



## Pieter & Nora Kalkman International Ministries

*Life-changing missions in Europe through partnerships  
with European Baptist Federation*



### **March 2009 Newsnotes -- ALARM & Four weekdays fundraising**

THE ALARM WENT OFF with the results of the World Mission Offering from Fall 2008, finally finalized (it takes a couple of months into the new year, before the administration of gifts through the denominational channels is completed). It became clear in the last week of February that the economical crisis was hitting International Ministries very hard. With a \$6 million budget and only \$4 million income, a steep adjustment to expenses was demanded. Many programs got cancelled, commitments terminated, and budgets reduced. Also, personnel were affected: 16 % of Staff at the home office was released, and missionaries were asked to put all their focus and attention to fundraising. The timeline for meeting our 100% support target was changed from September next year to September this year.

Missionary support changing from denominational support to individually raised support, is a seismic change for both missionaries as well as the churches. Churches and its members were used to the fact that their missionaries were taken care off financially through the denominational giving structures. However, over the recent years, denominational giving is not just in decline anymore, but it is in sharp decline, and it is not common for many Church members to give rather anonymous to the greater cause, but people want and prefer to give individually to people they know, to missionaries and their ministries that they know.

Also, for us missionaries, this is a 180 degrees change of approach, compared to when we were commissioned nearly 9 years ago. At that time we were prohibited to ask for money for projects or approach people/ churches for individual support. We only could promote WMO (World Mission Offering) or other denominational giving. Even, during our last deputation year in the US, when the first signs of changes in giving patterns were noticed, we were still and firmly instructed to ask for the general fund, rather than for our ministry.

We had special visits with missionary friends here in Prague, who do raise their own support, and tried to learn from them. Further we used most of March to try to change our address system with contacts of churches and individuals that we accumulated over the past 9 years, from a traditional card-based system to an electronic version. We had halted pursuing that, some years ago, when we heard that our headquarters was working on an electronic address data system for missionaries; but now we decided to start with our own version, even if this would mean that we might have to do the work again, when the mission-version comes out. We also tried to identify about 30 people that would probably be willing to hold a fundraising event by inviting some friends or use a Bible-study, a prayer group, or home-cell group to announce our need for support, and we sent them a Czech Challenge package with small items that could be used for promoting the support of our ministry in small groups. If you have a small group, invite us to do a conference call with your group.

We had always hesitated to spend time directed to our support base rather than to ministry. During our first year in the Czech Republic, I spoke a missionary, who shared that he used 4 days per week on fundraising and 1 day on ministry. We felt uncomfortable with that thought, and spend somewhat consciously less than one day per week on contact with our support base or fundraising. However, now we are urged to spend as much time as we can to connect with our support base.

We want to take this situation from the Lord, and we are seeing this now, as a temporary priority. We see the benefit, and feel happy and even comfortable, to interest more people for mission in Europe. We are committed to sustain a high level of contact with our support base, and expanding our support base, devoting full weeks now in this season, and projecting at least one day per week in the future, on fostering a love for the lost in Europe, and raising interest in the hearts of those who can not go out themselves, but whom we can represent here in Europe. Praise the Lord for this urge to involve more people in mission!

Greetings and Blessings,

Pieter & Nora