



**Poland: Treasure & Tragedy**

### **Did you know?**

Famous for its tragic history, castles, composers, and culture...as well as beautiful countryside and fascinating cities, Poland is a country worth exploring. (Did you know that Copernicus was Polish?) Perhaps not so well known are accounts of their generous acts of kindness. Only a few decades ago many Polish people made incredible sacrifices to save the lives of their Jewish neighbors. "The citizens of Poland have the world's highest count of individuals who have been recognized by Yad Vashem of Jerusalem for saving Jews from extermination during the Holocaust in World War II. As of 1 January 2019, there are 6,992 Polish men and women recognized... as 'Righteous Among the Nations.'" [Wikipedia.org] For the people of Poland, such acts of compassion were extremely dangerous because entire households were exterminated for harboring or helping the Jews. Did you know that the factory where Oskar Schindler saved 1,200 Jews from the ovens at Auschwitz is located in Krakow, Poland?

In recent times the Polish people again demonstrated their readiness to give sacrificially for the sake of refugees fleeing ISIS who were pouring into their country from Syria and Iraq. Both the government and many Polish churches gave generously to help these desperate and destitute people. Staying with Polish believers, we experienced their hospitality and were amazed by their stories and examples of caring, giving, and loving other people at great personal cost. We went to teach and encourage, but we found ourselves on the receiving end as they lived out the heart of Peter's letter: demonstrating "fervent love for one another," showing "hospitality to one another," and using their gifts "as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:8-10 NKJV)

The current population of Poland is 38,021,063 as of August 2019. (Worldometers.info) While Poland is listed as 10% non-religious and 89.6% Christian, that may be further broken down into 85.7% Roman Catholic, 1.5% Orthodox, and only 0.44% Protestant (including approximately 0.3% Evangelical). (Operation World) Local pastors in Warsaw estimate that there may be 50,000 Bible-believing and practicing followers of Jesus, which puts the percentage at 0.001%. Unreached People Groups are considered by missiologists today to be ethnolinguistic people groups in which less than 2% have accepted the gospel of Christ. Poland clearly fits that category.

We were invited by the pastor of Good Shepheard Church in Warsaw to teach the Epistle of 1 Peter to the church families. We travelled to a camp and conference center near Krakow and opened God's word daily for six days as we sought to encourage them from the Apostle Peter's teaching to "Stand firm in your faith." Note some of the responses to that teaching below.





## Responses to Teaching on 1 Peter:

We were grateful to hear the testimonies of how God spoke to various hearts during the week.

- "It was really encouraging for me as a young mother to learn how to persevere in the trials I face every day."
- "The teaching was very encouraging for me and for others who I heard discussing how to apply this in my small discussion group."
- "In my high school, I do not know of a single dedicated Christian. So this was very encouraging to hear how we can stand for Christ even against opposition."
- "I learned to trust God with my trials."
- "I learned that it is important to love difficult people."
- "I learned that it is important to keep going all the way to the end."

## Fall 2019 Prayer Needs

- ⦿ Praise the Lord for His provision for Michael's parents as they moved to NC this spring and summer.
- ⦿ August—Sing Conference in Nashville, TN
- ⦿ August—Visit to our daughter & family in Alaska
- ⦿ September—Czech Republic for board meetings of Integrity Life Ministry.
- ⦿ September—Teaching and mentoring in Burundi, East Africa [Funding still needed]



Jacqueline Armstrong—Finally Home

Dr. Larry & Jacqui Armstrong, beloved friends & colleagues, have modeled excellence in missions for over five decades. They served together in the Philippines, Australia, Ukraine, Bosnia, and trained leaders in Asia Biblical Seminary.

Jacqui served humbly and tirelessly beside Larry and kept learning languages well into her 70's. She was called home Sunday, August 4. Pray for Dr. Larry as he grieves the profound loss of his lifelong partner.



Honor to Whom Honor is Due

On June 23rd, Michael was privileged to present a lifetime achievement award on behalf of the board of DNA Global Network to Pastor Jerry Lancaster for 45 years of pastoral leadership in world missions.

During that time Pastor served on multiple mission and ministry boards, appointed hundreds of missionaries and traveled extensively encouraging missionaries. Thank you Pastor Jerry!



*Because of your faithful support and prayers, we were able to mentor and encourage three young Polish couples who are planting churches in three cities of Poland.*

*Join us in prayer that they will persevere to see much fruit that remains in this challenging nation of unreached people.*

*Grateful for your partnership,*

*Michael & Jo Beth*

Gifts to this ministry are tax deductible. Checks may be mailed to the address below or online donations made via our website.