St. Nicholas goodies and Biblical books for the kinder. Over 100 friends gathered from the congregations of Dresden, Chemnitz and Leipzig in the “newness” of Christian fellowship. We are very thankful to our many generous supporters for sending 162 Christmas cards and some funds to bless this special event in the saving love of Christ for all nations. *Gott segne euch!*

Prayers:

- For waiting in Christ alone, by faith alone, through His Holy Scriptures alone.
- For the Baptism and Advent Refugee Event and blessings of faith and fellowship.
- For thanksgiving gatherings with family and friends.
- For healing of friends who suffer from long term illness and injury.
- For our mission servants in faith that joyfully “wait” with us with their generous gifts, notes and prayers

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Romans 12:12 **ESV**

In Christ Our Peace,

Carl & Karen Cecil



Cecils and Kourosh
before Christmas Party



Newly Baptized at St Petri



162 USA
Christmas Cards



Karen and Carl at
Striezelmarkt, Dresden



Support LCMS work of Carl & Karen Cecil; send a tax-deductible gift to:

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