

Re: Nata

name of latin origin meaning "born again"

As the fireworks broke over the Galata Bridge I wondered: what will 2019 bring? And at the same time: Wow!!! I'm standing here on the Galata Bridge in Istanbul! It was a fantastic trip after **Christmas** and into **January**. My friend had planned visits to the covered bazaar, spice market, churches/mosques, restaurants ☺ as well as day trips to Iznik (Nicaea) and Büyükdada Island... amongst other interesting places! I could understand a little more why she loves this city and country ☺

In **February** we had Evi Rödeman here to give us staff some in-house training on the post-modern students we currently serve. What challenges and joys these students bring with them, and what a great task we have to help them prepare to go out "into all the world and make disciples!"

I again had the privilege of a week teaching on the book of James with the OrientierungsJahr students in Korntal in **March**. Also a good spiritual challenge for me to be confronted with his teaching! Another great bunch of students with some creative projects for their final assignments. So much creativity in such a short time!

Cornerstone students prepare for their mission assignments from nearly the beginning of the year. 30 first-year students were divided into 6 teams for their 3-week mission placements. 16 second-year students could decide which country or mission organization they would want to work with for 6 weeks, beginning in **March**. A good number of our students feel called to CAN countries = Creative Access Nations, where missionaries as such are generally not allowed. This time is often an opportunity for them to explore whether God is specifically calling them to the country and people group they visit. It is a time bathed in prayer – which is also our task during their absence!

April 1st was no Fool's Day as Cornerstone staff agreed with the Leadership that I would take over as Academic Dean as of January 2020! I will understudy Martin

Till, the current dean, until then, and look forward to his support until his retirement in July 2020. This is both a BIG privilege AND a BIG responsibility! Two bible passages undergirded my decision to apply for the position: from Esther 4:14, that I have been put here "for such a time as this"; and Joshua 1:6-9 "Be strong and courageous... for the Lord your God will be with you."



As April was then "student-less," I used the time to visit friends and churches in America. Bob and Sue Ferris in NC, dear friends also of my parents, allowed me the

use of their car. This made it easier to also visit Mom and Dad Mahan in TN whom I hadn't seen in 25 years. They "adopted" me when I was a CIU-student "orphan" ;-)

In Columbia I had the joy of staying with Joanie and Dennis and their daughter, Rennie (yup, Renata! ☺) who spoiled me rotten!! I also met up with friends from CIU and the AWM (e.g. Klausli's) as well as a former student from Cornerstone!

Joanie and I drove up to see her Mom – Ma Bet – on Bogue Sound in NC, before I headed back to Winston-Salem.

There, I had the joy of celebrating Sue's 80th birthday with her and Bob. We drove a good many miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway (beautiful!), stayed overnight in the Pisgah Inn, and enjoyed the Winston-Salem symphony. It was SUCH a delightful trip in so many ways. God really blessed me through these many friends and contacts.

Korntal came to Cornerstone at the beginning of **May** in the form of Traugott and Magdalene Hopp - and jars of jam from Martha Schlichenmaier (received with delight by both staff and students)!

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Traugott had agreed to lead our Prayer Day, which included an introduction toward a Theology of World Prayer. The priority of prayer was emphasized, also as something we DO by petition, prayer, intercession and thanksgiving... all of which "is good and pleases God." (1Tim 2:1-6)

In **June** (22 & 23) we celebrate the 30 year anniversary of Cornerstone! including the Watoto Children's Choir (from Uganda) concert on Saturday evening and the Open Day on Sunday afternoon from 2-5pm. We look forward to celebrating God's faithfulness through the years! **(And to realize that I have been here for 5 years!!!)**

July is then graduation for our second-year and some first-year students. A bittersweet time to reflect on what has been taught and caught as well as to send these precious people out into the world to build up His kingdom!!

Please **thank God** with me for:

- The rest and refreshment of holidays and mutual encouragement of meeting up with old friends
- The deep and on-going connections with Korntal /Brudergemeinde / Orientierungsjahr, the AWM/CIU
- New challenges that keep my focus on the One from whom my strength comes!
- Our students – the ones we have and the ones to come next year – they are a treasure!

Please (continue to) **pray** with me for:

- End of year, graduation and the farewells that come with it.

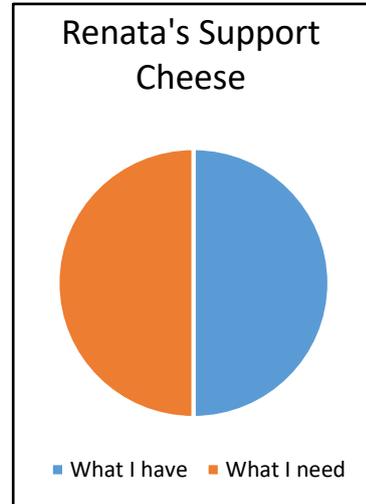
- My new task as Academic Dean
- Further "milk" for my "support cheese." I am currently hovering around a "half-round." Feel free to get in touch with me if you would like further information.
- A theology teacher ... ~~we have someone who is in the process of deciding!~~ They have agreed to come! 😊 PTL
- The challenge of an upcoming change... more about that in the next letter!

Blessings from Beugen,

Renata



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