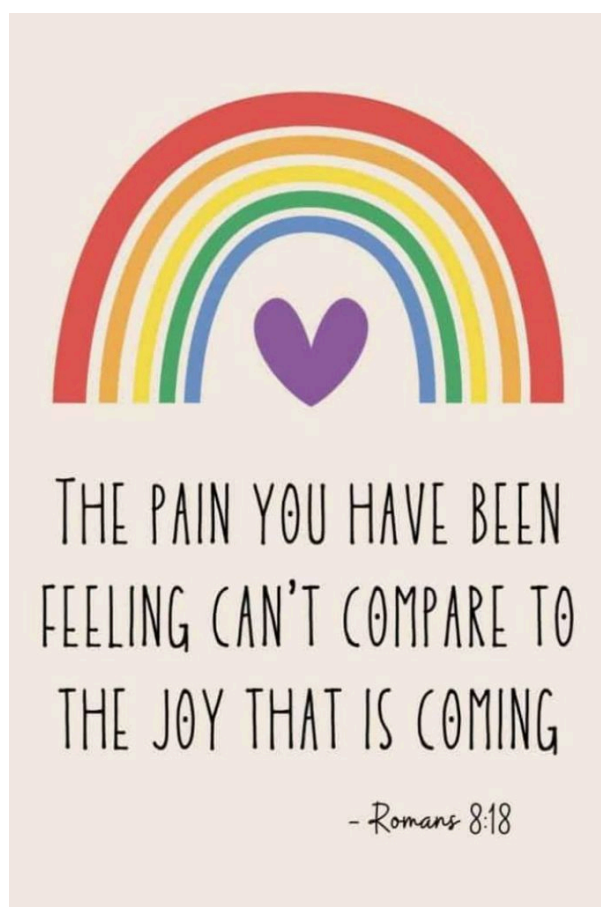


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Zeal for Kiel July 2025 Ministry News

Two Americans
serving God's people
together with you in
Germany

Watch and wait



Waiting for God to move

We meet online regularly with our Serve Globally colleagues for prayer and fellowship. At a recent meeting, Letha Kerl, Regional Coordinator for Europe, led us in a time of devotion. As Letha is getting ready to retire, she reflected on God's faithfulness over the years, the process of learning to trust his timing, and the excitement she experienced with each new adventure in mission. She and her husband, John, spent most of their adult lives on the mission field and raised 3 kids on multiple continents. Letha shared the following scripture:

Romans 8:22-28 (MSG)

22-25 All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's *within* us. The Spirit

for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

26-28 Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

We were deeply encouraged by the fact that we are not diminished by the waiting. Like an expectant mother, we grow larger (with hope, with wisdom, with joy!) as we wait for God to move. The waiting itself is not "lost time" as we might think. Just the opposite! As we wait, we are emptied of false beliefs, false perspectives and false expectations. We are also being filled with the Holy Spirit, with new inspiration, and with new purpose and vision. And we are being formed more and more into the image and likeness of Christ.

Sometimes, we get tired in the waiting because waiting is hard. When we need it most, God's spirit is right there beside us, helping us along (v. 26). Like a midwife, the Holy Spirit comes alongside us as we "labor" to work out our salvation. God's Spirit helps us to manage these birth pains and leverage them to produce good spiritual fruit. We do not wait without hope. We wait with joyful expectancy, trusting that God will complete the good work he started in us.

Just as a laboring mother endures the work set before her for the promise of new life, we, too, endure the work set before us--the hard, human and sometimes messy work as disciples of Christ--because we know the struggle will produce something far more valuable in us and through us than we can hope for or imagine.

As pastors serving in Germany, we have the privilege of watching and waiting with many. We seek to be faithful witnesses to the love and hope of Christ as we "weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice." As you will see, June was absolutely *pregnant* with opportunities to watch, wait, weep and rejoice with friends, near and far.



Waiting for baby

Speaking of watching and waiting, I (Stephanie) was invited to attend the upcoming birth of a German friend, "M." One of my greatest joys in ministry is accompanying expectant moms through pregnancy and helping them prepare emotionally and spiritually for delivery. I have found great strength in the encouragement of other women during my own pregnancies, so I welcome the opportunity to support other moms when I can.

A few weeks ago, M asked if I would serve as her support person at the hospital during labor. Without hesitation, I said "YES!" What a joy it will be to accompany M and her partner as they welcome their baby into the world. M is 43 years old and this is her first child after many years of waiting and praying for children. So, this is an especially meaningful time for her and her partner.

Please pray that the Holy Spirit would surround M and her baby for the task of labor and delivery. Pray for a quick, safe and healthy birth. And please pray that I would support her well so she feels empowered, encouraged and at ease. Her official due date is July 6, but her doctor suspects she will deliver any day now.

We praise God for the continued deepening of relationships with both the German and international communities in Kiel. We pray that God would continue to grow and bless each connection to bear good fruit for the Kingdom of God.



Waiting for a miracle

You may remember our newsletter story about an Iranian refugee named "S" who tried to leave Germany 3 years ago and was caught by the German border patrol. He was detained at an airport prison with a stern warning and threatened with deportation and/or imprisonment if it happens again. With the new government cracking down on undocumented immigrants, our dear friend has been given his official papers for deportation . He does not know when it will happen, but one day in the near future he will be picked up from his home and escorted to the airport--this time he will not have the chance to argue his case and return home.

S cannot return to Iran as he narrowly escaped the oppressive regime years ago as a Christ-follower. Going home would mean imprisonment, torture or even death. So, now he faces impossible odds. What does it mean to trust God in the waiting? Does he wait for the government to come knocking or does he try and come up with a plan to escape? All we can do is pray, listen and wait with him as he makes his decision. But the clock is ticking. Please join us in praying for S as he waits on God for a miracle.



We had the joy of hosting new Europe Regional Coordinator, Chris Peterson, in our home from 6/13-16. He preached at IKC and had fun interacting with our church. You can see the IKC church building pictured in the background. Praise God for new connections and partners in ministry!

Family news



Gabby travelled to Toulouse for 9 days to stay with Desen and her family. In June, we hosted Desen for 9 days in Kiel. The girls had a wonderful time getting to know each other and going deeper in each other's culture and language.



Each year in June, Kiel hosts the world's largest sailing regatta called "Kieler Woche" (Kiel Week). Our small city of 250,000 welcomed more than 3 million international visitors! The festival featured sailing competitions, hot air balloon rides, fireworks and over 400 concerts and performances. Maddy and Charlotte both performed on stage with Sport Tempel Kiel. Maddy danced with her hip-hop class and Charlotte with her jazz class. They did a great job! Here they are all dressed up and ready to go!

With prayer and thanksgiving...

-Praise for a great quarterly business meeting with our Serve Globally EuroTeam on 6/3.

-Praise for a wonderful visit with Desen, Gabby's French exchange partner, who stayed with us from 6/3-11.

-Praise for a meaningful visit with Chris Peterson, Europe's new Regional Coordinator, who stayed with us from 6/13-16.

-Praise for meetings with 5 different couples this month for mutual encouragement, fellowship and prayer. Praise God for the way these old and new relationships continue to develop and grow.

-Pray for Stephanie as she preaches on 7/6.

-Pray for Stephanie as she leads a summer Enneagram class at IKC! Pray for upcoming meetings on 7/8, 7/22 and 8/5.

-Pray for Phillip as he leads a workshop for new worship moderators at IKC on 7/13.

-Please pray for C, the mother of Gabby's close friend, as she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Pray that we could be an encouragement and support to their family

-Pray for a healthy and positive birth experience for M and her baby boy.

-Praise for S, an Iranian refugee living in Kiel who has been given his papers for deportation. Pray for wisdom and courage as he waits for a miracle.



Thank you for your faithful prayers, friendship and financial support! We are so grateful for your continued presence in our lives and ministry.

Have you considered joining our team of ministry partners or increasing your monthly support gift? Now is the perfect time. We are currently looking for partners to support God's work in Germany with a new monthly pledge:

- 1 partner to give \$500/month**
- 2 partners to give \$250/month**
- 3 partners to give \$100/month**
- 4 partners to give \$50/month**

To partner financially with our family in Germany, please click [here](#) to make a secure gift online.

**Or mail a check to: Evangelical Covenant Church,
P.O. Box 773420, Chicago, IL 60677.**

Please indicate "Voland mission" on your check or online gift.

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