

Calendar

Group 1

Monday 15 February 2010

Activity 1. Introduction to the German Seafarers Mission

Established 150 years ago. Their motto is “to be for the people”, regardless of their religion, nationality, etc. Chapmans support seafarers on board, in jails, while there are also welfare centers. In these welfare centers people can find a place to stay, two or three meals per day and a place where they can learn news from their homeland, meet other people, etc. The idea is to offer “a home away from home” for all people.

Activity 2. Visit the vessel ‘Robyn Hood’

A vessel that carry passengers (around 350) and cars, trucks, etc. The flag state of the vessel is German. The captain is German, as well some of the crew members. The rest of the crew members are Chinese, Filipinos and some Africans. Total number of crew is 32. The vessel travels everyday to a port of Sweden. Germans stay on board (length of contract 40 days on- 40 days off), while foreigners, such as Filipinos, stay for 6 months. All crewmembers have to speak German. Visited the engine, the bridge and the catering area.

Activity 3. Mourning Café

Years ago, the church decided to create a grave for the babies that died in the nearby clinics (weighting less than 500 gr), because otherwise the bodies were sent to garbage. After that, the parents of the babies were coming often to the church and discussed with the pastor their grief. So, the pastor decided to start mourning groups for parents who lost their children. Then, groups were created for people who have lost relatives, elderly, etc. Most group members are women (80%) [it is believed that women talk easier- express their feelings], but there is also a group for men. These mourning groups started in 2004. Four years later, in 2008, the Mourning Café was established.

Mourning café is located in the entrance of the church, and is supported and financed by the church. Groups meet once or twice a month, and the Café is open to the public every Tuesday afternoon.

- The mourning process is conducted with the method of a dialogue with the pastor (person-to-person), or in a group, but always follows the idea “Every person has the self-help source inside”.
- Some seafarers’ families who lost a seafarer believe that “we belong to the sea”, so they don’t feel bad if they don’t have a grave for their beloved ones.
- In Germany there is no tradition nowadays about what to do with the death of a person (where to bury, what to do with the ashes, etc.) and it is difficult to take such a decision. This lack of tradition makes mourning even more difficult, because people are already in grief and feel lost.
- The pastor helps in grief but with no touching or hugs (when it is person-to-person support). In groups hugs are used. This keeping of distance is in order for the pastor to protect for him/herself from emotion. Moreover, the pastor believes that it is easier to help if you keep a distance.
- The pastor also experienced in the past a person who was in grief for the loss of a pet, and wanted support. Moreover, experienced an old and poor lady who

couldn't visit the grave of her relative, so the pastor created a grave (a stone with the name of the dead person) in this city.

- There is an emergency phone that every pastor has the responsibility for a week. Police and other authorities contact the pastor in case of an emergency, so that the pastor (along with the police) announce to people the accident and death of the person.
- Finally, an artist discovered that some years ago it was common to use planks in order to carry the dead people from their house to the church and grave. Then, these planks were positioned outside of the dead person's house, with his/her name on. This artist started painting such planks in the frames of a workshop, and this was part of a group therapy of mourning.

Tuesday February 16th

Activity 3. Painting

Exercise 1: Imaginary story-telling & painting

Maria:

In my job I have to travel very often & my hobby is photographing. So, I take pictures of the places I visit. I keep in my memory images of landscapes, which are connected to the feelings I have in that particular moment. When the artist started the story telling, I recalled memories and images of some places I have been. So, my drawing is a collection of 3 images, representing the journey. It starts from right to left. The first image is a landscape here at Lubeck. The seaside with a marina and snow. There is a narrow path that goes down and then up. The second image is the path to the top of a hill, which I actually experienced in another trip. I managed to get to the top of the hill, carrying a heavy backpack. The path starts to widen and takes me to a landscape of my homeland. There is a huge tall tree with long branches that act as an umbrella, a shelter. Leaves sound like music when there is wind. It is a place where I find peace. I didn't find a door in that tree, but I found a small hole. There were two wheels which could help me out with the burden I carried, but I decided I didn't need them. I was already feeling lighter and stronger after that stop and ready to go on.

Inita:

First I saw mountain Everest, high peak of the world which I want to reach but it is dangerous and I don't trust if I have either the strength or courage. When I went up the little mountain I had a heavy backpack and no identity. I opened the door of the tree and I saw Jesus, like a friend and a brother. He took my backpack and carried it, and gave me a new identity- an identity of woman, sister and daughter and I understand I can reach the peak now, because I have my friend, my brother my savior with me.

Renata:

It is a view of the place where we are building our new house. The nature is so beautiful, green hills with many kinds of wild flowers. This represents many kinds of colours in the picture. When I am in this place I feel peace, love, joy and all problems are gone, because God is so close to me in this moment and I am so thankful to him – he created this beauty for us. That's why we are building in our house also a place for visitors to share this with other people.

Alenka:

The journey. I walk through the warm landscape with blowing wind in my back. I carry a backpack and I don't understand why it is so heavy. So, I look inside- it is full of the water bottles. At the top of the mountains is a big tree. Behind the small door there is a curved corridor. I look there and I see a lot of friends. I give them my bottles and walk happily back with my friends.

Hasan:

In my first picture, I have tried to show forest and grass. A person began a journey in the forest on a small path up to the hill. The person is carrying a backpack during his journey in the forest. He feels that the back is very heavy. He begins his journey with full of problems that he faces in the daily life, but beautiful view, fresh air in the forest, all kind of colourful flowers make him very happy, and he leaves behind all things that give him pain, grief and sorrow. When he arrives at the hill, freedom, happiness and to be away of all kinds of life burden, covers his feelings. He return down the hill to feel very happy. He says that "that is the happiness I want to catch in my life and things that every person in the world make thanks to God for coming to the world as a healthy and happy person. Nobody can say "I can pay the bill of my life" even one of his eyes.

Exercise 2: Make a draw of something typical of your country that also represents how to deal with sorrow and mourning

Maria:

As you can see from the flag of Greece, there are two colours, blue and white, representing the colours of the sea. For Greeks and also for me personally, the sea has a very important meaning. In my drawing I painted various 'faces' of the sea. For me, the sea has many different faces every moment, every day, every seasons. It changes all the time, reflecting various sides of our lives. So, the sea can be dark, almost black, representing how deep and unknown it can be. There can be waves and storms, like in our lives, when there are problems, but every day the sun rises and brings colour to our lives, and the chance for a new beginning. Two birds represent the couple- the journey of life is easier when you are not alone, and lighter when you don't carry material things- as the birds that fly free.

Inita:

In Latvia we can deal with sorrow and mourning being shoulder by shoulder with others, such as the church, society, family, friends, neighbours. Also Latvian people get strength from nature and idea of our independent country. Listening from one another also could help dealing with mourning.

Renata:

In our life we are going through many kinds of situations (on a picture- many kinds of colours) and everybody needs somebody beside him/her (it is two hands close together) to help in time of grief and difficult situations, but also in times of joy to share their happiness. Red colour of their hands represents love, the special kind of love that Jesus had and unselfish unconditional. If we don't have this kind of love, we are not able to help the others.

Alenka:

Sorrow. Sorrow on my picture is as flame- it burns and causes the physical pain. There are also waves and we feel that we can drown in the sea of the pain. Sometimes we have feeling that it is nearly gone and it is coming back again. But everywhere is a yellow colour which represents love of God. At the side of the picture there is a big ear which is open to listen, because when we grieve we need to have someone who is there to listen.

Hasan:

Second picture is about grief, sorrow and loneliness in my culture. The colour of black is the symbol of grief. We shouldn't always think about things that give us grief, pain and sorrow. Sometimes we have to forget about it. The colour of red is the symbol of happiness and the optimistic way of life. In the day of happiness, for example, people took the flag into the streets waving the flag to show their happiness. That is why I have figurines in my pictures.