



LCMS Missionaries with
SELK Missionary Pastor Hugo Gevers
in front of Die Brücke.

DIE BRÜCKE

Located in a diverse and economically challenged section of Leipzig, Die Brücke (The Bridge) first began a number of years ago as an outreach center for refugees. Early on, German children from the neighborhood began hanging around, and it became clear that the German population in this neighborhood also had many needs. Now Die Brücke offers opportunities for refugees as well as German children, youth, and adults. This is where I spend most of my time. Any day of the week, visitors to Die Brücke can come to find community and hear the Word of God. Our goal is to be a bridge to help refugees and others be accepted into the community and, ultimately, to help them find a real and eternal community in Christ.

Connect with me:

Kim.Bueltmann@lcmsintl.org



Deaconess in Deutschland

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In Christ We are New Creations



A young man from Afghanistan was baptized on Easter Monday.

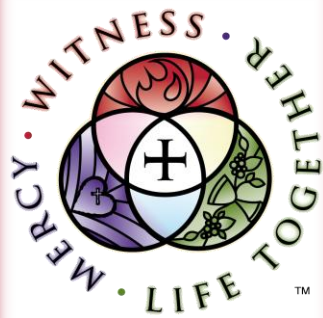
"I don't count that birthday anymore. My real birthday is the day I was baptized and became a new person in Christ. I have a new life now!" These words were spoken to me by the first German baptized as a result of the ministry at Die Brücke. "Helga" openly shared with me her difficult past, which included struggles with spousal abuse, alcoholism and mental illness. Today, much of that is behind her, and she is happy to have a new life in Christ. She spends as much time as possible at Die Brücke and at church because that is where her life is now. She gleefully tells everyone that she will be turning three years old on Pentecost Monday.

It is a true blessing to witness the joy that fills the lives of those who have new life in Christ!

The core group of Persian church members planned a Passion Play for Good Friday, and now they are working on a drama for Pentecost. The time, energy, and creativity they pour into sharing their faith in this way is amazing. Each individual uses the gifts and talents they have been given to write scripts, play a role, sew costumes, create music, design sets, and more--all to the glory of God. It is clear they have been given new life in Christ, and they are eager to share the wonderful news of what Jesus has done for them!

The young man pictured above is just a teenager. He lives a little way outside the city of Leipzig, and the government only provides him with a public transport pass during the week so he can go to school. Whenever I see his smiling face on a Sunday, I think of the sacrifice he must have made to come up with the train fare to get there. Yet he knows the one who made the ultimate sacrifice for him, and so he rejoices in the new life he has in Christ!

Soon an entire family from Iraq will be baptized. We visit them in their home every week to instruct them in the faith. They left behind everything in Iraq because their lives were in danger, and so they have very little. Yet every week they prepare a huge meal for us. They are eagerly learning and asking so many insightful questions. The father said to me recently, "I should be doing my German language homework, but I can't stop reading the Bible!" Clearly the Holy Spirit is working on their hearts through the Word of God. They can't wait to receive new life in Christ through the waters of Holy Baptism!



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Refugees preparing for Baptism.
- Those who have been baptized, that they continue to be strengthened in faith.
- The Word to take root in the hearts of the Germans we serve who still declare they are atheists.
- Continued success in learning the Persian language (Farsi).

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The opportunities to regularly share the Gospel with those who are not yet in Christ.
- Good health and safety during the transition to Germany.
- God's care and provision through the long and arduous process of getting settled.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- Our new brothers and sisters in Christ through Baptism!

Sharing the Gospel through Music

Singing with our weekly children's group at Die Brücke



From the first day I arrived in Germany, music has played a significant role. Shortly after the plane landed, I found myself at Die Brücke for the first time. A large group of refugees had gathered, as they do every Wednesday. After some introductions and coffee, we began singing Christian songs in Persian. The refugees sang with joy and exuberance, and it was beautiful. I couldn't wait to be able to speak Farsi with them and to be able to sing praises to God with them in their own language.

When I took part in my first Farsi worship service, I discovered the only accompaniment they were using was YouTube videos. I got to work searching for the songs online, finding transliterations of the texts, and figuring out the music. Now I accompany all the Farsi services on piano or guitar.

Beyond worship in Leipzig, we travel to Chemnitz and Borna to allow refugees living further out to be able to partake in the Sacrament. Leading music in Farsi is helping me learn the language and develop a closer connection to the refugees.

Before I came, music hadn't been used much in the German activities. The first time I sang with them, the group had been a bit unruly and trying. As soon as I started singing, the group started to calm down, and slowly they all gathered around, some even trying to sing along. Suddenly they were all listening attentively to the Word of God in song. Now we sing at every event, and they love it. They are even starting to learn Scripture by heart simply by singing along and learning the songs. Music truly is a universal language, which God uses to share His Word!

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now.
Philippians 1:3-5 (ESV)

- Deaconess Kim



To help Deaconess Kim continue to share the refuge we have in Christ with refugees, send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

OR

Mission Central
40718 Highway E - 16
Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and include Buelmann/Germany on the memo line.

Gifts can also be given securely online at lcms.org/Buelmann or by phone by calling 1-888-930-4438.