

# Update from Subotica, Serbia October-November 2007

## Dear Friends and Family~

Thank you so much for your prayers for us over these several weeks since we last wrote to you. We have indeed sensed the sustaining and guiding hand of the LORD in our lives, and we praise Him for all of the different ways He has allowed us to serve Him, as well as for doors both opened and shut by that same hand.

First we will share a couple of out-of-the-ordinary events from the past month, and then we will expound on how things are with us currently.

### Sweet Firsts

On October 20, 2007, both of us had the privilege of participating quite actively in the wedding of a dear friend, Zlata, to her beloved, Aco. As it was Dejan's first time officiating a wedding ceremony, preparing was a new challenge, but the LORD poured out His Spirit and blessed this event. He preached a short message and then shared the Gospel before their time of communion after the vows and rings. Both bride & groom said they were blessed to have Dejan perform their ceremony as his first, and several guests (both Christian and first-timers in an evangelical church) also commented on how their hearts were touched by the service. This came in



*first wedding ceremony: Aco & Zlata Ceranic*

answer to the desire of the couple and ours as well, that Jesus would be glorified, which He indeed was.

Zlata is one of Julie's translators for the women's Bible study, and before that she and Zlata became good friends through Zlata's hostessing of Julie and others from the Bible college who came to Subotica for their weekend outreaches. She was also therefore part of our relationship together from near the beginning, and it was a blessing to see the LORD provide a Christian husband for her as well (a treasure difficult to find over here).

### Pastors' Tour

In late September, we were visited by a group of pastors and their wives from the East Coast of the U.S. Through a tour organized by the Bible College in Vajta, the pastors came to several churches in Hungary, Croatia and Serbia, staying with us for a Sunday night and Monday. We had the privilege of hosting one of the pastors and his wife from Maryland. It was a very encouraging time, as they spoke words of exhortation and wisdom into our lives. The Pastors' Tour exists to familiarize church leadership in America with different ministries of Calvary Chapel that are in Eastern Europe.



*with our pastor & his wife and those from the tour*

### PRAYER REQUESTS:

- filling of the Holy Spirit
- salvation for Dejan's mom, that she will reach out to God in this time
- abundant blessing on all the women at the retreat this weekend, **Nov. 2-4<sup>th</sup>**
- God's anointing on Dejan as he teaches a workshop on Creation-Evolution in Belgrade, **Tuesday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>**
- joy and strength for each new day, especially as we pack up our flat & move things to storage
- God's guidance & provision for the future
- our physical health, our marriage
- anything else on your heart...

## Seasons Bring Change

Little did we know, even in late September, what the LORD would bring us into in a matter of a few weeks. The season of fall bids us to let go of the busy, fruitful activity of summer and slowly introduces us to winter's time of rest and renewal. So the LORD is working with us, bringing a new season into our lives, though unlike the yearly seasonal changes, we far from expected it.

Back in August, we were discussing plans for visiting America in the fall of 2008 for our two-month, bi-yearly furlough. But six weeks later, Julie's rapidly digressing health put us on our knees. So we sought the LORD earnestly for wisdom, as well as counsel from pastors and fellow workers. The agreement on all sides was the same: that for the sake of our longevity in ministry and Julie's health, it is wisest for her to come to the U.S. on a medical furlough, and to come sooner, not later. This is in order for her to receive better health supervision and care, as well as the rest she needs for her immune system to fully recover and to re-gain weight and strength. Both of us will go, as the time is long, then we plan to return sometime next winter, Lord willing, to continue serving the Body here. We have plane tickets from Belgrade on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

## A Crossroads

This leave of absence is a bitter-sweet decision. October 21<sup>st</sup> marked two years since our move here to Subotica. We also had made many plans for the ministries we are doing here, but the LORD has reminded us in His Word of His hand in this change and that, "*a man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps*" (Prov. 16:9). We do not know many details at this point, but we will still be involved in ministry, since that is our calling. We believe God will use us "in all the world." Specifically, Dejan will be using this time to work more on the translation project of Pastor Chuck's sermons. We praise God that this ministry is highly "portable", due to His provision of a laptop, hard drive, small sound board, and professional headphones over the last two years.

## "Being taken for a short time in presence, not in heart..." (1 Thess. 2:17)

Preparing to go has reminded us that though God has put us in the body of Christ where He wills in order to fill needs, we are not irreplaceable as His servants. The women's ministry will slow its pace and change formats a bit for 2008, but the ministry team remains the same (minus Julie). The men's ministry will be an opportunity for two of our deacons—Silvester and Vladimir--to be further raised up in leading and teaching this next year, as Dejan was working with them previously. The worship fellowship will continue to meet, using the foundational tools given them so far and take it onward under the direction of the pastor and one of the worship group leaders. And the band is currently working on recording their demo. They have practiced apart for long periods before, and will do so again while we are away. Our pastor here has been very supportive and affirming, and he is sending us with his blessing. Without his agreement, we would not consider this step.



"Hope to see you soon": touching surprise party at the October Ladies' Bible Study

We are very sad to be leaving Europe and our friends in ministry here for this time, but we have the hope of rejoining you much healthier next year! We also are looking forward to seeing many of you stateside very soon. Please pray for us as we enter this new season.

Following the Good Shepherd,  
Dejan & Julie <><

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT INFO:

We will continue to receive support during furlough. If the LORD so leads you, please make and mail checks to:

*Shepherd's Staff*  
P.O. Box 27220  
Albuquerque, NM  
87125-7220

in the memo line, write #1326  
(please don't write our names on the check)

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we will continue to post & send monthly updates