

IN TOUCH MISSION

i n t e r n a t i o n a l

Monthly

1 June 2016

"For He who has compassion on them will lead them and will guide them to springs of water," -Isaiah 49:10

5 Ways we are Influencing a Community and Building Trust

"When we came to Onseepkans, the Lord gave me a portion of Scripture over and over again," ITMI's [Gerhard le Roux](#) said in a recent interview.

Thus says the LORD, "In a favorable time I have answered You, And in a day of salvation I have helped You; And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people, To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages;

Saying to those who are bound, 'Go forth,' To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' Along the roads they will feed, And their pasture will be on all bare heights.

They will not hunger or thirst, Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them And will guide them to springs of water. — Isaiah 49:8-10.

This is exactly what the le Roux family is doing. They are teaching local people how God can set them free!

1. Showing God's Power and Care

One of Gerhard's primary projects is food production through gardening and raising milk goats and sheep for

meat. He and his family try to be self-sustainable through small-scale farming, and teach others to do the same, as well as they can.

An out-of-the-ordinary early summer has prevented plants from growing properly. Daytime temperatures are soaring above 108° F.

Gerhard has tried shading his fruit and vegetables and watering them, yet the plants are overheated and cannot germinate properly.

"It is very weird, like there was no spring. The plants like the spring, but it went straight into summer," he said.

Gerhard and his godly wife, Elmane, and their eight wonderful children moved to Onseepkans and founded Onseepkans Mission in 2011. Since then, they have made influential friends among other farmers and community leaders. Slowly it is paying off.

South Africa is going through a period of drought. All indications show that there are difficult times ahead. Food prices, especially fresh produce, will experience sharp increases. Already potatoes have doubled in price, and this is just the beginning, Gerhard said.

There is a community leader, an influential man, "...we have developed a relationship with him," Gerhard said. This man was moved when local people gathered for a prayer meeting for rain, and Gerhard was asked to pray. Shortly thereafter they had a wonderful rain and the whole area greened up. This was a tangible sign of the power of God to the community leader and to the people. When God caused the rain He also watered the Gospel seeds planted in the community, which will hopefully bear the fruit of salvation for many.

Step by step, Gerhard and his family are spreading the influence of Christ among a people who are in bondage to sin and a dark worldview.

2. Planting Gospel Seeds with Onseepkans' Children

Allow Gerhard to explain in his own words.

"We have a group of children that regularly come on Sundays, in whom we built into spiritually," he said.

The Gospel is going out to people of every age group.

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Introducing New ITMI Partner, Johan Leach!



Johan is hard to forget after you meet him for the first time. His passion for life and love for Jesus leak out from all sides as he welcomes you into his inner circle. Johan knows no strangers. You can't forget that strong staccato South African accent as he tries to squeeze 50 passionate words into a 10 word sentence, explaining his unwavering commitment to faithfully take the gospel to the unreached of Zambia.

Johan is one of ITMI's newest partners and his passion and current ministry is to train teams that make disciples to cross the Zambezi River and fan out across the forsaken and forgotten Zambian bush between Angola and that crocodile infested Zambezi River.

Johan and Leslie, his wife, teach the local "evangelists" to use the Genesis-to-Christ method of evangelism. "If you just tell them about Jesus and not about Genesis and why Jesus needed to come to earth, they will just accept Jesus and add him to their other ancestor worship." ITMI has already purchased some sturdy canoes for Johan and his teams so in the last rainy season they could still paddle the greatly swollen river and take the gospel to the isolated people. Johan also has worked for years with ITMI's **Timothy Keller** and **Charl van Wyk**. Welcome aboard Johan and Leslie, we are excited to help empower you both to greater and farther ministry there in the bush of Zambia.

-Steve Evers

Could you "adopt" a widow for \$50/ month?

If 100 supporters pledged \$50/month, we could preserve the testimony of Bethesda Home!

Last month we presented a pressing need for financial support from ITMI's Bethesda Home for widows in Arad, Romania.

The need is still acute.

Bethesda Home is a great testimony to the unsaved staff and extended Romanian families that see first-hand the difference between Bethesda's quality of care and what would

happen in a state-run elderly care facility.

The severely restricted mobility of the six women requires a staff of full-time nurses, which generates the majority of the home's expenses. The monthly expense of \$747/month for each widow is also elevated by oppressively high payroll taxes.



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3. Influencing Culture through Testimonies and Door-to-Door Contact.

A team of co-workers from Moreson Farm - Lydia, Beauty, Denzil, Andre and Uncle George - helped build trust in Onseepkans for a week last February.

Among the team members was a faithful woman named Lydia, who herself had met Christ in 1996 at a youth camp at Moreson Farm. She has been serving with Moreson ever since. Lydia and Beauty were influenced by Gerhard in years past. Beauty is like an older sister to his children and Lydia helped raise the le Roux children.

Denzil was a new Christian, having come from a gang and drug lifestyle. Now he uses his testimony of God's grace to invite others to seek new life in Christ. Andre, himself a recent convert to Christ, also gave his testimony. Uncle

George, co-founder of Moreson Farm with Gerhard, shared, too.

Three teams, made up of the le Roux children and the Moreson team, went out morning and afternoon each day into the three local neighborhoods, visiting door-to-door and at the local health clinic.

"The Lord went before us, opening people's hearts, and the people welcomed the teams. The results were that we prayed for many people and we discovered many people who needed discipleship. Also, two young men went back to Moreson with the team for spiritual guidance," Gerhard reported.

4. Building Trust Through Local Relationships

Because they have grown and sold lucerne (hay), the le Roux family has many relationships with local farmers.

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From the Director

Dear Team,

Greetings! I'm fresh off an extended trip to **Poland, Romania and Ukraine**. We have a lot of great stories of what God is doing in Eastern Europe with Bible translations, street evangelism, homeless ministry, orphans, widow care and forgotten people discipleship.

Our newsletter would need to be ten or more pages if we tried to share all that is going on in that area of the world. Eastern Europe is not as much in the news and headlines as say Africa, but nonetheless, there are many spiritual challenges being faced.

The Eastern Europeans still remember with crystal clarity a not-too-distant time during communist occupation that brought them poverty and imprisoned them for years. Those memories are being reawakened as they keep an eye on "Big Bear" Russia. The giant country's rumbling and grumbling as it gobbles up land in Ukraine and moves troops around its old stomping grounds is unsettling. There is clear anxiety in Eastern Europe these days, both politically and socially.

Our U.S. Presidential politics and current social/gender distractions have also added to the concern for the future. This anxiety - real and discussed - is not keeping our ITMI Polish partners from remaining focused on the people and ministries that God has laid before them.

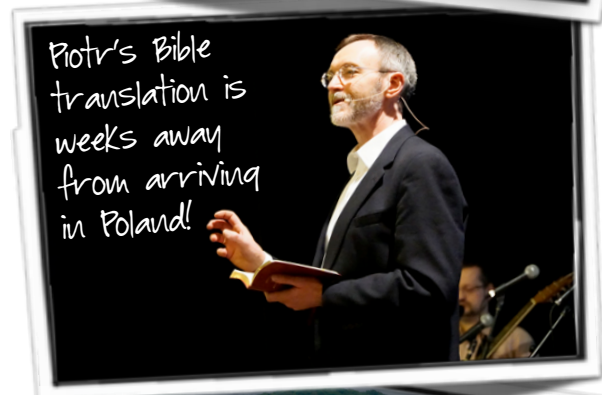
[Piotr Zaremba](#) is anxious, very anxious. Not about the Big Bear or politics. No, Piotr is anxious to get his hands on the first printing of his full Old and New Testament Bible, which is being printed in Belarus as you read this. Fifteen years of work and the first of the end product is only weeks away from arriving on his doorstep in Poznan, Poland.

While I was in Piotr's home, he received another shipment of Bibles that have standardized on Piotr's translation. **Franklin Graham's** ministry, **Samaritan's Purse**, wanted to give Poland a beautifully illustrated Children's New Testament, with compelling illustrations and clear, accurate and readable Polish translation. They asked Piotr for use of his translation. Piotr is always glad to share the fruits of his years of faithful translation that many of you have helped him create.

[Adi Ban](#) took me on a road trip to an area in Western Ukraine that once was part of Romania. After one of the many border changes decades ago, there were settlements of Romanians that have now lived there for generations. They were not aware that there existed such a country as Romania, where people spoke as they did, that they once were a part of. Adi met a young Romanian missionary couple that left the comforts of home and went to live in one of these remote and mostly uneducated Romanian settlements in Ukraine. We have some great stories of how God is moving in this community that, for all intents and purposes, seems to have stepped out of the early 1900's in lifestyle, culture and existence. Stay tuned for stories that will amaze you and also warm your heart because of the display of God's goodness.

The Eastern European believers want me to tell each of you, "Thank you very much" for standing with them, helping them push back the godless communist mindset, and for enabling them to be blessed with the opportunity to share God's truth and life. We thank you also.

In His Service,



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Such relationships are very beneficial, providing commerce, communication and fellowship. Several local farming couples have taken a shine to the eight le Roux children and gave Christmas gifts to each of them this year.

A local farmer who buys lucerne also recently sold Gerhard some sheep. Gerhard had planned to buy a ram, but after the farmer and his wife discussed the deal, they decided instead to give them the ram as a gift. To that they added two boxes of fruit jam for the le Roux family.

Building relationships with locals cannot be emphasized enough. Commercial sheep farming is the most longstanding economic contribution to the area. So it is also a point of contact for Gerhard among the farmers.

"The other day I went to a local shop to buy a cool drink for the wife and children. A man in the queue began talking

about a politician in the Western Cape. I told him that what people need more than politicians is the Lord. He asked who I was."

When Gerhard told him his name, the man said, "I know you from church in Pofadder. I heard you speak and I like what you had to say."

Step by step, the influence of Christ is growing in this small, isolated desert community.

5. Demonstrating the Gospel at Local Outreaches.

Gerhard is serving on the local health committee of the medical clinic. Through ITMI's help, the family also had multiple opportunities to give gifts in the community and demonstrate hospitality last winter.

"We won more trust from the community," Gerhard said of one of the events.

It is important to understand that Gerhard is a white Afrikaner. He has gained so much respect among the church leaders in the area that the all-colored Pofadder church leaders trust him to shepherd their members in Onseepkans, even though he is not even a member.

Little by little, God is expanding their sphere of influence and allowing His Word to go out in Onseepkans!

What You Can Do

Pray for the light of the Gospel to fill the culture of Onseepkans, and all of South Africa. Pray that people will respond by faith in Christ. Petition for the le Roux family to have endurance and joy as they obey God in this work. If the Lord leads you to help Gerhard and his family, they will faithfully use it to share God's truth.

-Steve Lee



For Praise

1. S. Africa – Onseepkans Mission - Seeds planted and growing influence following the Moreson Team's visit.
2. Poland – Daniel Machlowski – A beautiful God-honoring marriage ceremony uniting two missionaries.
3. Poland - Piotr Zaremba - Full Old and New Testament Polish Bible Translation will be delivered any day now!
4. Zambia - We anticipate much fruit from ITMI's newest partnership with Johan Leach.
5. South Sudan - Political first steps in a good direction were taken last month that could possibly lead to peace.

For Prayer

1. Ukraine – Adi Ban – Fruitful ministry for Adi's missionary contact in the harsh environment of this Ukrainian village.
2. S. Africa - Onseepkans Mission - That many in the community would respond in faith to Jesus.
3. Eastern Europe - Believers to be a faithful presence amid political and social anxiety.
4. Romania - Bethesda Home - Provision for the cost of caring for elderly widows in need.

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