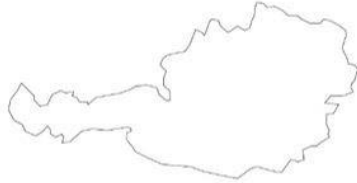


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HATCHER UPDATE - JANUARY 2021

Dear Praying Friends,

As you pray for us, you may wonder what life looks like for us in the midst of COVID. Here in Austria, we are under strict lock-down orders. Aside from taking walks and an occasional trip to the grocery store, we have to hunker down as if there were a blizzard outside. We have very little direct contact with other people. To give you a glimpse into our lives these days, I want to tell you about my/our last 24 hours. I can't say that this is a typical day in our lives, because it was a little crazier than usual. But many of the pieces are normal parts of most days.

8-10pm on Tuesday – Lynette and I meet on Zoom with two young couples for Bible study. They are the ages of our children. Their little ones are restless, but we manage to discuss John 12:1-8. I had asked them if they would help me prepare for a message I was going to be preaching on this very passage. They take up the challenge and have really good insights. This little group gives us great joy. With God's help we are making disciples and that is AWESOME! I get to bed late.

At 5am I am awake. My bladder makes me get up, and I start my day (pretty normal for me – I wish it weren't!). My morning routine includes meditating on Deuteronomy 5:21 (my goal is to read Deuteronomy s l o w l y this year). I write about a page of random thoughts in my journal about the passage. (I'm not too good at journaling, so this stretches me.) As usual, I get distracted and my good intentions to spend more time in prayer get sidelined. (Shouldn't

I be better at this by now?)

7:00 – I head to the office (in the basement). My heart is filled with a desire to help Kristiana and Cory get to Austria. My mind has been working on a to-do list. So, before tackling my real jobs, I spend about an hour writing up a document in German needed for their visa application. It's not my job, but she is our daughter, and whatever I can do to help her and Cory and the grands get to Austria I would go through fire and high water to do it. Never mind that I have a busy day ahead.

9:00-10:10 is a scheduled Zoom call with my field leader in Romania. Good leadership stuff. I'm loving it. After the call, Lynette gets on Zoom to talk with the FL's wife. They live in a small village in southern Romania, not far from the Bulgarian border. They need the contact and encouragement.

10:15 – I eat breakfast. I am trying to do the 16-8 intermittent fasting, so these are my first calories for the day. Yoghurt and Müsli in a teacup, followed by coffee and one of Lynette's banana muffins with butter. I wonder for a split second why I am not losing weight.

I spend the rest of the morning until **after 1 pm** "focusing like a laser beam" on my dissertation, actually making pretty good progress, but still feeling behind schedule. I shoot off a few emails and start feeling hungry.

At exactly 1:24pm I get an unexpected call. A young man whom we know well and deeply care about is frustrated and angry. He is threatening serious harm. We talk. The Lord directs the conversation, and I have an idea. Tensions dissipate. I need to make a couple more calls. The Lord prepares a way forward. Another friend, a Christian and social work professional, is willing to help. She encourages me. I have this feeling that God intervened and brought our friend back from the brink. I still feel the adrenaline but am very glad.

2:00 – Lynette gets home from the grocery store. I am still on the phone, but get off by 2:15 to gobble down some lunch (fresh Austrian bread with cheese spread and pesto). I am still eating when my afternoon meetings on Zoom start at 2:30. I keep the camera off to finish lunch. Today is the first of a three-day GEM leadership conference, that should have been in Rome. There are about 90 on the call. I have no formal responsibilities aside from leading a breakout group of six.

By 5pm I am tired of Zoom. The call was good but intense. The last hour was on a difficult topic. I wind down by looking at some US news – mistake.

5:30 – dinner with Lynette. Lentil soup by candle light. We hold hands and pray like we do every day.

We play a game of cribbage, and I beat her soundly. She has won 7 of the last 9 games. I gloat.

We chat a bit and I feel a nudge to make a call. A very special friend who lives nearby is about 75 and not in great health. I wonder if she has signed up for the COVID vaccine. I call and we talk for 20 min. Speaker phone is on, so Lynette is in on the call. Our friend had been hesitant about the vaccine. I tell her our mutual doctor friend had already taken it and Lynette and I had signed up. That is all she needs to know. Lynette sends her the link. **It is nearly 8pm.**

We are thinking of some friends in the US whose Christmas card just arrived (after seven weeks). We haven't seen them for over three years. I write an email to ask about setting up a call.

Days End – Lynette and I talk about our day. It was really full – and a bit strange. We think it would be fun to tell you about it.

Thank you for praying for us. God is building His Kingdom as He always does: one moment and one person at a time – even during COVID.

Yours in Christ,

Jim and Lynette