

# KONYA PRAYER LETTER

DECEMBER, 2001

## MINISTRY TO MINORITIES

Every new class coming to Bible School in the Fall is unique. God brings each group in as He sees fit. This year, God has given us a special opportunity to minister to the Hungarian minorities living in surrounding countries. After WWI, the treaty of Versailles divided up Hungary's territory and ceded over a third of it to surrounding nations. The result is that millions of ethnic Hungarians still live in countries such as Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, Serbia and Croatia. These people still consider themselves to be Hungarians, and retain their Hungarian language, culture and traditions. They do not assimilate well in the countries where they are now living. Nationals from these countries often resent them. The result is that many Hungarian minorities live in deep poverty and are poorly educated.

The exciting thing is that we have a number of Hungarian students this year who are from these minorities. These students often come from very poor families, and we have to quietly help them with shoes, clothing and money to travel home for holidays. I think of Karcsi, a Hungarian from Ukraine who was in my office because he was failing exams. As we began to talk, he dropped his gaze and just looked at the floor. I could tell he was ashamed. He went on to tell me he had only an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education, did poorly in that, and had no opportunity to even attend a trade school. Students like Karcsi require patient tutoring by our better students and a lot of love. But they *can* learn! Upon finishing school they go back to their people to reach a group often neglected by missionaries and church planters—the Hungarian minorities. Isn't God's plan creative!

## IN THE SHADOW OF TERROR

On September 11 I was helping to move one of our married students into his rented home, getting ready for the new school year. Just as I was leaving the office, a colleague told me sketchy details about an attack on the World Trade Center. I went home, turned on CNN and watched in stunned silence as the second tower collapsed on live TV. Hungarians were as stunned as any one else by these horrific events. That Saturday, the entire nation observed 5 minutes of silence in memory of the victims. Budapest literally froze. Trolleys and busses stopped, radio and TV stations paused in their broadcasts, and people stood in the streets, bowed their heads and removed their hats.

Yet even this great tragedy gave three special opportunities to present the Gospel to many who may have never heard otherwise. The first opportunity was at a memorial service held in Miskolc, Hungary's second largest city. It was a city-wide service held in the "Wooden Church," a very large Reformed church which is a national landmark. The church was packed with businessmen, civic leaders and common people—Hungarians, Americans, Englishmen, Russians and others. People were even standing outside. What an opportunity I had to give them a clear gospel message! That evening I preached again at the Miskolc Brethren Church. Then the following weekend we held a memorial service here in Tóalmás, where I again gave the Gospel. The mayor was there and publicly offered his thoughts. Even the owner of the local bar came, wearing a large cross around his neck. For a short time at least, people had a heightened sense of spiritual things. Pray that these

opportunities will bear spiritual fruit.

Regarding our safety, Hungary is not considered a primary terrorist target and does not even have a significant Moslem minority. There are few signs of any change here, although the government has quietly taken a number of prudent steps in case an attack is attempted. Nevertheless it is always appropriate to pray for God's protection of missionaries in every area of service.

## ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO SEND IN CONTRIBUTIONS

There is currently much discussion about biological warfare and the US postal system. We have every confidence that the postal authorities are responsibly handling this issue. And we want to reassure those of you who regularly send in support through the mail. Nevertheless, there *are* other safe and sure ways you can send in your missionary support. Word of Life has a website that has information concerning sending in support via online giving. It is a secure site and you can even use your credit card. It also explains what to do if you have a problem. You may want to check this website. You can get information on this at [www.wol.org](http://www.wol.org) and then click on the information "Donate Now". Or, go directly to that site at [www.gospelcom.net/wol/giving/gift.html](http://www.gospelcom.net/wol/giving/gift.html). You would need to designate your gift for either Alex and Pam Konya, Word of Life Hungary or the special project you wish to contribute to. Word of Life Hungary also has a website at [www.eletszava.org](http://www.eletszava.org) and there is a link to connect to our headquarters on how to "Donate Now." Use our website to keep informed and pray for us. Thank you so much for all that you do to help!

## *Cam's Perspective . . .*

*This November was a special time for us. We made a very brief trip back to South Bend, Indiana, to join the celebration of Mayflower Baptist Church's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Mayflower was where Al pastored for 14 years before joining Word of Life. It was a special time. Also, my Mom, our daughter Ann and little granddaughter Chloe (who is now two years old) were there. What a whirlwind trip of friends and family!*

*We are now in our 8<sup>th</sup> year of Bible School. While Al's work is pretty much the same and simple to explain, what I do it a little more complicated. Every year is different. My biggest project this year is the school library. Last year I spent a good deal of time classifying and putting in order thousands of books donated to the library, and for the first time we have a library fully functioning, with a book check-out system as well. Each week I lead a Bible study with young staff wives. Our source material is "Jesus, the One and Only" by Beth Moore. We are all enjoying this. In addition, I occasionally help Érzsi by watching her children, taking her shopping or to the doctor. You may remember that Érzsi is the young widow of one of our Pastoral Ministries graduates who was killed in a tragic accident last January. She has really grown spiritually and is getting baptized soon. She has received her insurance settlement and plans on having a house built close to the Word of Life property.*

*We have had a beautiful Fall here. It is now turning colder, but we probably will not have snow until close to Christmas. We love hearing from so many of you at Christmas, although most of your cards arrive in January! That's no problem—it just extends the season and I decorate with your cards the following year. As we approach the Christmas season, we want to tell you how much we appreciate each of you. We know many of you pray for us regularly or support us financially. We trust God will bless you and work through each of you as you do your part. Merry Christmas!*

### **A SPECIAL NOTE**

*If you send in a personal Christmas gift for us, please be careful to send an attached note with your check, noting that it is a personal gift. Thank you for caring!*

### **PRAISE THE LORD FOR:**

- 64 students currently enrolled at school, coming from nine nations—Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia, Albania, Poland, Kenya, South Korea and the USA.
- Opportunities to present the Gospel at memorial services in Hungary.
- An insurance settlement and spiritual growth in the family of István, killed in a tragic accident in January.

### **PRAY WITH US FOR:**

- Finances to complete renovation of the Castle and build a new school administration building.
- Lynne Murphy, our Director's wife, as she faces the continuing effects of multiple sclerosis
- Fall semester at school. Pray that many would be saved through student and staff weekend ministries, that students would grow and mature in Christ as they learn. Pray for minority students with academic limitations.
- A repentant heart from students dismissed from school early this year
- Real revival and spiritual awakening in Hungary.

### **DID YOU KNOW???**

\*\*That about 800 people from Afghanistan are Hungarian citizens . . .

\*\*That a Hungarian immigrant, József Galamb, designed the Model-T Ford, as well as the Fordson tractor . . .

\*\*That a Hungarian scientist, Leó Szilárd, discovered the principle of atomic chain reaction, and that a moon crater is named after him . . .

\*\*That it is illegal for Hungarians to give their children names that are not on an official government "name list," and that this is done so people do not give their children names that are sacrilegious or that cannot be pronounced in Hungarian . . .

## **THE KONYAS . . . SERVING WITH WORD OF LIFE HUNGARY**

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