

NEWSLETTER

DELIVERING GOD'S WORD TO THE NATIONS

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SAME MESSAGE - NEW TECHNOLOGY

From childhood onwards, I lived a sheltered and structured life in a Christian home and later during my nursing training at a Christian health and welfare organisation. However, during my holiday time things were different! As a young woman, I'd often leave my secure surroundings to covertly deliver Bibles behind the 'Iron Curtain' (into Eastern European countries closed to the Christian message).



Photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash.com

Every journey was an adventure requiring much time, energy, and nerves. We often had technical issues with the specially prepared vehicles. Thousands of kilometres were travelled on rough roads without GPS, internet, or smart phones to help us reach our destinations. Even phone calls were impossible, as our contact persons either didn't have a phone or if they did it was tapped by the authorities. Without a 'plan B' we completely relied on God, and time and again we experienced His guidance and protection!



Photo by Martin Kallur (IG: @mkallur) on Unsplash.com

One situation is still fresh in my mind:

We were en-route to an arranged rendezvous point. Nervously we kept looking at our watches and after what felt like an 'eternity', the boom gates at the train crossing failed to open. So we turned around to take a lengthy detour. Anxiously we pressed on knowing that there was no way now to arrive at the arranged time. After even more obstacles and being much later than anticipated, we finally made it to our destination. One of us walked ahead to the meeting point to scout out the situation and soon returned with his report:

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"Get this: when I arrived I found out that our brothers and sisters had prayed on their knees, pleading with God to delay our arrival as the police happened to 'visit' them at our appointed meeting time!"

Our brothers and sisters in Christ were overwhelmed with joy when they held their very own copies of the Bible in their hands. My whole life, I had taken it for granted to have my own Bible. What a stark contrast to the Christians in those countries in the 1970s who had no Bibles or only handwritten ones.



Car repairs in the middle of nowhere

I was deeply moved and encouraged by the love and hospitality of the believers during these encounters. After each of those trips we returned blessed and these experiences deeply enriched my faith life.


A rest stop at a water well during a trip in Romania

Several years ago, I heard about *HFA* and how modern technology is used to deliver Bibles into closed countries. Back in my youth, we had to invest lots of time, energy, and nerves to do the same, but now Bibles can be delivered much easier and in larger quantities.

I am also impressed and encouraged by the possibilities to equip local evangelists with aviation and technology solutions, to aid them in reaching people groups in otherwise inaccessible terrain.


"Home" on the road

As there are still many closed countries and unreached people groups today, I'm glad to still be able to contribute to the efforts to bring God's Word to people who have never had access to it, even now that I'm older and from the safety of my own home.

Gisela
HFA Network Partner

A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.
Prov 16:9

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

This past winter we were joined by Micha, a young volunteer from Germany. He mainly supported our team with hands-on work on the water drones. One of them was in the final construction phase and just before his depature, Micha was able to help put it on a lake for testing - complete with it's precious cargo of Scripture portions for a 'closed country'.

Here is an interview with him:

Micha, how did you get into this?

In January I came across *HIN*, the German Network partner of *HFA* at JUMIKO missions conference* and subscribed to their newsletter. In one newsletter I read about the water drone project and that there was a shortage of manpower for that work in Australia. So I contacted *HFA* and asked whether I could come and support the project.

What motivated you?

It was the project itself that motivated me, along with the opportunity to use my technical skills to help build God's Kingdom. It is close to my heart to provide technical support for projects that help bring God's Word to people.

What held you back?

What held me back was the thought of going to a foreign country where I didn't know anyone. Also, everything there is conducted in English; that was something I wasn't used to in my everyday life. But God didn't let my doubts take over and, looking back, I had absolutely no reason to worry.

How did you know that this was meant for you and that it was meant to be?

God somehow laid it on my heart and also gave me the urge to do this now.

What inspired you and got you excited?

The people I met in Australia were

what impressed me the most. Everyone was very open-hearted and incredibly patient, kind, and generous with their time, explaining everything to me - even when I had reached my limit with the language.

I was also captivated by the country itself - especially its open, endearing culture and the natural landscape which was far more vibrant than I had imagined.

Would you do it again?

Since Germany still feels like home to me right now, I don't feel the urge to set off again straight away. Even so, the experiences I had there were well worth it. If God calls me again, I hope I'll be ready.

What would you do differently, or what would you wish had been different?

If I was to go again, I would do it exactly the same way.

What would you like to tell us?

If God wants you to do something, do it because there's no reason not to. He will help you along the way just as He helped me and kept my fears from taking over.

Thank you very much for your commitment and for this interview!

Micha's contribution and commitment was a great blessing and a source of encouragement for the *HFA* team, and he even managed to recruit a new volunteer from one of his host families he stayed with!

We also pray that you may always receive God's guidance and blessing, and that you may experience how Jesus uses you – He who came *'to seek and to save what was lost' (see Luke 19:10)!*

**JUMIKO is an annual youth missions conference/expo in Germany.*







Volunteers hard at work in the HFA workshop

WE CAN REACH THEM!

Growing up in church I remember hearing so many general prayers for unsaved souls around the world. In fact, when I became an Elder I prayed them myself. They went something like this:

"Heavenly Father. We lift up every soul around the world who does not know You yet. Your Word tells us that You desire all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and that You are not willing for any to perish. Lord, we ask that You open their spiritual eyes to see the light of the gospel and the glory of Christ. Soften hardened and stony hearts, replacing them with hearts of flesh that are alive and responsive to Your grace. Break every chain of darkness, confusion, unbelief, and distraction that keeps them bound. Draw them to Yourself by Your Holy Spirit; let them encounter Your mercy, and bring them from death to life in Jesus Christ. In His name, Amen."

Then we would sing an appropriate hymn and move on to the next part of our worship service. Not long after one of those services I had a very vivid dream:

I was standing before Jesus and with pain in His voice He asked, "You prayed. But didn't you even try to reach them?" I woke up feeling shocked, ashamed, and powerless. I have always believed that we must pray like everything depends on the praying, but we also are to work like everything depends on the working – at the same time. Jesus commanded us to go into all the world and make disciples. I was praying but I had no idea about how to work at it. I was further convicted by the Apostle Paul's word to the Corinthians:

"Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."
(1 Corinthians 9:19–23).

I wondered what we could do to win some of the many souls who currently have no hope of hearing the gospel. But I had no idea just how many of them there were. Today, there is an estimated 3 billion people on earth who have never heard the name of Jesus and have no Christian, no Bible and no church in their area where they could find out about Him!

Years later, a member of the congregation I was serving as a pastor spoke of his vision to begin *HFA*. When he told me that their goal would be to reach unreached and isolated communities with the gospel by using aviation and technology, my heart leapt and I suddenly felt empowered. I realised there are many things we can try, so I joined a small group of people who founded *Hope From Above* and for over 12 years now God has given us many opportunities, gifted workers, volunteers, and supporters to carry out this mission.

I can now stand before Jesus and declare that by His grace and provision we are reaching thousands. The technology solutions God allowed us to develop with the help of staff and volunteers are being used by partner organisations on different continents. Some have transported innumerable Bible portions into a closed country. Others have been given coordinates of people groups they've tried to locate for years, and we're building water drones to deliver God's Word to regions where nobody could personally take it and survive.

I am overjoyed at the thought that when we arrive in glory, people will be there because God moved through us to overcome the multiple barriers and reach them.

So instead of general prayers for the lost we are now praying for many more opportunities and many more "doors" to open. And for hundreds of Jesus-followers to hear God's call and join us!

Richard
Acting CEO



DID YOU KNOW...

We send out prayer updates every two weeks with specific prayer and praise points. If you would like to receive these, let us know at info@hfa.org.au, or you can subscribe online at www.hfa.org.au.

HOPE FROM ABOVE

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