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Gospel on The Road: part 2



Bea and John-Paul talking to grandma on a tablet

DID YOU KNOW?

Bucharest has the fastest average internet in the world. Speeds of a gigabit a second are normal and cheap here. This has allowed the city to attract numerous tech companies. It also benefits us as a missionary family.

It allows our family to easily communicate via Zoom or FaceTime with family and friends around the world. Every week the children get to talk to their grandparents. It also blesses my work in the region, as it makes it easy to teach online classes and Bible studies and to preach through out the Balkans.



The Tsakmalis family. (L to R George, Iro, Jordan and Mina)

Greetings in the name of our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I hope this newsletter finds all of you well and enjoying the end of summer. As I spend more of my time ministering to the southern Balkan area congregations, I wanted to let you, our supporters and prayer partners, know more about them. Last month we focused on the congregation in Sofia and their decades of faithfulness. This month we will shine a light on the relatively new congregation in Katerini, Greece.

Katerini, is about 12-14 hours south of Bucharest by car. It is a town of about 85,000 people situated in Macedonia, an hour south from Thessaloniki along the coast. Katerini sits along a part of the Aegean coast popular with German, Balkan and Eastern European tourists. So besides Greek, you often hear

and see signs in Romanian, Bulgarian, Russian and German.

While the vast majority of Greeks consider themselves to be Eastern Orthodox Christians with a small Roman Catholic minority, as with most countries in the region this is more of a cultural identifier. But, Katerini is an anomaly in this sea of Eastern Orthodoxy, having a historic and sizable Protestant population. During the 1700's and 1800's protestant missionaries planted a number of churches among ethnic Greeks in what is today Turkey. After Greek independence, ethnic Greeks living in Turkey were deported. These scattered protestants of Asia Minor decided to settle together in the small town of Katerini. Our parish in Greece comes from this protestant community.



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- *The conflict in Ukraine and the church there.*
- *The refugees and all those that aid them.*
- *Rev. Sorin, Rev. Adrian and The Confessional Lutheran Church of Romania.*
- *The congregations in Bulgaria and Greece.*
- *For safety as we travel long distances to serve congregations*
- *All the men in the region preparing for the pastoral office and the diaconate.*
- *Our new catechism classes*

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- *Mission Central and all their amazing work.*
- *OIM and their support for us and all our missionaries.*
- *Our daughters finding a friend that lives next door.*

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- *The many congregations and individuals who pray for, encourage and support us.*
- *Confessional Lutheran materials on the Internet.*

Jordan Tsakmalis and his wife Iro grew up in Greek Evangelicalism. But with the Greek Economic crisis of 2010 Jordan began to question many things. After studying Scripture and theology he began to believe in the reality and efficacy of the Sacraments something denied by the Greek Evangelicals. Looking for a community with the Sacraments Jordan contemplated joining the Roman Catholic Church. While the Orthodox, Catholic and the evangelical churches may differ on many of their beliefs, all of these churches preach the same false gospel of works and legalism. Everywhere Jordan turned he always heard the Law and what he must do. The Law cannot save, it only condemns and accuses us pointing us not to Jesus but to our own failed works.

That is when Jordan stumbled onto a YouTube video by LCMS Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller called "God's Word is Awesome (Becoming Lutheran from Evangelicalism)." At first he didn't want to watch it, assuming that Lutherans were like all the other protestants he was trying to flee from. But the Lord led him to watch the video. I will let Jordan in his own words describe what happened next.

"I was surprised, amazed, more than happy and full of joy. I started

to read voraciously the Lutheran confessional texts I found on the internet. I cannot describe my relief, my joy, how much I enjoyed them and want more and more. I felt the key to the Bible had been given to me and I wanted to read the Bible with it. It was as if someone turned on the lights of my conscience and all these beauties started to reveal their true meaning. I could not keep the findings of my studies only for myself. I shared everything with Iro and my children."

About this time Pastor Trifa from Romania noticed Jordan in a Facebook discussion and reached out. Through Pastor Trifa the family was catechized and confirmed. The entire family is now Lutheran and zealous for Lutheranism and the Gospel of Jesus that we clearly proclaim. We hope and pray that as more time and effort is devoted to Katerini more disaffected Greeks will come to hear the pure Gospel and the church will grow.

Christ bless you all,
Pastor Andrew Fedder

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building." 1 Corinthians 3:6-9 (ESV)



To support the LCMS through the work of Rev. Andrew and Megan Fedder, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

Mission Central
40718 Highway E16
Mapleton, IA 51034-7105

Make checks payable to Mission Central. Write Fedder-Romania on the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through either

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