



September 2020



Quick Takes

Life:

- Summer saw the lock down ease and cases of Covid go down so we could meet and minister in person.
- The Covid cases are now increasing greater than ever here in Hungary, while a second lockdown doesn't seem to be coming, due to the high risk posed to our family (specifically Samuel), doctors have told us to go into a personal lockdown.
 - This change came the day before school was to start for Samuel and Nathan, so we will now have to homeschool on the fly.
 - Boys are very sad to not be able to see friends.

Summer Ministry:

- God provided opportunities this summer to serve through:
 - Work and bible study days at the ranch.
 - In person baby mama club meetings and play dates
 - Ranch family day--some families are making decisions to better walk with Jesus as a result of this day.
 - Discipleship Retreat at ranch--this was with the group with whom we have worked with for 5 years. Multiple of them shared how this time brought together what Jesus has been teaching them for the past months.
 - Assisting with mini riding weeks at the ranch put on by a group from the discipleship/bible study group.
 - Helping with the ranch during a crisis
 - Taking on leadership for a family in the Czech Republic with WGM

Fall Ministry:

- We are working with IHS Global to help make ready and put on a pilot zoom training of "Salt and Light".
- We are continuing to plan and organize an international leadership conference here in Hungary for WGM.
- Having to go on lockdown certainly has changed many of our plans, so we are asking Jesus for wisdom on how to reimagine ministry once again to those we have been working with locally.



Kids playing in our yard during a meeting of the mothers prayer group.

Uncertain Times

This is not how we imagined life. These days of global pandemic, unrest, and uncertainty are not what we would choose--not for us and especially not for our boys. However, we don't determine the time in which we live, yet we can determine how we live in that time. We can so easily get consumed with the suffering, upheaval, and inconveniences, that we fail to remember that God is at work and that these disruptions are also an invitation to join in with the Holy Spirit who is always seeking to bring life out of death, hope out of darkness, and who is wanting to do a new thing. It has not caught God by surprise that these are the times we are living in, he made us knowing the times we would live in, and he has a purpose for us in these times just as he did for Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" (Jeremiah 1:5).

For us this is especially important to remember as we enter the fall season. We had what we thought was a good plan for the fall and were excited about some new opportunities that God seemed to be providing. However, early this week many of our fall plans were rendered impossible. The cases of Covid here in Hungary are now growing faster than they have at any point prior, while schools are remaining open and a second lockdown does not currently seem to be on the horizon, multiple of Samuel's doctors said that Samuel absolutely should not go to Kindergarten--his heart anatomy puts him at highest risk for complications. This means neither Samuel or Nathan can go to school, which they were both very excited for. But it also means, we have to greatly limit our outside interactions because of the risk--so no play dates, no (or at least very restricted) in person meetings. This is a hard pill to swallow for adults, and even harder for a 6 and 3 year old boy who were both excited to be back with their friends. Yet, we must remember that God is in control and if we trust him and seek him he has something good in the midst of this for not only us but also for our boys.

God met us this spring when the world unexpectedly closed down. He provided opportunities to use Zoom to lead bible studies, prayer meetings, and connect and encourage those we had been ministering to before. In fact, in some cases he even gave opportunities to go deeper. He provided many chances for Eszti to walk side by side with mothers who learned that their child had some form of congenital heart disease.

God met us this summer. Covid meant that we didn't have the capacity to have camps in the same way that we typically do. However, we were able to have multiple work and bible study days at the ranch where people both served and learned. We were able to gather local families we work with at the ranch and talk about what it means to structure our family lives around Jesus--it was encouraging to see people really grapple with ideas they hadn't considered before and to have since heard of decisions that some of these families are making in order to more fully have a family life centered on Jesus. God provided the opportunity for us to lead a discipleship retreat at the ranch for those we have walked with for 5 years now (and in some cases longer). Mark taught out of Philippians 4:4-9 for the retreat and multiple people shared how the teaching brought together what God had been teaching them for months. It was then a joy to walk beside and assist some of these we have poured into for years, as they led mini riding weeks at the ranch. God also had us step in and fill some holes in the day to day running of the ranch when a crisis arose. On top of these God provided many chances to pour into lives through one on one discipleship, play dates, baby mama clubs, etc. Also, in July Mark took over the direct supervision of the family serving with WGM in the Czech Republic.

Much of this happened on the fly or had to be reorganized or reimagined because of the circumstances, yet God made a way and he will make a way this fall. Mark will continue to lead

the team here in Hungary and the Czech Republic. Additionally, Mark is chairing and Eszti is serving on a team planning a leadership conference for WGM here in Hungary next summer--a lot goes into making an international conference like this happen. We are also very excited that we are partnering with IHS Global to help refine and get a pilot version of a training called "Salt and Light" offered. This training helps every Christian to see the call of God for them to be a witness where they live, work, and play and helps equip them to do so appropriately and effectively. We have big dreams of where this could be used. On top of these, we are asking God to help us to know how to effectively continue to invest in those people we have been working with when we can't meet in person but they can continue to. For instance, Eszti leads two mother ministries, one at our church that has recently gone through a lot of restructuring and leadership change and one in our community that just had 3 new members join. We would appreciate your prayers for how to continue to invest in relationships and to lead well from a distance. God has a way of doing more than we could imagine when things seem the least possible, so we are leaning on him and will be excited to report on how he shows up. We will also be homeschooling Samuel and Nathan on the fly (as many have had to in these past months), while Jakob is now 7 months old and will soon be mobile.

Thanks for praying for us and supporting us. We are encouraged in these times of uncertainty that we are not alone, but we have a group of brothers and sisters in Christ carrying us with both their prayers and their generosity. Know that we are carrying you and we believe that God has made you for such a time as this. We'd love to hear how he is challenging, stretching, and using you in these uncertain times!

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Eszti teaches a baby mama club at our church while rocking Jakob to sleep.

Resources

We wanted to start sharing a few resources each newsletter that have been life giving to us.

- [Lectio 365](#): This is a daily prayer app produced by 24-7 prayer that leads you in praying and reflecting on Scripture.
- [Foundations podcast](#): This is a podcast by Ruth and Troy Simons on foundations for raising our families to be shaped daily by the word of God. (There is also a devotional, but this was Eszti's birthday wish when we thought we'd be in America for a bit this summer, so she hasn't gotten it yet and we can't directly speak to it).
- [The Big Picture Story Bible Podcast](#): The boys like listening to this podcast on longer car rides. It is a reading of the Big Picture Story Bible.



Top: Eszti teaches horsemanship. Bottom: Mark teaching at retreat and the boys helping.

Praises and Prayer Requests

- We praise God for his faithfulness in meeting us where we are and for empowering us to fulfill his call.
- We praise Jesus for the many ministry opportunities we had this summer and for how he met people through them.
- We are thankful for the opportunity to partner with IHS Global and work on the "Salt and Light" training.
- We ask for prayer for the pilot "Salt and Light" training to happen over zoom this October and for all the preparations that need to be made for that to happen.
- We ask prayer for wisdom and creativity on how to continue to invest in the relationships Jesus has given us despite us having to be in lockdown and society as a whole continuing to meet in person.
- We ask for health--especially for Samuel as he is at high risk.
- We ask for prayer for homeschooling this fall (really indefinitely) and for the boys as they won't be able to have interactions with their friends.
- The two older boys both need some therapies, so we ask for prayers that these needs could be safely and effectively met.



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