

McCRACKEN MEMO

Panagiotou 3 Papagou 15669 Athens, Greece

E-mail: Scott.McCracken@iteams.org

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

On August 16th, **Joanna Brenner** arrived in Athens to be *my secretary for one year*. She is being provided to our team through the organization **EME!**

* In spite of some significant challenges, the young **Iranian Fellowship** is being used by God to **bring more Muslims to Jesus**, and to encourage new believers in Him!

* Our **special outreach to Russian/Ukrainian women** yielded the visible results of: 5 indicating first-time trust in Jesus, much clothing distributed, the Jesus film seen by many, and relationships with Russian believers started for future ministry partnership!

*We have had positive experiences with **our special teams this summer**, and from their evaluations it seems that they did too!

Please note the new e-mail address at the top of the page. This will be our e-mail address as long as we are with International Teams, so hopefully you will not have to change it again for many years.



MCCRACKENMOBILE UPDATE

We thank God, and we thank you for allowing Him to use your generous gifts and prayers, making it possible for us to purchase a new vehicle this summer.

Although we had intended to buy a Fiat Scudo, once we had enough money and went to order one, we were informed that they were no longer available. So we started the "hunt" again.

We are now the happy owners of a Nissan van. The best thing about it is that it hasn't broken down yet. The next best thing is that it is our first vehicle with air conditioning, and we are so grateful for that during summer in Athens.

SWEET DREAMS

Yasmin shivered in her cell as she reviewed her desperate circumstances. Her husband Rezar was confined in another part of the Greek prison. What was he thinking right now, she wondered. Did he regret fleeing persecution? Was he remembering the time he'd spent in an Iranian jail for playing in a band at a Christian gathering? Though a Muslim, he was still beaten for the offence.

Yasmin, a teacher of the Islamic catechism for women and children, had also run afoul of the government. She had gotten into trouble for wearing the wrong colour of clothing and for allegedly teaching little girls to remove their head coverings, though in reality she was only checking them for lice.

The couple finally decided to escape to the West. On their way through Turkey Yasmin had a dream about Jesus, where she saw herself walking behind Him as His servant. Several months later, the couple arrived in Athens, and that's when their hopes began to unravel. First they lost all their money, and then the police arrested them.

"Greece is a Christian country," Yasmin reasoned in her cell. "Perhaps I should pray to Jesus because He will have power here."

Later that night, Yasmin's cellmate told of a dream she'd had in which four great shining angels surrounded Yasmin as she was praying. The angels prayed for Yasmin and Rezar and then the dream ended. Twelve days later Yasmin and Rezar were released from jail together.

After their release, the couple went to the only friend they had in Athens, who just happened to have a Bible in Farsi as well as the address of the **Athens Refugee Center**. Yasmin couldn't stop reading the Bible, and even read parts of it aloud to Rezar. It seemed so wonderful! At the **A.R.C.** she met others who also believed in Jesus.

One night Rezar had a dream where the Lord came, placed His hand on Rezar's head and said, "Follow me."

That was all the man needed. He woke Yasmin, told her of the dream and decided that he too must become a Christian.

On a sunny Athens beach not long afterwards, a crowd of refugees, believers and curious sunbathers listened as Rezar passionately sang his confession of faith in his native Farsi. Then he and Yasmin were baptized as the multitude looked on.

Since that moment, Yasmin and Rezar have continued to grow in faith and are finishing their second term at the International School of Ministry. During this time they have suffered through two miscarriages, haven't had a permanent place to live, nor been able to find work. Despite the problems, when asked how she felt about being in Athens, Yasmin's face lit-up. **"We have lost everything, but have found Jesus," she said.**

UPDATES

- **THE REFUGE**, an evangelistic shelter ministry for refugees, *has only received a little over \$500*. Though we are thankful for this amount, it is a long way toward the \$320,000 we are trying to raise. Also, the *building we were hoping to buy was sold to someone else*, so we are looking for a different one.
- **TEAM CHANGES** are always challenging. The Burtons and Jennifer left this summer. Debbie left for a 4 month furlough. The Carlsons leave this month. Joel Scarborough will not be joining us after all. But Kate and Ilir are back as a married couple, and the Sirinides family has returned after a one year furlough! It looks like we will possibly be joined by Anne (currently with SIM in Italy) this fall.
- **WE NEED MORE MEN!!!!!! WHERE ARE THE MEN????? GOD, HELP THE MEN TO HEAR YOUR CALL!**

KOSOVA TRIP

In August, I (Scott) had the opportunity to **teach some intensive classes** on "Developing Intimacy With God" at a small church in **Peja, Kosova**. It was a great honor and privilege for me to be with these dear (mostly new) brothers and sisters in Jesus who were so hungry for the Word of God.

Following, are **a few impressions** of my week there:

- * There are **UN peacekeeping forces and police** everywhere
- * The monetary **currency** there is Deutchmarks
- * Most of the people in the small church where I taught speak **good English**
- * The water and electricity get turned off without warning at various times for **several hours a day**
- * **I was impressed with the number of believers in Kosova that I heard had become believers while refugees during the war last year, or became believers due to the witness of others who came to the Lord while outside of Kosova.**
- * There are **80,000 people in the city of Peja**. There were more, but about 20,000 Serbs left at the end of the war. There are a handful of Serbs (100-200) living in a couple of Orthodox Church compounds in the city but they are heavily guarded day and night by peacekeeping forces. **When the forces finally leave they will have to flee or be killed.**
- * While most Kosovar Muslims are still uninterested in Christianity, God is moving in that area of the world! There are **Muslims turning to Him, asking for churches to be started in their villages, and hard hearts are softening to the Gospel.**
- * While the churches are made up of mostly former Muslims who are learning to forgive the Serbs for the crimes committed against them, **they are mostly new believers who struggle to get along with each other within the church** (like in most place in the world, only more so).

PRAYER POINTS

- * The **Church in Kosova** (unity and spiritual growth)
- * **The Iranian Fellowship in Athens** (needs mature leadership)
- * For the **McCracken kids** as they begin a new school year
- * This year's **Christmas Outreach** (We will NOT be receiving X-mas shoe boxes this year. However, we will be accepting funds from any willing investors **to help us share the meaning of Christmas with these Muslim refugees from Iraq, Iran, Kurdistan, and Afghanistan**. Funds will be used to locally purchase practical gift items and to present a quality program. If interested, you can send checks to International Teams, and indicate that it is for the **HELPING HANDS X-mas Outreach**. Thanks.)
- * It appears that the door may be closing for our work at the Pendeli refugee camp. We are still allowed to go up for "friendship evangelism" and for occasional "low-key" programs for the children, but the language classes have been cut and any "official" relationship has been severed. Please pray about the situation.

Financial Contributions: Write checks to International Teams, and specify for the McCrackens account, OR for "The Refuge" account, OR for the "HELPING HANDS" account. Thank you.
Send to: International Teams
411 W. River Rd.
Elgin, IL 60123-1570 USA