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Don't mean to brag, but while the rest of the country has been experiencing record-breaking lows it has been mostly sunny with highs in the low to mid 50's this week. :)

We're bringing people together in Rockwood to ensure that no one is invisible and that everyone has access to food, freedom, and forgiveness.

This is part of the PREVENTION side of our anti-trafficking efforts, dovetailing nicely with our Integrated Community Transformation mission.

We envision Rockwood becoming a community where children are less vulnerable to being trafficked and adults do not want to traffick kids.



North Sudan, and over the years he and I have studied the word of God together and he has become family to us. In fact, he is probably my closest friend that is not (yet) a believer. Even though raised Muslim, and later rejecting Islam for Communism, and later rejecting Communism but remaining "agnostic" (sort of), he is open-minded and loves the Christian faith (and many Christians) but has not made that step of faith to follow Christ. He has asked me (and others) many times to pray that God will open his eyes and grant him faith.

Right now he is going through a major challenge to his health. He has a hereditary blood disorder, a type of **cancer** that has been attacking his **bones and now kidneys**. He had to move from Greece to Holland (staying with his nephew there) because the doctors in Greece could not treat him. The Dutch doctors initially wanted to start chemotherapy after some blood tests, but called this past week and asked him to go back to the hospital to start the therapy immediately.

Since his last blood work a week ago ***his kidneys have deteriorated to a dangerous level***. **THANK YOU FOR PRAYING** that God will give wisdom for the doctors, healing for Mr. Ali, and above all that God will open up his spiritual eyes to see his need for Jesus and grant him the gift of faith and eternal life.

Also, if you wouldn't mind praying that God will allow me to visit him in Holland in the near future I would appreciate that. Thank you.



Our very dear Afghani brother "Achmad", who came to Christ in Athens and now lives with his wife and son in Germany, has been recently devastated by his 17-year-old brother's suicide. THANK YOU for upholding his entire family in your prayers as they are all reeling from this tragedy. I am hoping and praying that I might get to visit him this September in connection with our Mission Trip to Austria (read more below).

If interested or needing a reminder of who he is, you can read part of his story



<https://www.oasis-iteams.at/english/>

In May 2018, I (Scott) wrote about the "God-sighting" that happened, connecting our current local church (asischurch.com) to the refugee ministry called **The Oasis** that Vicki and I helped start in Austria back in 1987. (If you want to re-fresh your memory, that report is included at the bottom of this update).

The **GREAT NEWS** is that we now have a team of 6 people committed to

and encourage the only other missionary family As Is Church helps support. **All together, we will be gone just under 3 weeks!**

The **GOOD NEWS** is that **I have the privilege of leading this team**, though I have never done anything like this before. I have RECEIVED many short-term teams but have never led one. Thanks for praying especially hard about this one.

The **SOBERING NEWS** is that **our church is currently experiencing a SEVERE financial crisis** and will not be able to financially assist with the trip's expenses at all. **Total cost will be about \$3350 per person.** I say "about" because we cannot buy the tickets until we have the money, and the longer we wait the more expensive they get. If we could buy them today, the cost would be closer to \$2850. We are trusting that God will provide but wondering how, and **asking who wants to be a part of what He is doing.**

The **HELPFUL NEWS** is that the church is **setting up a special account** so that if you want to help support this effort financially, you can send a tax-deductible investment, made out to As Is Church, and sent to:

As Is Church
6828 SE Holgate Blvd
Portland, OR 97206

or online giving at: <https://pushpay.com/g/asischurch?src=hpp>

Please include a clear note that this is for **Scott McCracken's Church Mission Trip.**

end of February. Please pray we will apply what we are learning and will continue to make positive investments in helping our church positively reflect our neighborhood.

* On Wednesday evenings, starting next week, **Vicki and I will help lead a "Life Group"** from our church with our neighbors Joe and Hannah Vasquez. Scott will be doing some teaching in the group (Marriage, Parenting, Managing Finances, etc.), and all 5 couples in the group will be attempting to "do life" together

* Scott will be teaching a **Marriage Class** on Tuesday evenings at the church (starting next week)

* Scott will be co-leading (with previous "disciples" of his) a **Discipleship class** called "Connecting With Jesus" on Sunday evenings

* Last weekend **Scott led a Discipleship Retreat**. Thank you for praying that the men who attended will apply what they learned about dealing with Temptation.

* Vicki is spending time with different women from the church, using her gifts of encouragement and wisdom to help them in their walk with Christ



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** Team Ministry (<https://onecollective.org/community/rockwood-usa>)

THANKS AGAIN FOR PARTNERING WITH US IN THE GOSPEL THROUGH YOUR PRAYERS AND/OR FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS! WE APPRECIATE YOU!

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE IN DECEMBER AND HELPED US END THE YEAR WITHOUT A DEFICIT IN OUR ACCOUNT!!!!!!!!!!

Tax-deductible donations may be made to "One Collective" (with an enclosed note expressing your intended designation--i.e., "for Scott and Vicki McCracken's account"), and sent to:

One Collective
2155 Point Boulevard, Suite 200
Elgin, IL 60123

For online giving, go to: <https://give.onecollective.org/>

MAY'S GOD-SIGHTING...

For the last 4 years Vicki and I have been part of a church IN which, and THROUGH which, God is working to share His love with a broken and hurting world.

(See asischurch.com) However, beyond the homeless and hurting in our own neighborhood of Rockwood/SE Portland **there has been NO awareness of, or interest in, missions beyond our "Jerusalem".** Having spent 26 glorious years overseas, witnessing wonderful works of God abroad and getting a glimpse of His heart for the nations, it has been a little disappointing to be part of a young church (only 6 years old) which is largely made up of people just trying to survive another day (this is NOT a criticism, just an observation of reality). Of course, there ARE people coming to Christ, and even some beginning to grow and walk the path of discipleship, but the focus has still been very narrow and very "local".

One of my (Scott's) continuing "daydreams" has been to lead a small short-term team from our church overseas to either **the refugee ministry we helped start in Austria** (The

possibility.

Whenever I have felt frustrated, I have sensed God saying, "Be patient, be patient...wait for it...wait for it..."

On Easter Sunday our 6-year-old church "merged" with another (130-year-old) church. In essence, the 2 became one but remained 2. One church, 2 campuses. Much more could be said but the point of this "God-sighting" is to relay how **the new campus--Kern Park--brings a maturity in many ways to our church family, INCLUDING A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING MISSIONS.**

As Is Church/Rockwood (www.asis.church/rockwood-campus/) is a young church, strong in local ministry (but weak in overseas missions). As Is Church/Kern Park (www.asis.church/kern-park-campus/) is an older church strong in supporting overseas ministry (but weak in local outreach). Learning of their heritage of supporting missions encouraged me but did not excite me.

**"Be patient, be patient...wait for it...wait for it..."
(We have not reached the REALLY GOOD PART of this story yet!)**

Recently, I went over to the Kern Park campus to preach (we have a rotating team of preachers and rotating worship teams). Before the worship service, I attended an adult Sunday School class. While the teacher was standing in front of the class teaching, I noticed behind him to his left was a bulletin board on the wall with about 10 photos on it. I was too far away to see clearly what was in the photos but my eye kept being drawn to them. I started thinking, "Those kind of look like refugees in the photographs." Then I replied to myself, "What do refugees look like?!? They are just PEOPLE like everyone else!! Why would you say they look like refugees?!?" Then I thought, "That building sort of looks like The Oasis in Austria." I replied to myself, "You can only see two vertical lines from here. How can you say it looks like The Oasis?!?"

After class, I went up to look at the photos and...sure enough...**all 10 photos were of refugees standing outside or inside The Oasis!!** I got chills and went to ask the campus pastor Denis Whittet about the pictures. He told me that **Kern Park church had been supporting a missionary couple (Dan and Misti Lincoln) who have been serving at The Oasis for 16 years!!** Furthermore, he told me the current Missions Team was disbanding that very week and was re-organizing with members from each campus, and asked if I would be willing to help with the new team. (Was that a rhetorical request?).

campus (in addition to me) to join with the committee members of the Kern Park campus to form the As Is Church Missions Team. **We are currently in discussion with the leadership at The Oasis about bringing a short-term team to serve there some time next year!** Not only will this represent a "full-circle" kind of God-story for me but will also represent the first mission experience of its kind for either campus of As Is Church!

What are the odds?!?

Thank you for praying about God's guidance, provision, and glory in this continuing story.



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