



# MUNICH MESSENGER

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STEPHAN  
KALLUS  
REPORTING  
FROM  
THE  
GEMEINDE  
CHRISTI  
AM  
LAIMER  
PLATZ  
IN  
MUNICH  
GERMANY

## Herbert Schmidt

In the beginning of 2005, we had to say good-bye to another dear brother: on January 9, Herbert Schmidt, our oldest member died at the age of 98. Herbert was a fascinating story-teller, though did not tell fairy-tales, rather he talked about his own story: having grown up during World War I, spending sev-



Herbert Schmidt

eral years in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, living a life of hopeless despair afterwards, joining the German army in WWII hoping he would die on the battle-field, surviving Stalingrad, getting injured and experiencing the miraculous protection of our Lord – the stories of Herbert’s life have left such powerful memories in the minds of all brothers and sisters in Munich. Herbert’s life was amazing in many ways. He was baptized at the age of 76, and up until 2004, Herbert with his wife Rosemarie (80 yrs.) came to church by public transportation! I will always remember Herbert as an ever encouraging happy brother in Christ.

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## Three new members

As our efforts to reach out to members of the (former) ICOC church continue, we have begun to see some effects on our own congregation. In the last months, more and more of the ICOC members have attended our worship services and Bible studies. As we get to know these people better, we are impressed by their friendliness and openness. So many of them are still hurting from emotional wounds of the past. While the present leaders are doing all they can to minister to the members, they have to deal with their own past as well. All in all, it is a difficult situation for the whole church. What they lack the most is the wisdom of more experienced leaders. They cherish Reiner’s advice, and we are willing to help them as much as they let us.

In the meantime, three asked to become members of our church: **Christoph, Carsten** and **Anja**. Our church has warmly welcomed them into our fellowship, and all three have already begun to use their gifts: Carsten is a gifted craftsman (Thank God, we needed that), and spent two entire days doing some (always) needed renovating work; he was the boss, I was his helper. Anja has her gifts in decorating, and we so desperately needed someone for our display case. She started working on it before she placed membership. Christoph has a heart for the suffering. For eight years, he has visited people in a nursing home and organized parties there. He started taking counseling training and he has a heart for evangelism (see next paragraph).

## Internet conversions?!

Once again, our Lord just made us stand in awe of His great power and His manifold

## OVERSEEING CHURCH:

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Christoph baptizing Isa

meetings several years ago, met Tanja in a Christian Internet chat room. Tanja was looking for a church “that really wanted to follow the Bible” and Lajos brought her to us. I had an interesting conversation with Tanja, but Christoph invited Tanja and Lajos to lunch and they arranged a meeting for a Bible study. They met three times, when Tanja asked to be baptized.

During this time, I received an email from an unknown man named **Isa**, who simply told me he wanted to be baptized, and wanted to know “our requirements with scriptural references”. Honestly, I was not sure how to interpret the mail, since we do get mails from “religious kooks” occasionally. I suggested a personal meeting to talk about his questions. It turned out that Tanja had known Isa through “Paltalk”; she scanned all our articles about baptism and mailed them to Isa who was also searching for a Bible based church. Isa, however, is a student at the University of Bielefeld, which is a seven hour drive from Munich, and we know of no church of Christ nearby. So, Christoph baptized Tanja and Isa in Frankfurt, which is about halfway between Munich and Bielefeld. Please pray especially for Isa that he can find other believers to fellowship with. The Lord can provide.

**Unity Efforts Continuing**

In December, Bernhard & Micha, the two preachers for the (former) ICOC church in Munich, introduced themselves to our church. They were very outspoken about the errors in the ICOC movement and how they now strive to build a church on the teaching of the New Testament alone. For instance, they stopped mandatory tithing, because it cannot be supported by the teachings of the New Testament. Bernhard Georg preached an excellent sermon on “Nearness to Christ”. In February, I was invited to preach at their church. I used the opportunity to challenge them to officially drop the “ICOC” in their name and to instead see themselves as an undenominational church based on the teaching of the New Testament. I

ways of reaching souls: Four weeks ago, **Tanja** came to our assembly. Lajos, a man who used to visit our



... and Tanja

don't know that this will actually happen soon, but I told them that a lot of the future development of our relations will depend on that. Please pray that they will continue to seek renewal on scriptural grounds and that we may have the wisdom to guide them in that direction. I believe they really want to take that step, but still need some time and courage to actually take it, because it might damage their relationships to other ICOC congregations in Germany.

**Mark Ellis**

Mark & Julie Ellis have been long time members of my sponsoring church, the Campus Church in Norcross, GA. Mark has been working for a German corporation which had sent him to England for six months, and now he will work at the headquarter in Munich for 18 months. We were happy to welcome Mark and hope that Julie can move to Munich soon as well.

**Reiner & Rosel**

A lot of you know that we were very concerned about Reiner. In December, a 2.5 inch tumor was discovered in one of Reiner's kidneys. In January, the kidney was removed, and we were told that the tumor cells were malignant. Thousands of believers around the world prayed for Reiner - and after one week, the cells were diagnosed as being non-malignant. We were surprised by joy! While Reiner is still recovering from the operation, he is suffering from an “inflamed nerve” in his back, which causes tremendous pain in the right leg. Because he has only one kidney, Reiner is not allowed to take many pain relievers anymore. The doctors tried several medicines, and it seems that morphine is starting to bring the desired relief.

Rosel has been struck with several illnesses recently. Please pray for Reiner & Rosel for strength and good spirits.

What can I say? With Reiner not being able to teach and preach much, it has been a very demanding time for me recently; but with eight new members in the last three months (not counting Mark & Julie) and the Lord opening so many doors, this is definitely an exciting time for our ministry and a very rewarding one. Thanks for partnering in it! Please continue pray for the work and for me as well.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

- \* Tanja, Isa
- \* Anja, Christoph, Carsten
- \* Contact with the two other churches
- \* Reiner & Rosel