



Fall Scene in District 22

**Vienna Tidbits:**

Typically Halloween is not celebrated in Vienna. Instead they have a holiday in February called Fasching. The western holiday is not ignored completely as schools and houses will decorate in a Halloween type theme, but there is no need to stock up on candy!

**Prayer Requests:**

Empower us to fulfill the task we have been given

Current and new contacts

Office Space—God will provide a central location with enough space.

Darla King (Kari's Mom)  
She will find a job.

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# Vienna Team Newsletter

CONNECTING THE PEOPLE OF VIENNA TO THE STORY OF CHRIST THROUGH SERVICE AND LOVE

WITH A COMMUNITY OF HOPE, PURPOSE, AND REDEMPTION.

## "ER WAR VERLOREN, ABER JETZT IST ER WIEDER GEFUNDEN"

The last few months our team has focused on learning the Parable of the Prodigal Son during our times of German-speaking worship. For Christians, this story is by no means unfamiliar as it is one of the most famous of all the parables told by Jesus. Despite its familiarity to us, there remains something powerful and striking in this story that never wears or loses its strength.

- ER WAR VERLOREN

The younger of two sons audaciously requests his portion of the inheritance. What is even more audacious is that the father gives the son his inheritance, which the son subsequently begins to squander until he is impoverished and friendless. The son, staying in a land struck by famine, is forced to work for a pig farmer. As he longed for the food that the pigs were eating, it occurred to the young man that his father's servants received more than enough to eat. His father took good care of his servants.

The son returned to his father and begged his forgiveness. The father was filled with love. He did not act out of hurt or anger. He did not sit down with the son and lecture him on the value of a dollar (or a denarius). He did not say, "I hope you've learned a valuable life lesson." He showered him in love. He celebrated the son's return. The father had never rejected the son—it was the son

who had rejected the father. Now, the son returned. Now, the son accepted the father and, as crazy and audacious as it sounds, there was no grudge to hold. There was only joy. There was only celebration because he was lost...

- ABER JETZT IST ER WIEDER GEFUNDEN

...but now he is found. I just like to say that phrase. I like to read it.

I like the way it sounds: Er war verloren, aber jetzt ist er wieder gefunden. He was lost, but now he is found. This is a story of unwavering, indisputable love. The father would not treat the son in the same manner in which the son had treated the father. Even though the father had every right to do so—and even the father's eldest son would remind him of this—the father offered only resolute and unabashed love.

This story remains powerful after so many years because it is the exact opposite of the way the world operates. The worldly understanding of rights and justice is turned on its head by this story of marvelous, dedicated love. Personally, that is why it is a story so powerful to me.

It is so satisfying to think and act like the world. When the son came crawling back to the father, the father did

not hold the ill behavior against him. I don't know that I could take him back without a little holding it over his head. I could forgive him, I think. But, first, I'd have to give him a piece of my mind. Then, after I've said my fill, perhaps I could forgive. The father is so unlike the way I'd act that I can't stop thinking about what a tremendous example and story this is to share with friends and even strangers! It is a story a city such as Vienna not only needs to hear, but longs to hear.

- THE BEAUTY OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

People don't normally think of the German language as beautiful, but learning to read the Bible in German has really helped me to appreciate the subtleties of the

### HERE'S A FEEL GOOD STORY FOR YOU

Last month Josh, Ira, myself, and three other men from Vienna traveled to Neckarzimmern, Germany for a five day men's retreat. This is an annual retreat sponsored by the German-speaking churches of Christ in Europe. While retreats are known to be a good way to re-establish old relationships occasionally these can transcend generations.

While speaking with different men and learning a little bit about them (as much as can be learned from my still infantismal German) one gentleman mentioned he was baptized in the US. Finding this interesting I asked him where and he said in a small town in New York.

Many years ago I had lived in a small town in New York (and there are not too many small towns in New York with a church of Christ) so I asked him what was the town's name. He said it was next to a big IBM plant. At this my eye's lit up because my Dad used to work for IBM and I asked him to repeat his name again. In German when you ask someone's name they give you their last name, which I wasn't recognizing initially, but when he said his first name was Frank I knew him immediately!

My parents had studied with a man named Frank Druschke while living in Endicott, NY and he was baptized before going back to Germany (I was 3 or 4 at the time). My brother and I grew up on stories about Frank and the time he spent with my parents. Last year when we moved

language and it's power in communicating the story of Jesus. As a team, we've been reading Das Gleichnis vom verlorenen Sohn for several weeks and its words and phrases are now common to us.

We've practiced pronunciation together and asked each other questions about structure and syntax, but more than anything else, I believe we've been richly blessed to engage God's word together and, hopefully, encourage one another to pursue the paradox that is God's love. Our prayer is that we will now be able to take this story and share it with our friends in this city and encourage them to pursue the paradox that is God's love. ~Brian

to Vienna my parents asked me to inquire if anyone knew about Frank. Nobody recognized the name (probably because I was mispronouncing it) and in the mix of everything else the search for Frank was forgotten.

So there I was sitting across from Frank Druschke both of us talking as fast as possible in a mixture of German and English trying to catch up on each others lives and both hardly believing this is happening. God is GREAT!

It really is amazing how God intertwines lives through our love of Christ that transcends continents, languages, and generations. My heart still leaps when I think about the moment we realized who each other was and our connection to Christ that brought us together in the past and is bringing us together in the future! ~Jake



Frank Druschke and Jake Haskew

"We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me." ~ Colossians 1:28-29



Men's Retreat 2008



Jake and Ira listening to a speaker

## LANGUAGE AND LIFE EXCHANGE

In the last few months as we have transitioned out of the classroom and into the city, we have been searching for ways to advance and hone our language skills while making new contacts. Several of our team members currently participate in language exchanges with German speakers who are interested in practicing English. This setting provides a great opportunity for us to improve our conversational skills in German and help someone else improve their skills in English.

Naturally, the time we spend in conversation helps us acquire the language, but more importantly it provides us opportunities to make new friends. I have really enjoyed conversing with my language partners over a nice cup of coffee while learning what goes on in their lives. We often share stories about our families and the differences and similarities between our cultures. I also spend time describing our goal to share and study the Bible with the people of Vienna. I have been blessed with some very helpful language partners who are willing to help me improve my German and share with me insights into the culture and lifestyle here in Austria.

During our conversations, I find opportunities to share aspects of my faith about the given topic of discussion. In one case we were discussing the family relationships of a political leader here in Vienna, and I was able to share my belief about the sanctity and fidelity of marriage. In a different conversation, I was discussing the wide array of religions with my language partner, and I was able to share my belief that studying God's Word and searching the scriptures for ourselves is the only way to discern truth amidst so many different beliefs. I have been very thankful

for these opportunities and always look forward to the next time I can share another aspect of my faith or learn something new from my language partners. As always we appreciate your prayers for our friends and for more opportunities to plant seeds of faith here in Vienna. ~ Ira