

The Gospel in Scandinavia



OCTOBER 2008
Report

Heath & Renee
Robertson

← Our new sign
which will be hung
outside of our
building soon.

Attend. & Contrib. Averages

- Sunday AM: 5
- Tuesday PM: 3
- Contribution: 852,- Kr
(\$130)

The Arctic Circle: Cold and Dark

HOW does Santa Claus stay so jolly in the North Pole? Really! By the end of October it began to get dark at about 5pm. By January, the sun won't come out until 10 or 11am and will go back into hiding again around 2pm. For me, it is an adventure. For many who have lived here their whole life, it is depressing and they can not wait for spring. We have had some snow but not much. I expect to see more temps

around 15-20F in November.

Life and work is becoming more routine. However, there are still many things we are exploring and trying to implement into the work. You will read about those things in the report. Let me know if you have any suggestions or ideas. Our hearts are continually thankful for those who support us in the work here.

*"...He humbled
Himself by
becoming obedient
to the point of death,
even death on a
cross" (Phil. 2:8).*

October Lessons and Studies

There are wonderful benefits of worship and Bible class in both large and small congregations. Some are highlighted more in each setting. There is an intimate closeness in our congregation. Not only are we few in the congregation, but also in the country. This makes my job all the more personal and important. I beg for your prayers that God will guide me in my teaching. Also, any wisdom that you can offer as you follow the work is appreciated.

Principles study to a new study hour on Thursday evenings which is held at a member's home. We are now studying Proverbs on Tuesday evenings. This makes it easier for some members to join us in a mid-week study as well as adjusts the Tuesday topic to one that is more appropriate for walk-ins. My lesson topics for October were as follows: Lessons from James pt. 2, The Character of Joseph, The Bible's Relationship to the Christian and the Church, and Faith and Marriage.

We continue to study through the Gospel of John on Sunday mornings. However, we have moved our Christian



Our meeting place is on Steinkjellergaten, which means "stone cellar street." These old cobblestone streets are quite common in downtown Bergen.



As noted in my last report, we had some Christian visitors from Sandnefjord and Stavanger, Norway in September.

Visitors and Other News

Even without having really advertised we continue to have visitors often. As I will mention on the next page, we not only have visitors coming to services but we are making contacts through the website. I really believe that our website and our good location are two great tools if we really try to get all the use we can out of them.

We have had two Romanian men visit with us the past two Sundays. They seem to have some religious background. They are very attentive, participate in the song service, and even gave in the collection (which was rather interesting considering I preached this last Sunday that the collection was something for the members of the congregation). They both work here in Bergen. I hope we see more of them.

I mentioned in my last report that Eva, one of our members, had not been attending so well. Part of the reason was that she visits her father in a nursing home on Sundays. However, since we have encouraged her to at least be here for worship, she has been more consistent. She is a good asset to the congregation and I pray that she continues to improve.

What's New in Bergen?

I guess many of the things we have been doing aren't really "new" for the work in Bergen but rather revised or newly organized. There has been much in regards to the building, website, and other connections with the community that needed to be cleaned up, organized, or reestablished.

I have continued to work on the website. The site statistics show several hits a week. I will record one sermon each month in Norwegian to upload on the website. On Nov. 1st I uploaded "The Bible's Relationship to the Christian and the Church." This will hopefully attract some who are interested but too shy to come to services. Articles and other evangelistic tools are available through the website as well.

We have added two new bulletin boards in the building. One has our supporter list, the congregation's 2009 Budget, and our contribution record (to see if our giving is matching our budget). The other is an evangelism board with reports from 6 countries and a prayer list. Renee has been working on advertisements for the front windows. You can see all of her work in the pictures on the right.



TOP: Meeting times and Website advertisement signs.

BOTTOM: "To Believe in God Doesn't Mean You Must Leave Your Brain Behind. We Believe Because There Is Real Evidence that Points Toward a Real God!"

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www.churchofchrist.no**

***"The Aim of Our
Charge Is Love"
- I Tim. 1:5***

A Look to the Future

As we begin to get a feel for the nature of spreading the gospel here we realize certain needs that are going to arise. As I said earlier, our website gets several hits every week. As soon as we figure out the best route, we are going to advertise the site more which will bring in more traffic. Already we are receiving at least one e-mail every week from someone interested and/or with specific Bible questions. However, many of them are outside of Bergen and even outside of the country.

The problem in Scandinavia has never been a lack of interest, but rather a lack of workers and resources as well as the contrast between the moral life Christ demands and the immoral European society. The latter can only be changed if the things lacking are supplied.

On many occasions in the Bible spiritual principles are related to farm work. Most of us are not farmers in the real sense of the word. However, most of us do realize the planning and hard work that is involved and to which Jesus and the others were alluding to. What would happen if there are not enough workers when harvest time comes? When the crops are ready, their ready! If we wait too long, they will spoil. Brethren, when it comes to our need for workers in the gospel field, we have some planning and hard work ahead of us if we want to reap at harvest time. Are you preparing your young men to preach the gospel? Or is that a career you deem with not enough security for your sons? There are thousands of areas all over the northeast, northwest, midwest, and western US states that have no one preaching the gospel near them. Who will go there? I am the only gospel preacher in all five Scandinavian countries. Who will come here and help me? There are many other places that need sound gospel preachers. Who will go? Will you?

The lack of resources I am not so worried about. You as well as many

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many others have been so good to meet the needs of your brethren and help spread the gospel. We have made some contacts in a town called Haugesund, Norway. In a few months, Renee and I plan to travel to Haugesund for a few days, Lord willing, to study with them. We would also like to advertise in a Haugesund paper a week before and the week of our arrival and hold gospel meetings each night. I know that through you, the Lord will provide the means to do this, if that is His will. You abundantly supplied our needs to move and live here and I know you will help in this.

It is my sincere hope that I will come in contact with many in Norway and the rest of Scandinavia to which I can go and study with. Also, as spring rolls in, there will be many opportunities to advertise publicly within Bergen. Preaching the gospel in this area is costly and we will do our best to find the most economical ways of reaching the lost. In the end, I know it will all be worth it. In this work, the results aren't always visible. However, fifty years from now, they will be. Christians then will know that we didn't give up and that will encourage them not to either. Thanks for who you are and what you do. Together, with God, WE CAN CHANGE THIS WORLD.