

## HATCHER UPDATE - DECEMBER 2020

Dear praying friends,

On Wednesday this past week our Kagran church's preaching team of five met on an online platform (what else!). Sharing the preaching and teaching is common practice in our small churches in Austria, even when we can afford a pastor. While it is encouraging to have five, all of us are stretched thin. During our call this past week, the topic came up of how to encourage emerging leaders, mentoring them and giving them opportunities to grow in ministry. As we brainstormed together, eight names surfaced. Five of these are young men involved in the two Bible studies Lynette and I lead, and two of those we have seen come to saving faith in the past few years. The preaching team's call reminded me of the responsibility we all have to disciple others, who in turn can disciple others. As Paul said to Timothy: "What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2. Tim. 2:2) Please pray for these five (Lukas, Daniel, Ernst, Fogii, and Josef) and also for us as we look for ways to pour our lives into these and others, with whom the Lord has entrusted us. Our earnest prayer is to multiply disciples.



My view on November 2 during my early morning time alone with God. We enjoyed a lovely fall.

## BAO

One of the joys of the research I am doing is hearing the testimonies of many people who have been blessed by BAO's courses over the years.

- “[Through BAO] my enthusiasm for God and his Word has grown significantly.”
- “[Through BAO] my love for Jesus has grown along with my amazement and gratitude to God”
- “[Through BAO] I became more confident in interpreting the Scriptures, sharing the gospel, and leading Bible studies.”
- “[BAO] has given me deep insights into the Scriptures and has encouraged me to preach God's Word.”
- “[BAO helped me] grow in discipleship, in understanding the Bible, and in confidence.”
- “The [BAO] course led directly to the planting of a new church.”

Lynette and I first came to Austria in 1986 to work with the newly established ministry of BAO. Since that time, literally thousands across Austria and even beyond have taken BAO courses. According to the research I have done, BAO's impact on Austria's small but growing evangelical movement, has been significant. Needs, technology, and people, however, have changed over the years, and the BAO team is in the process of addressing these new realities. Can we ask you to do two things of critical importance for the future of this transformational ministry?

First, please pray for us.

- Pray for wisdom as we make important decisions about BAO's future.
- Pray for new workers. We desperately need people who can help us deal with new technologies, re-design courses, and who can inspire and motivate a new generation of emerging leaders.
- For financial resources.

Second, as the Lord leads you, please consider helping BAO financially. This COVID year has hit this ministry especially hard, with courses canceled or not even started. Some funding sources have also disappeared due to key people moving or passing away, including a 2,000 Euro annual gift. Giving through GEM is possible ([www.gemission.org](http://www.gemission.org) – click “donate”, then scroll down to “projects” and type “BAO”).



Jim preaching from home on December 6, 2020.

**Other news and prayer items:**

- We are sad to inform you that we have once again had to cancel our next trip to the US, planned for February 24 – April 8. We will let you know, if/when we can reschedule.
- Pray for Kristiana, Cory, and the girls as they explore how they can move to Austria in 2021. Once again, visas are the primary obstacle. Pray that they will not be discouraged by this long delay while they wait in Illinois.
- Pray for my regional leadership responsibilities. I have walked five fields through seven leadership transitions over the past three years, including one happening right now. These changes can be challenging, but they often represent exciting opportunities.
- Pray for continuing progress on my dissertation.
- Pray for Lynette's Daniel study and our other small groups as they continue online. Pray esp. for us as we invest in the lives of those whom God has entrusted to us.

Lynette and I are immensely grateful to God for the outpouring of his blessings this year – in spite of the craziness, disappointments, and deep grieving at times due to COVID. We stayed remarkably well; the canceled travel has given us time for other important matters; and through your partnership in prayer and giving, you all have carried us. THANK YOU.

Yours in Christ this Advent season.  
Jim and Lynette