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In His presence is fullness of JOY!

Dear Friends,

It's been a while since we last wrote, probably because there's not been a great deal that's been happening here! It's still very quiet, very few visitors, but the groups that have come have been very special.

Building Update

Over the last few months, we have had workers inside the building, plastering the walls, and sanding them down again, to a beautiful smooth finish ready for painting. And so, very soon we'll have rooms that are clean and painted. We've already chosen the paints and the colours, and by the end of October we're hoping that most of the walls and ceilings will have been painted. We have some wonderful volunteers from Saxony, Germany who will be helping us to do that. We have also chosen the fabric for the curtains and blinds for the lounge, so Cathy will be spending many happy hours making them.

So, the Prayer House – the building that is – is a bit of a mix. At one end of the spectrum, there are rooms that are almost finished. And at the other end of the spectrum, we are missing some very basic infrastructure. I think the cesspit, toilets, bathrooms, floors and stairs are at the top of the list. But we REALLY want to finish the Prayer Room… have a kitchen… and 33 internal doors would be nice! There is still a way to go…

All in God's time

We are conscious that the Lord is very much in charge of the timing.

At the beginning of February, I heard the LORD say, "Mark, I want you to put back the work on the outside of the Prayer House to June". That meant a 3-month delay and I was really not happy about it! Didn't God know that we were going to be in the UK for 2 weeks in June??? I called the contractor and asked him to start in the middle of May (God seemed to be ok with that) and soon after that everything went a little crazy. Coronavirus, lockdown, flights cancelled, etc. The contractor was delayed by a couple weeks and ended up starting the work at the end of May, continuing all the way through June, just as God had said.

Several months ago, I tried to get the cesspit installed. I called the guy 20 times, without any success. There simply wasn't any grace on it. And then I heard the Lord say, "It's not the right time…". I believe there's a definite timescale for this House of Prayer. It has to be done in His way and in His time. We should have learned that from our testimony. We had to wait and pray for 7 years before we saw Him breakthrough and give us the land. This, He said, was necessary to establish the roots, the spiritual foundation of the Prayer House. I think this lesson can be applied to most of us.

The children of Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness learning to synchronise with God's schedule. Every morning they would open up the tent door and look at the pillar of fire / pillar of cloud. Was is up or down? Are we moving today or staying? So often we get it wrong and try to get God to work to our agenda and our schedule.

The Joy of the Lord

There have been some other interesting developments in the Prayer House of a different kind. It's the level of JOY that people are encountering when they come here. In a place like Auschwitz-Birkenau, people expect to feel grief, brokenness and sorrow. And yes, you can experience all of that when you go through the camp. But that is not what God is manifesting in the House of Prayer. He is manifesting joy. His boundless joy!

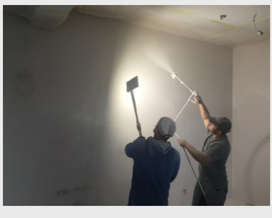
Every group that has come here over the past several months, has experienced it! Even when people come in feeling heavy, burdened and depressed, God lifts that off and gives them joy, freedom and laughter. It's a beautiful thing. Should we really be surprised by this? After all, a House of Prayer should be a House of His Presence, and we read in Psalm 16, that, "In His Presence is FULLNESS of JOY". I've been told by many people who have experienced it, that the atmosphere of heaven is joy.

Remember also that Auschwitz is a target for His redemption. He wants to turn this place of death into an oasis of life. In Isaiah 61, we read the heavenly mandate that the Father gave Jesus at the start of His ministry.

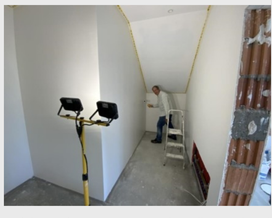
"He (the Father) has sent Me to HEAL the broken-hearted, to proclaim LIBERTY to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound… to COMFORT those who mourn in Zion, to give them BEAUTY for ashes, the oil of JOY for mourning, the garment of PRAISE for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified." (Is 61:1,3)

I believe Jesus is still in the same business today. He is freeing captives, healing the broken-hearted, pouring out the oil of joy, giving beauty for ashes, etc. Thank you, Jesus, for Your boundless grace!

Here are a few photos of the inside of the Prayer House.



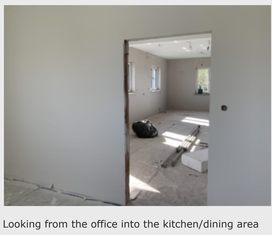
Workmen spray painting the ground floor



Mark having his turn painting in the walk-in-cupboard off of the Prayer Room



A group worshipping in the Prayer Room



Looking from the office into the kitchen/dining area



A panoramic shot of the lounge in the process of being painted

We wish you shalom and joy during this season of Sukkot. Please write, if you have the time, we love to hear from you. Grateful thanks for the support we have received during this Coronavirus season.

With our love and blessings
Mark and Cathy

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