

Parakletos News Letter July 2021

Parakletos Ministry

We exist to facilitate the church to be a safe, honest, and intimate place to meet, know, and grow in Christ and His Body.
Parakletos creates a safe place through means of individual and marital counseling, teaching, and mentoring.
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Dear Friends,

Even though our lives here are still affected by the coronavirus, the beginning of the summer has been time of removal of government restrictions. It feels really good to be able to sit with someone in café, to visit places or shop just with a face mask on. It has been so many ups and downs that we know that it probably is not yet over completely. But still normal things we had been accustomed to have much greater value and it is pleasant to enjoy them.

We hope that your realities also become easier in everyday functioning. And that we slowly can give thanks to God for all that he has lead us through. We realize that an area that has been significantly affected were relationships. It helps just to realize how valuable these connections are and how much we need them. Thanks God for all the close people he gave us even during these uneasy times.

Because relationships are focus of our ministry, in the last eighteen months we had many opportunities to serve to those whom God sent to us. Even if it was only through internet. Our lives as well as, hopefully, theirs, have been enriched. And we understand better our need for the most important relationship with God. We cannot see him face to face but through faith we live with him. A connection much more stable and fast than any internet line.

Webinars for Pastors

We had more opportunities to do presentations via internet than ever before. We did several seminars for Christian leaders or pastors. The range from small group leaders in one dynamically growing church to specialized themes for pastors. One specific timely practical theme was *How to Care for Oneself* during the pandemics. We did several meetings about that topic. Sometimes it was just a lecture, other times there was also discussion in smaller groups. As much as we have observed, the discussions was lively. One aspect which was particularly valued was that the current experience of pastors was named, described and denominated. It was like a relief when things start to take shape. We also attempted to encourage pastors to look back and evaluate what they went through in the past year. That was done in a hope that they would be able more intentionally to process their personal experience but also to be able to communicate with each other and support each other.

It was interesting that some pastors not only dealt with an immediate situation but seemed to desire to use this time for their growth. With a group of pastors we opened discussion about dilemma of being *Overworked Or Idle*. It was really about an issue of responsibility of the pastor. What pastor should and what he should not feel responsible for. The theme arose during one seminar for pastors. And even though that is a sensitive topic, pastors were during the webinar really involved. They were honest and very vulnerable because each of them struggle with a question: Should I do more? Obviously, that was a real but often private unexpressed burden in their ministries.

Programs at English Camps

We did programs for two English Camps. Because it was impossible for the US teams to come, those camps were organized with help of some in-country missionaries. The picture is one group afternoon activity from one of the camps.



We did some talks. The topics were relationships during pandemics or emotions in relationships. The purpose of those camps was evangelism so these themes were used to present our need for the gospel and for Christ. Especially the theme of emotions started a spirited debate because it obviously was touching people's needs and struggles. Several people afterwards shared with us their life stories. That is always precious.

Pastors Support

Some of the pastors we work with have been dealing with very difficult church or personal situations. Our contact with those intensified as they were consulting with us both next steps they should take and also how to personally manage the increased stress levels. During high pressure periods we were in regular communication. In their words they would have not been able to deal with those issues without that opportunity each time to discuss and affirm their course of action.

For us it has been interesting to see that not only they move to a resolution of the difficulties but they also grew personally and spiritually through those struggles. They became stronger leaders with greater sanctification in their lives.

Fall Plan

We have several conferences planned for the fall. But with the experience from the last year, we know that the plan may change. In that case it is very probable that some form of online presentation will substitute the seminars. We just know that we have to be flexible.

Family

On the last day of July Kristýna has her wedding. With Rasmus, her boyfriend, they decided that it will take place in Denmark at the sea shore. Supposedly, a very romantic place (provided the weather is good). Main reason for Denmark was that at the time when they made the decision, Denmark was most accessible for travel from other countries. We really look forward to the wedding. Jana also will be there. Because we have not seen her almost for a year, it will be great to be with together.

In all that we really appreciate that you stand with us! Thank you!

We pray for God's protection and refreshing summer for you!

Pavel and Julka Raus

For financial support from the US you can send tax deductible contributions to Bridge to Life Ministries, 17194 Van Wagoner Rd, Spring Lake, MI 49456. Make the check out to Bridge to Life and designate the gift for CCMCR or Parakletos.

Or send check to LeadingEdge, PO Box 27, Strasburg, OH 44680 for Parakletos. Online giving at:

<https://www.leadedge.org/parakletos>.

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