

WORLD REPORT

July 2009

Update from Christian & Martha Bastke

Dear Friends,

Christian and I have returned safely from our most recent ministry journey. We traveled to Denmark, England, the Faeroe Islands, Germany and Holland. Some of the places we visited this spring enabled us to maintain long-time relationships with believers in Christ. For us it is always a joy to renew contact with Christians who are growing in their faith towards spiritual maturity and are serving the Lord, whether in their home church or in a missionary capacity overseas. We also met with Christians who appeared rather indifferent to important biblical principles of Christian living, something which often also showed up in their children. Such observations made us rather sad.

The place we spent most time during our travels were the Faeroe Islands, located in the North Atlantic between Norway and Iceland. The islands are named after sheep which were brought over from Ireland by monks about 1500 years ago. For Christian it was his fourth visit there but my first. We got on board LOGOS HOPE in Edinburgh, Scotland. The vessel is the latest of two missionary ships of Operation Mobilization. From Edinburgh we sailed to Torshavn, the capital of the Faeroes.



Torshavn, the capital of the Faeroe Islands

My first impression, as we slowly slipped into the harbor of Torshavn, was a landscape more dramatic than anything I have ever seen. The 18 islands are of volcanic origin and therefore not part of the original creation. Most of them are close enough to be either connected by bridge or underwater tunnel. They are cone shaped mountains with steep slopes swooping into the sea. At the base of most mountains are crayon colored houses cuddled together, each with a view of the sea. And where are the trees? Well, there are none. Lack of deep soil, strong winds, and an aggressive sheep population prevent trees from taking root and thriving.

The fact that about 25% of the total population of 49,000 on the islands is Christians in the biblical sense has, not surprisingly, a tremendous social impact. There is a zero murder rate, almost no abortions, and house doors are rarely locked. Everywhere we went there is a helpful and friendly spirit.

Christian and I stayed on board LOGOS HOPE for nearly four weeks. We were invited to join the 360 short and long-term Christian volunteers of different age, background, culture and language, representing at least 45 countries. They are committed to communicating and demonstrating the saving love of God through Jesus Christ to the nations of the world.



On board Logos Hope in the North Atlantic

Much of our time on board was invested in getting to know and encourage as many of the OM workers as possible. As during his previous visits to OM ships over the past 25 years, Christian was also asked to give a series of relevant biblical studies for staff and visitors, preach on Sundays, and accompany as speaker, several of the ship's ministry teams on shore. In addition, he was invited back to preach in a number of local Brethren Assemblies on several islands he has visited earlier. Together we also enjoyed invitations into many homes for delicious meals and meaningful times of fellowship.

The main attraction to the people in each port and country is the book deck on the ship with over 6000 titles, both secular and Christian, at low cost. Most books are in English. LOGOS HOPE is the largest floating book store in the world. In addition there are a variety of Christian life oriented seminars and conferences being offered to different interest groups. During 2 ½ weeks in Torshavn and Klaksvik more than 17,000 visitors came on board.



Logos Hope in Klaksvik, Faeroe Islands

We returned from the Faeroes via Belfast in Northern Ireland to England for a teaching visit at the Capernwray Bible School and stop-over with long-time friends in other parts of the country. On our way south we encountered car trouble on the motorway which could not be repaired in a nearby garage. Fortunately, the car which was made available to us by Christian friends in Germany was still under warranty. We were given courtesy cars in England and in Denmark, where we responded

to invitations for biblical instruction in Christian living and service, and for Sunday services in free churches in Aalborg, Hirtshals and Copenhagen. Once again we were encouraged by the positive response of many to the Lord and His Word.



Peter, Sara & Nathaniel with Martha in Paris

While in England a call came from our son Peter in Mali, West Africa. He was required to take a week's course in air transport quality assurance in Prague and would be flying via Paris with a stop-over. Peter was going to bring Sara and our grandson Nathaniel along. Taking the Eurostar Express Train from London under the English Channel, Christian and I met up with them in Paris for a few days of family reunion and sightseeing.

Among the ministry opportunities ahead of us between September and November in Europe is going to be a rather unusual venue. Christian has been asked to join a crew of 9 fishermen on board a trawler for daily Bible teaching while fishing herring in the North Sea. All of the men are genuine Christians from the Faeroes, including the captain.

Thank you for taking the time to read our news update. We are especially grateful to all who keep identifying with our international ministry through prayer and giving. Yours as ever in Christ's service, Martha

Email address: bastke@iclt.org

MISSION SUPPORT ADDRESS

International Christian Leadership Training
P.O. Box 705, Fallbrook CA 92088, USA