



Dear Friends and Family,

When last we wrote, we were both feeling sick and disoriented. Your many responses to our last Update were overwhelming. Thank you for your prayers, interest and supportive spirit. During December we both recuperated.

Christmas was quiet, contributing to our recuperation. Ted baked our family traditional Finnish coffee bread for distribution to our neighbors. And on Christmas Day we had Ted's prayer partner and wife over for a belated Thanksgiving dinner! The days were also a time to just enjoy being together – that was special. PRAISE Him for recovery and relaxed holidays.

The awareness of a “free” church in Mainburg is growing. The church's book stand for the city Christmas Market was better received than last year. More people stopped to talk and there were even a number of sales! We, as a church, were invited to a citywide ecumenical service for the New Year. Several attended, and their presence was publicly appreciated. PRAISE God for these signs of public acceptance.

The church family has a New Year's tradition: a family service followed by a late raclette meal and activities. One of our neighbors invited us to join them for their New Years party. (Ones whom we met through our summer intern – thanks, Ben!) We told the church core that we would like to accept the invitation of the neighbors, and miss the raclette meal and evening with them. They were supportive and we experienced our latest New Years ever (home at 2), and got to know a few more Mainburgers. PRAY that these new acquaintances will develop over time.

The church members all went on a mini-retreat for 2 days at the beginning of January to pray and

plan this year. Aware of our different interests and ideas, we really wanted to know what God has in mind for us in 2007. We worked hard, prayed hard, played also. We came away with excellent goals and an overriding agreement of the church's path for the year.

The personally big event this month, however, was a long-awaited vacation / honeymoon (after 31 years!). Between 11 and 25 January, we spent two memorable weeks on the shore of the Red Sea in Hurghada, Egypt. We did a couple of day trips to see some of the sights, but mostly we just relaxed and enjoyed the weather and the acquaintance of several Coptic Christians who worked the hotel shops! It was wonderful!

We returned refreshed and renewed in body and soul, and even in our relationship to each other. We now use the term “best friends”; very special.

Individually, we continue our various paths of ministry. Diane in music, in relationships to the church women and their contacts, and in her counseling ministry here in Mainburg and in Munich. She is also part of a pastor's group for discussion of counseling cases and personal struggles. Her leadership of one session was really appreciated.

Ted's focus is with the men. He helped one on a sauna, meets with another weekly for prayer, and hopes to get to meet with each at his place of work over the next month. A Men's Night is planned for March 3rd, to which each man should invite a friend. Ted will invite, Peter, the host of the New Year's party. Last week he met for the first time with Samuel, a thirteen-year-old with ADD, who has artistic talent and an interest in computer training. PRAY for growth in all these varied relationships, and also for an opportunity to begin something with young adults in the near future.

February is full of various seminars, conferences and our church retreat (16-19). PRAY for Ted's preparations, and for the Spirit of God to work.

Finally: The BIG storm that hit Bavaria in January did create a mess, but we were in Egypt! One family in the church lost a car to a fallen tree.

Ted & Diane

Pictures of the month



Above: Left: Braided "Nisu" wrapped for the neighbors. Center: Bookstall at the Christmas market. Right: Thanksgiving Dinner on Christmas day with Uwe and Dorothea Mackfeld, pastor of our "mother church" and Ted's prayer partner.



Left: New Year's Eve tradition of melting lead, dropping into water and interpreting the meaning of the resulting figure.

Right and Below: Diane with a cup of coffee on the hotel grounds in Hurghada. Various images from our Egypt trip, and what we came back to on the 25th!(More online; see below.)



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Many more pictures, details, and some other stories available at our online album area:
<http://picasaweb.google.com/MorpheusDE>