
Darkest Before the Dawn: An Update from Bob & Carol

1 message

Bob & Carol Marsh <bobm@converge.org>
Reply-To: Bob & Carol Marsh <bobm@converge.org>
To: dix.stu@gmail.com

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Marsh's Mission Minutes

Bob & Carol Marsh

www.converge.org/missionary/bob-carol-marsh

Bobm@Converge.org

Darkest Before the Dawn: God is in Control!

Sometimes life seems darkest just before the dawn of a new hope.

The Christmas story is like that. The people of God had been under the oppression of the Romans for decades. They were ruled by Herod, a puppet “king”, whose cruelty is demonstrated in the murder of every child under the age of two in Bethlehem and the surrounding territory. Each year they called out to God for deliverance. They prayed for salvation. They waited for the Messiah to appear who would bring freedom, deliverance, peace and salvation.



Often in our personal lives the darkness seems overwhelming. The oppression, disappointment, obstacles, failures and tragedies of life leave us feeling hopeless as our faith holds on by a thread, calling out to God for help. And then, in the darkness of night – the glory of the Lord shines out, and words of hope come to us: “Fear not...”

Our partner in Poland, pastor Robert Merez, called last week with a story of unexpected darkness and the miraculous dawn of hope. As you may have read in previous updates from us (see video [here](#)), Robert pastors an evangelical congregation in Szczecin, Poland. The congregation was founded in the 1840's, their building was erected in 1855, but was taken from them during the Communist ruled years after World War 2. After communism fell in 1989, the



building was returned, but in terrible condition. The church has done all they could to remain in it, but when the furnace gave out last year, they moved to a local school.

Despite the challenges, God has given Pastor Robert a God-sized vision for the church - a vision of the church reaching 10,000 people in Szczecin with the gospel. Part of that vision is the renovation of the building so that it can serve as a ministry hub for evangelizing the region. He has plans for a Christian radio station, a ministry training center, a Christian bookstore, and an international outreach including an international church and service center for Ukrainian (and other) refugees. It's a God-sized vision, and we have been invited to help!

The light of God's blessing shone bright when the church received a grant of 2.9 Million Polish Zloty (742,000 US Dollars) from the local government to remodel the historic building. (The photo at right is Robert receiving the grant.) The total cost will be almost twice that amount, but they got a good start!



Then the darkness rolled back in. The grant given was from a local authority – but a State building authority put a stop to the work because they had not approved the work or recognized the historic nature of the building. Robert's lawyer told him it could take months, or even years to get the approval they required.

Robert prayed, and, rather than going through a legal fight, simply took his plans to the office of the state official. She looked it over – and immediately gave approval for the work to continue! And not only that, now the church is able to apply to that agency for another grant! Out of the disappointment and opposition came opportunity and a display of God's power.

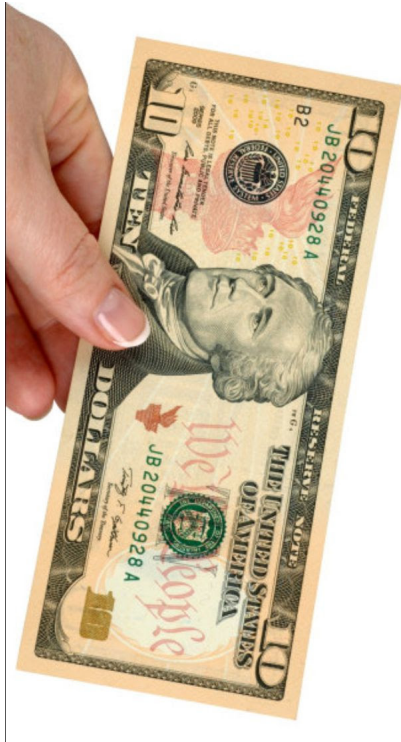


The work has begun again. The target date for completion is now late-summer of 2020, which corresponds exactly with our timetable for arriving in Szczecin to begin our church planting work at the ministry center. Please continue to pray for pastor Robert and the church in Szczecin. And pray for us as we continue to work to raise the support we need to join them! (Our apartment will be in the corner of the top floor in this picture!)

No matter how dark your circumstances may seem, remember that first Christmas night. An oppressed people under cruel military rule; lonely, outcast shepherds working through the night; a poor, tired couple forced to deliver their child in a stable. They did not know that in an instant, "The glory of the Lord would shine all around them..." But God knew. He was in control, even in their darkest night.

And He's with you, too. The "good news of great joy" that the angels brought that night is still the best news you'll ever hear. The Savior has come! Peace with God is yours to have! Believe in Jesus, find joy and hope in the darkness, and watch the light overwhelm the darkness!

HOW TO SUPPORT OUR CONTINUING MISSION:



This is a time of year when we begin to think about goals for the year ahead. As you consider things like getting fit, reading more and controlling your temper, think about making a commitment to support the work of spreading the good news of God's love to unreached people in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. In addition to our church planting work in Poland, we will be working regionally to impact new gospel movements among least-reached people in places like Egypt, Russia, Libya, Morocco, and 50 other nations.

Will you consider supporting that effort in the year ahead? If each person receiving our newsletters were to support our mission with just \$10/month, we would be fully funded for our return to ministry in Europe. Of course, not all can, or should, give to us...but will you prayerfully consider partnering with us, and give as God leads, even at \$10 monthly? If you are led to partner with us to bring the gospel to the least-reached people of Europe & the Mediterranean region, go to:

converge.org/missionary/bob-carol-marsh.

IN EUROPE: You may send support to our mission through bank transfers to:

SPAR- UND KREDITBANK EV-FREIKIRCHL GEMEINDEN

IBAN: DE 28 5009 2100 0001 1622 33

BIC: GENODE51BH2

All contributions should be marked "**Poland Church Plant (Marsh)**".

Tax donation letters will be sent at the beginning of the year following the contribution.

Together, let's take that "good news of great joy" to "all the people"!

~Bob & Carol



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You are receiving this email from Bob & Carol Marsh, to keep you updated on our mission to bring the gospel to unreached people in Europe and the Mediterranean Region.

Our mailing address is:

Robert L Marsh
C/O Nicole McCrorey
[19 Cardinal Road](#)
[Horseheads, NY 14845](#)

[Add us to your address book](#)

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