

TCM REPORT

SPRING 2021



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REFLECTIONS AND RENOVATIONS

by David Wright

"It was an interesting winter for us. I was 10 or 11 years old. My brother Mike was a year and a half younger. The Big Haus had no running water and was heated with coal we loaded into ceramic stoves in the rooms of our apartment on the second floor. We began each day in the winter of 1972 with three chores.

1. *Gather coal from the cellar and fill those stoves.*
2. *Bring 20 gallons of water from a well a half block away to use in bathing and flushing the toilets.*
3. *Carry several gallons of water from a spring to the kitchen for cooking and drinking."*

This is a memory shared by Jeff Thackston regarding life at Haus Edelweiss in the winter of 1971-1972. Jeff, Mike, and Mindy Thackston are the children of former TCM employees Dewey and Barbara Thackston. True missionary leaders, the Thackstons accepted an assignment by TCM founder Gene Dulin to begin the process of preparing the buildings and grounds to finalize the purchase of the property in Heiligenkreuz, Austria. This property was later named Haus Edelweiss.

The six-acre property included what became known as the Big Haus, a gate house, a horse barn, a cow barn, a green house, and several sheds. Through the 49 years of ownership of Haus Edelweiss, TCM has been blessed to be able to renovate, update, and remodel each of the buildings resulting in a most amazing facility in a breathtaking setting to serve God and His Kingdom.

Later in 2021 we will provide other firsthand memories of Haus Edelweiss and the ministry of TCM as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of TCM's purchase of this property in 1972. In the meantime, let me share with you an update on one of the buildings at Haus Edelweiss.

The first building constructed on the campus in 1890s was the Gate Haus. Through the years it has served as a residence for TCM staff and guests. Due to leakage and ventilation issues today, it is used mostly for storage space. It is in need of repair. No longer needed for housing, the Gate Haus will be transformed into a small chapel and serve as a Haus of Prayer on campus. Staff, volunteers, faculty, and students will be invited to utilize the serene and peaceful atmosphere being created to draw close to the Lord. In addition, we envision the Gate Haus becoming available as a classroom.

Renovation has begun this spring with completion planned by mid-summer. Special gifts have been received that will cover approximately half of the estimated cost of 70,000 €. Anyone wishing to make a special gift toward this project is invited to do so. Simply send your gift to:

TCM International Institute, P.O. Box 24560, Indianapolis, IN 46224 and designate "Gate Haus Renovation."

Nearly fifty years in Austria has provided a rich history of TCM's ministry through the years. This includes nearly 10,000 volunteers, thousands of students, hundreds of faculty, and hundreds of staff all focused on serving God. We are so grateful for all that He has done and what He continues to do and provide as we strive to equip international disciple makers throughout the world.



A Prayer Ministry of TCM

by Megan Herring

Building on TCM's PrayerFast event in November 2020, TCM seeks to develop a global prayer and fasting network led by the Holy Spirit to undergird the vision that every nation will have effective leaders of disciple-making movements impacting their churches, cultures, and countries for Christ. History reveals that our Lord God works in mighty ways through the prayers of His people. We know we should pray. Jesus taught us how to pray. We see God work when we pray. Yet, we struggle to pray. We struggle to fast. We feel like the disciples Jesus rebuked when He

said, "Could you not keep watch with me for one hour?" (Matthew 26:40). And sometimes, we just give up and say it is too hard, or God does not hear, or God does not need our prayers.

Beginning this year, we want to partner intentionally with you as we collectively pray that our Lord God would multiply disciples in every nation and fulfill His Great Commission. We want to provide resources so you can pray effectively. We want to encourage you to keep praying and fasting. We want to pray for and with you. We want to find ways to engage our communities in prayer both individually and collectively. And most importantly, we want to celebrate the work of our Lord God as we intentionally and regularly grow in our praying and fasting practice.

In 2021, we invite you to join us as a PrayerFast Partner by committing to pray and fast intentionally and regularly. Let us together grow in our prayer practice. Let us together ask our Lord God to do immeasurably more than we can even ask or imagine, all for His glory alone!

To sign up to be a PrayerFast Partner and to learn more, visit us at www.tcmi.org/pray.



FLEXIBILITY AND GOD'S GRACE

by Tom Sears

People often ask me, "How has the pandemic affected the TCM students?" Each time, I pause and think of the best response. If TCM operated at one location at one time of the year, it would be quite easy to answer. But with a yearly course schedule larger than any in TCM's history – over 130 courses scheduled in 26 mentoring centers in 20 countries – I'm not sure where to begin in order to answer that question appropriately. So usually my first response is, "Which students?"

2020 and 2021 have been full of ups and downs in all areas of life, and each country seems to ebb and flow at different times, frequencies, and intensities. For example, there seemed to be a lot of hope for things to get back to normal in Europe several months ago, but recently countries like Czech Republic have just seen their most intense lockdowns. Countries like Poland and Ukraine are emerging again as major COVID hot spots. While the United States experienced an enormous up-tick in cases and subsequent

restrictions four months ago, places like Kenya experienced a near-normal society at that same time. And now, a short time later, the tables turned where Kenya is experiencing its third big wave while the United States is slowly emerging back into normalcy.

How does a ministry like TCM operate in such quickly changing times? The answer is: Flexibly – with the grace of God. Because of the uniqueness of every country, each TCM course needs to be treated uniquely and with last-minute flexibility. For example, in the Victory and Vision Report sent out in January, you may have seen a picture of a small retreat pulled together for our TCM students in Arizona. In April of this year our course in Kenya has been switched to fully online in order to finish the course well while still adhering to the local government's travel restrictions that were imposed just weeks before the retreat. On this page you will also see a few pictures of our students and professors who were able to meet face to face to finish their courses. Whether our courses are face-to-face or screen-to-screen, the ministry continues. As the Lord shows us His never-ending grace, we continue to move forward flexibly, and with great anticipation for what He has next.



UPDATE: PROFESSOR-STUDENT MENTORING TIMES

By David Wright



We at TCM are grateful that none of the nearly 130 classes conducted since March 2020 have been canceled or postponed due to the pandemic. But not having the face-to-face mentoring time where professors and fellow classmates gather in person has been sorely missed these last 13 months. Those mentoring times have been few and far between during this period of COVID-19. As cases of COVID-19 have declined, some opportunities for face-to-face meetings have opened and students have welcomed the opportunities to gather.

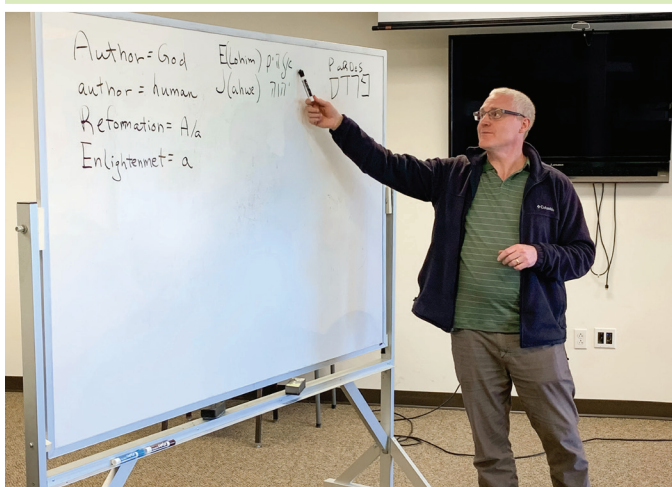
This was the case in early April when nine TCM students gathered at a beautiful retreat center in Tucson, Arizona. They were joined by their course professors Myron Williams (Discipleship) and Jordan Scheetz (Old Testament). Three other students joined their classmates via Zoom casts each day. The time together was found to be refreshing and inspiring to our students as well as the professors.

Jordan Scheetz shared that all his students had done well in their assignments, tests, and projects. "We certainly became acquainted during the distance delivery portion of the class. But gathering with my students inspired me as their professor and I know it brought us deeper in our appreciation and awareness of the importance of meeting face to face in ministry."

Student responses to mentoring time:

- "In a word, it was awesome. I expected to learn some things but didn't expect the experience to be refreshing to my heart," said retired policeman Jim Cousins.
- Jarred Medlin added, "I needed this time as it revitalized my strength and focus during a difficult time in my ministry involving transitions and change. It was well worth the time and effort."
- Austin Skalka went on to say, "I feel like I'm now brothers with class peers. Before the session, I saw them as strangers."
- Jonah Coughlin summed up his retreat experience this way, "The retreat center in Tucson, fellowship with other students and professors, and classroom involvement was far better than I thought. I see now why students love the face-to-face sessions. I can't wait for the next one!"

We are aware of more mentoring times with professors and students together that have taken place or will soon take place. Recently face-to-face sessions have taken place in Moldova, Central Asia, Indianapolis, and Belarus. We pray that all of TCM's mentoring centers, including our campus at Haus Edelweiss in Austria will soon be open for the disciple-making activities for which they are intended.





MOLDOVA

by Jozsef Steiner

Not only colleagues – but fellow servants of Christ

It was not the first time for me to fly to Moldova and teach at Divitia Gratiae University in the capital city, Chisinau. What a great teaching site for TCM! I had a wonderful group of students, so I enjoyed the whole week of preparing God's people for ministry. However, the highlight of the trip was the Sunday morning. Many times I am invited by local churches to preach during my mission trips, including the one week in-country courses. This time Mihai Malancea, my beloved colleague in TCM, invited me to his church, "Biserica Speranta" (Hope Church) to share God's word. It is a Romanian-speaking congregation.

Now, Romanians and Hungarians experience a lot of tensions between each other because of a long list of historical happenings. Many Hungarians would not like to spend any time in a Romanian-speaking environment. However, I as a Hungarian went to that church with great enthusiasm. After many months of online church life in Hungary (because of the pandemic), finally I was able to raise my hands and worship the Lord, stand behind the pulpit and preach to real people (not only to a screen)! Brother Mihai introduced me to his congregation with a big smile. And even though I did not understand anything from his Romanian speech, his body language radiated love toward me.

Then my soul was singing; how great it is to serve in an organization that is much more than an organization! How great it is to serve together with colleagues who are much more than colleagues!

Mihai's son, Iurie interpreted for me. In the last few years Iurie and I have developed a friendship, as he picked me up at the airport, as we shared meals together and talked about his near-to-the-end Ph.D. program, education, ministry, family, and life.

We are fellow servants of Christ. I mean: Mihai and I. And I mean: you and I, dear reader. We are serving together. We belong. To the same Father, to the same mission, to the same faith family. Praise the Lord for this!

Hungarian Hospitality

Every time I teach a course for TCM in my home country, Hungary, I invite the whole group of students to our family home, just outside of the capital city, Budapest. It is usually on Thursday, the evening before the exam day. We as a family serve the students – my wife Csilla, and my kids. When it is summer, the menu is cooled watermelon, sandwiches, and cold lemonade. During the colder months, a warm and spicy tea with a delicious meal.

I have a double goal during my courses. The first is to equip the people of God for ministry with theoretical and practical knowledge, skills, and experiences so they will be effective and fruitful missionaries in their own cultures. The second is to provide



Iurie translating for Jozsef at Biserica Speranta



Jozsef with Lydia and Mihai Malancea



Fellowship Party for Disciple Making students

a time for them that is spiritually refreshing, and serves as a retreat. I do not want them to be stressed out. Many of them are coming from non-healthy church environments. Just as anybody else, they carry huge burdens: health issues, family-related difficulties, conflicts. Several of them are persecuted Christians. This special fellowship – and especially the fact their professor is opening his home for them, has been proved many times as a time of healing for many.

At the end of March I had the opportunity to fly again to Chisinau, the capital of Moldova, where I taught Disciple Making for 12 students. I really wanted to serve them, but I was far from my home. However, love is creative. The leaders of Divitia Gratiae University (our teaching site in Moldova) let me use the Protocol Room. Wonderful atmosphere, couches, colourful pictures on the wall from Central Asian countries. So, I went out and purchased the best snacks I could find. One of my students, who works at the university helped me and arranged a wonderful table for the class. That night my students started to arrive to the fellowship party, one after another. They are from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Moldova, etc.

Oh, what great time we had! Stories, jokes, testimonies, discussions. Healthy laughing together – sometimes crying together. We enjoyed each other's company, and at the same time Jesus was in the center of this special fellowship meal. Close to each other, and close to Jesus. Just as it will be at Heaven's Feast of the Lamb.



A VOICE FOR THE CHURCH IN BELARUS

by Thomas Sears

After the longtime President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko claimed 80 percent of the vote in what many Western governments said was a sham election in August 2020, protesters

across the country have continued to turn out in droves, only to be met with a fierce police crackdown as the government tries to maintain its grip on power.

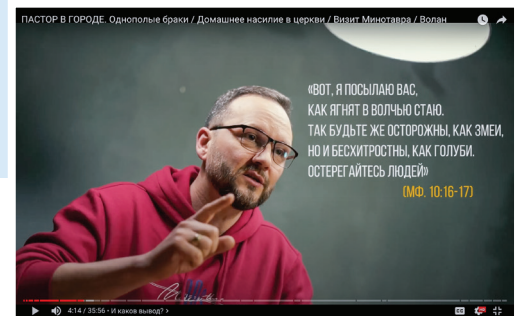
Svetlana G. Tikhanovskaya emerged as Mr. Lukashenko's main election rival after several other opposition leaders were jailed or exiled. Those jailed included her husband, Sergei Tikhanovsky, a blogger who was considered among the top opposition candidates before he was jailed. It wasn't long before allegations of election fraud began to spread, especially considering that the only non-government opinion poll leaked out showing his support at 3%. Belarus is often informally referred to as "Europe's last dictatorship." Although rigged elections and shady political practices have become commonplace in Belarus, the 2020 Belarusian election was the straw that broke the camel's back. Protests still continue today.

Sergei Lukyanov, a TCM graduate and church planter in Belarus, began seeking the Lord's guidance in how to respond to the current political situation in a way that would honor Jesus and remain true to the Word of God. Shortly after the elections, Sergei joined his countrymen in peaceful protests in hopes of speaking the truth of Jesus during this difficult time. In order to identify himself as a pastor, Sergei began wearing a religious

collared shirt, traditionally associated with the Catholic Church (even though Sergei is not Catholic), and people quickly began approaching him with questions about God, the Church, and for wisdom on how to respond to this political nightmare. Sergei continued attending these peaceful protests to preach the Love of Jesus and show people what the Bible says about truth, justice, and non-violence.

In an effort to spread this influence, Sergei began a YouTube Channel called "Голос Церкви" (Voice of the Church). The goal of the YouTube Channel is to show the Belarusian people that the Church is outside of politics, but that it always has something to say about morality, justice, and truth, and that all this wisdom is drawn from a single source that is significant for Christians of all denominations – the Bible. With the help of Christian spokespersons from other denominations and some very talented videographers (some of whom weren't even Christians, but believed in the project), Sergei began creating God-honoring content through video that was relevant and preached the Word of God.

In only one month of the project, The Church Voice videos were published by 23 Belarusian media outlets – and 15 of them are secular! Svetlana G. Tikhanovskaya (the president's main political opponent) even mentioned Sergei, his friends, and their Church Voice project in her famous speech given in Germany after the election. Please pray for Sergei and the many other TCM graduates in Belarus who are using their God-given talents and passion for spreading the gospel during a pivotal time in Belarusian history.



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A current financial report or a full audit report is available upon request.



TCMII CLASSES: *Spring and Summer*

ONLINE

Greek 1	Dumitru Sevastian
Research Methods	J.K. Stevens
History of Christian Theology	Beth Langstaff
Leadership and Management	Rick Grover
Servant Leadership	Rick Justice
Disciple Making	David Roadcup
New Testament Preaching and Teaching	Jeff Snell
Christian Ethics	Meego Rimmel
Tools for Pastoral Counseling	Rick Walston
Hebrew 2	Sara Fudge

HAUS EDELWEISS

Small Groups Ministry	David Roadcup
Introduction to Old Testament Studies	Jordan Scheetz
New Testament Theology	Dumitru Sevastian
Principles of Christian Teaching	Myron Williams

IN-COUNTRY

May - July

Disciple Making	Jozsef Steiner, Georgia
History of Christian Theology	Sorin Badragan, Estonia
Greek 1	Dumitru Sevastian, Moldova
Theology and Practice of Prayer	Tony Twist, Central Asia
Introduction to New Testament Studies	Dumitru Sevastian, Albania
Introduction to Old Testament Studies	Konstantin Nazarov, Russia
Homiletics	Rick Grover, Hungary
Disciple Making	Jozsef Steiner, Poland
Hermeneutics	Jordan Scheetz, Moldova



PLANNED GIVING

by Megan Herring

The TCM Vision of Faith Community exists to recognize those who commit to Equipping Future Disciple-Making Leaders.

We invite you to join the Vision of Faith Community, investing in the future of disciple-making leadership by remembering TCM in your estate plan. Your planned gift will help ensure that TCM can equip the next generation of Christian leaders to be effective disciple makers who impact their churches, cultures, and countries for Christ.

Contact Megan Herring at megan@tcmi.org for more information.

COMMEMORATIVE GIVING

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PRESIDENT'S OUTLOOK

Tony Twist

TCM was built on prayer. How do you help brothers and sisters imprisoned behind an Iron Curtain? First, you pray. How do you help leaders getting out of prison negotiate the surging rapids of change? First, you pray. How about when you do not know the next step? First, you pray.

Since 1957, through world and ministry changes, a deep commitment to prayer has led the way. Prayer has opened doors, provided paths, and built bridges. Prayer kept TCM humble and responsive to new needs and challenges. Every step of the way.

Prayer honors our Father. Prayer welcomes His Spirit. Prayer brings glory and fruit to Jesus. As He told us in John 15:5: "Apart from me you can do nothing."

We read about prayer. We talk about prayer. We study prayer. And we should! But the way we grow in our practice of prayer is to pause and pray. As you finish reading this, will you pause and slowly pray this prayer with us? Please take to heart this prayer

over you from the Apostle Paul,

"For this reason, I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

-Ephesians 3:14-19

Through Jesus we pray this for one another. Amen.

Tony on behalf of all our TCM PrayerFast team.