

Ukraine

(Nikolay Niuniaiev, Hensie van der Merwe)

Thank you for your prayers. The Lord blessed us during the Leadershiptraining LST. We had 13 students, most of whom had attended the Basic Training last year. According to their testimonies, they did not expect the LST to provide them with such a substantial amount of knowledge and practical skills. Unfortunately, however, the full-scale war of aggression, now in its fifth year, has left the people of Ukraine so emotionally and mentally exhausted that it was difficult for our students to process and absorb all the information to the extent they (and we as trainers) would have liked.

Nevertheless, despite everything, most of them identified the daily Bible devotions on the theme of Moses as the most valuable part of the training. Other things mentioned as valuable in feedback was learning the deep Christian values of a leader, learning about the importance of understanding the kids they serve and the love of God for the kids. Great value was found in the experience of working as a team, and creating and leading a club meeting around one important spiritual truth and how to understand the biblical context in order to find this spiritual truth in a passage.

One woman, who is a representative of a potential partner organisation, said that the training showed her that God had not "written her off" when it came to ministry to teenagers, and that she is actually capable of doing much more than she thought. This was a great encouragement to her as she serves Internally Displaced youth.

For us as trainers, it was a valuable experience, as we were able to identify important areas and gaps in the students' knowledge, which will help us further improve the training process. We already have plans for next year.

Unfortunately, not all of the leaders from the different clubs were able to take part in the LST. From one area of the country – which is under great fire from the enemy –, no one was able to attend and from another area, leaders have all been drafted or had to relocate because of the war. However, all four young leaders from the Odesa club were able to attend.

Please pray that our students will be able to process and put into practice what they have learned and begin using it in their ministry. Please pray for the opening of new clubs and for the growth of the leadership teams in existing clubs, as the war destroys many things and brings constant changes to people's lives and ministries.

Please also pray for wisdom for the Youngstars Ukraine team, and for our protection, strength and for peace in our country. Our city, Odesa has suffered much because of attacks, we and Ukraine need your prayers!



Teaching without electricity – Game "Gathering up Israelites" – Kolya teaching rope safety

Switzerland

(Melanie Zaugg)

At BESJ, we had a great summertime with trainings. In July we started with a Teamleader course, in the middle of July was a leader training, in the following week the Pioneer and ropes techniques training with a group from Romania. It was great to share know-how with Romanian leaders.

A week later on the same spot, there was the Basic training. We planned 3 days of adventure with roping and boating. This was a highlight for the group. In each training we had a Bible topic and we are thankful for all the conversations in all the weeks, moving people's heart.

Last weekend we had a training for canoeing. At the most places in Switzerland there was heavy meteorological disturbances. But in our destination/place we had just moments with rain and wind. God's Hand was with us!



BESJ Training – Jesus at the Centre



God is Lord over the weather – God gives us blue sky despite heavy storm in other regions

Poland

(Markus Karzelek)

This year, in addition to the Basic Training, we had two summer camps: a tent camp in Belk and a summer camp at a Christian retreat center in Wisła. The theme this year was Robinson Crusoe. We are grateful for the summer, while also planning some major changes for the years ahead.

Our Highlights

- We had four young people from Skoczów at our Basic Training. They were really motivated, so it was great to work with them in both the practical and more theoretical sessions.
- Our sixth Youngstars camp in Belk was once again a great time for everyone. We followed the story of Robinson Crusoe, who first ran away from his (heavenly) father, but then met God in difficult circumstances and began to live with Him.
- During the second summer camp in Wisła, Markus was able to take some of the older kids into the mountains for an overnight stay. This was a first for the Youngstars group from Skoczów.

Our Requests

- Our Youngstars groups in Żory and Skoczów are starting up again in September. Pray for wisdom and energy, but also that what we learned in the trainings can be put into practice.
- A new group is starting soon in Bielsko-Biała. Konrad is motivated, but needs creative ideas, wisdom and patience as a leader.
- We will start a new modular Leadership Training during this school year. Pray for wisdom for me and for endurance as I take on this new undertaking.



Youngstars by Definition: Outdoor Activities

Latvia

(Ronald Svarups)

Warm greetings from Latvia! From August 3rd to 7th we held our camp "Cietoksnis" ("The Fortress") at Kalna Skola in Madona district. The theme was Nehemiah: rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and trusting God, who is our true fortress. 20 children aged 8 to 14 took part, with a team of 12 volunteers.

Our Highlights

- The camp went much better than last year, with a positive, peaceful atmosphere all week.
- Our Latvian team took over more responsibilities than last year, so we depend less on Swiss volunteers. The team is growing both in size and in capability.
- Every day was accompanied by morning devotionals, Daily Bible studies, a theater play and evening campfires.
- A 12-year-old girl served as mini-leader for the first time and did very well.

Our Requests

- Our monthly afternoons for children (ages 8–12) restart in September – for new children and fresh strength for the team. Our aim is to double the frequency of these afternoons, but this depends on whether the team will be able to manage it.
- Three candidates have been selected to become future mini-leaders – pray that they will join in.
- Camp 2027 – wisdom about the theme, and about the place: we might change the venue and run the camp in a more outdoor way.
- Finances for next year's camp.
- Please pray especially for one boy ("M"), who has lost some of his faith in God during this year and now says he believes in reincarnation. We had many conversations with him throughout the camp – pray that the spiritual seed he received would grow.



Romania

(Simona Moasa)

Our Highlights

- We are thankful for the new generation of leaders who participated in Basic Training, there were 27 teens and young leaders
- God cared in every detail of the camp and courses (perfect weather, no accidents, good relationships, perfect kitchen staff)
- We enjoy 45 people joining a monthly donation following Florin and Dana Șaitiș's birthday campaign

Our Requests

- We pray for Xploratori Camp (ages 16–19) – we will have 22 participants
- We pray for the preparations for the Fasting and Prayer Weekend
- We need enough leaders for the children's programs at the PdF anniversary
- We ask to pray for the "Explorer Day" event on October 3rd in Sibiu – it is a public event part of the Marathon Project



Outdoor Instruction in Romania Training



Young People Trained as Leaders

Bulgaria

(Hans-Georg Gerster)

All the camps were very blessed and accident-free. Seventeen motivated leaders took part in the camp leadership training. Most of them helped out at the subsequent camps and are also planning to get involved in their local Youngstars groups. The camp for children from care homes and other socially disadvantaged backgrounds has never been as relaxed as it was this year. The participants are clearly changing, and so is their experience of the camp. At the children's camp, a dozen children made a decision for Jesus, and many of the teenagers also had special encounters with God.

Let us now pray for a good start to the local youth groups after the summer break, particularly the group in Sofia. Please also pray for our registration as a charity. At the moment, we are experiencing difficulties getting the changes to the board of directors registered. The authorities have now turned us down three times.



Camps in Bulgaria with the Topic "Robinson Crusoe"

Italy

(Abramo Manduzio)

From August 23rd to 29th, near Rome, we held a basic training course for Scout Guides (basic trainers). There were 17 participants from various Italian regions, and for the first time, we allowed couples with children to participate, thanks to two wonderful young men who cared for the children 12 hours a day! It was a truly blessed time, and with the four teachers, we made the most of every available moment for teaching. We emphasized the low rope techniques learned on the team leader course held in Italy two years ago. We were pleased to learn that two new districts will open soon, and a third "dormant" district will reopen after years of inactivity. Praise be to God for the work of Scouts in Italy!



Basic Training for Scout Leaders in Rome



Final Delivery of Diplomas with the Instructors

Austria

(Ruedi Hächler)

To our great delight, our 2026 camp season went very well. Despite the sometimes extremely hot temperatures, we were able to run all six weeks of camp without any major problems. For the first time we had junior Camp leaders in all regions this year. They settled in quickly and complemented the existing teams superbly. We are particularly grateful to have found a new campsite in Eastern Austria. Unfortunately, the previous site is no longer available due to a change in agricultural use.

We also experienced a great deal spiritually. At one of the teenager camps, many very profound conversations took place. At the children's camps, many children decided to accept Jesus as their Saviour. Others renewed their commitment to following Jesus. Our aim is for children who have not yet been connected to a local youth group to find one and to be well supported on their journey of faith.

We are planning a musical camp for the end of October. However, the current number of registrations is well below our expectations. It is even doubtful whether we will be able to run the camp at all.



Blessed Camps in Austria

Youngstars International

(Cosmin Tamas)

Highlights

- We are thankful for the opportunity to take part in the BESJ technical course in Switzerland, their teaching and openness to share their knowledge.
- We rejoice in the possibility to share knowledge and resources within the network in this summer.

Requests

- We pray for the event in November with sponsors, donors, and those who support the ministry. We need ideas, creativity and wisdom for organizing the November event.
- The Leadership Training in Cuba is starting in September. We pray for all the participants. The political situation is very difficult, the fuel and energy crisis in Cuba still omnipresent. We plan to travel there and pray that God will provide the right means of transportation. Furthermore we need wisdom and provision for everything needed to make the training in Cuba possible.