

Celeste Dvorak: 1/28/21

Missions Month

I love to tell the story of the very first short term mission project that I went on way back in the year of 1993 (yes, I was just a wee babe). I went to Chemnitz, Germany on a 6 week Let's Start Talking project and had the VERY best experience. Oh, how that changed me. I'll share one funny story from my time there. Chemnitz seemed to be still very "East Germany" during those years and our team ended up in an apartment building that was ancient and missing a few creature comforts. I don't know why, but there was not a proper bathroom in the apartment. We had a kitchen with a sink and stove, but the toilet was outside the apartment, down a half flight of stairs in a closet of sorts. So, NO bath or shower. At all. It was certainly an adventure. We'd make due until the weekend and then we'd go to one of the local missionary's houses and get a proper bath or shower. The stories from that trip! Do you know, I also wrote a ton of letters (to my sweetheart Jim!), and used phone booths that trip!! What a blast. It changed my life.

I remember several readers from that project that God somehow, despite my naivete and complete lack of experience, used me to reach. I didn't know this until 20 years later, but at least one sweet lady that I read with became a Christian later (not just because of me, but because of many of God's faithful I'm sure). This lady and her husband and their children welcomed me into their home, took me on walks & showered me with gifts. She gave me so much more than I ever gave her. God blessed me with the knowledge that I was one seed planter on her journey. Those sweet moments of sitting over God's word and asking each other questions...those were just a very small part of that project. The other parts were small gatherings, dinners out, long walks and discovering that amazing city. God used every bit of that experience to bring me to these realizations: He can use the young, the ignorant, & naive to grow His Kingdom. He uses those who **give** to send the workers & bring His Kingdom. He will use His Word in His time in His way. He has servants in His cities and countries all over the world and each place brings a different challenge to bringing His Kingdom. He GROWS His people when they say YES and step out of their comfort zones to grow His Kingdom.

I want to encourage you to engage with Missions Month (February!!) here at The Springs. Our theme this year is Grow Your Kingdom Here. We hope that you'll engage however you can. Please join us for class online or at the building. We're going to be joined by several of our missionaries in different ways in February and during class

several of our lessons will be given by some of them. Watch your emails and social media for information about missions and about our missionary members. Pray for our missionaries by name each week. Get on our website and learn more. Pray about your part in missions. Commit to giving just a little bit more this year. Fill out a pledge card so the missions team will know what they can expect. Consider participating in a GO project. We pray that those can happen this year! Do any and all of these things. This is our year for Growth. Let's grow together on God's mission.