



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends,

This year we celebrate the 30-year anniversary of our mission and service in the Balkans. We sincerely thank everyone for their faithful support in these last three decades. God has blessed us tremendously, and again and again we have been surprised by his providence, which always appeared just at the right time.

The promises of the Lord endure.

“You are the God who sees me“ (Genesis 16:13, NIV): this word for the year 2023 speaks to us. God’s love, becoming man through Jesus Christ, does not forsake us in the challenges of our daily lives or in times of exhaustion. This is something we have experienced throughout the last years in thankfulness.



Aidlingen 2023: This year we also celebrate the 30-year anniversary of selling ice-cream at the youth conference during Pentecost in Aidlingen. The proceeds are given to the service of Hilfe konkret since 1993. For our anniversary we have recorded a three-minute video, that will be posted on our website.

On the picture from left to right: Sister Friederike Kehnel, Sister Brigit Oewermann, Jakob Neudeck, Sister Ulrike Ahrlich, Levi Grauer, Sister Dorothee Beck, back row: Johannes Neudeck, Katharina Neudeck, Simon Seeger, Timon Walther, Philine Grauer, Sister Anne Rentschler.

We thank all of our faithful and hardworking volunteers who continue to support our work. In the summer there will be different camps and retreats with families, young adults and refugees, also from Ukraine.

You can find attached our birthday card, which you are welcome to share. With our growing work we continue to rely on new friends and new support. We sincerely invite you to Karlsruhe on the 8th of December for an upcoming event on the occasion of our anniversary. On the following pages you can find a brief insight in our current work and further information. Thank you again for your prayers and support.

With kind regards

Johannes Neudeck and the team of Hilfe Konkret



Sarajevo February 2023: from left to right: pastor Tomislav Dobutović, president of the Baptist Union, Bosnia-Herzegovina; Katharina Neudeck; Johannes Neudeck in a conversation about projects with the leader of KomPass, Sarajevo. A closet and a cafe for refugees are continuously supported. Next to groceries and toiletries, they can get access to showers and a launderette.



Camp Uživak, Sarajevo:

More than hundred people including unaccompanied minors and families with kids live in this camp. A team of international volunteers cooked a special meal for them.



Supporting refugees on the Balkan route

Since 2015 there are about 1.18 million people on the Balkan route. Further on, thousands are still on the road.

Through your cooperation and the help of friends and partners we were able to support over 300.000 people in need from 2015 until 2023. This help consist of providing groceries, toiletries, shoes, and new clothing as well as supporting with logistics. Again, thank you so much for your support and ongoing cooperation.

Bihac, Bosnia-Herzegovina, large kitchen of the Red Cross, from the left: pastor Ladislav Ružička, Johannes Neudeck, Hilfe konkret; pastor Thomas Ebinger, Kemnat, in cooperation with Hilfe konkret; Team of the Red Cross; Selam Midžić, leader of the Red Cross Bihac; Željko Mraz, general secretary of the Baptist Union Croatia (Zagreb). We work together for many years to support refugees along the Balkan route, cooperating with the Red Cross and a small evangelical church in Bihac.

Pastor Dr. Thomas Ebinger from Kemnat, Ostfildern cooperating with Hilfe konkret

From January 9th until the 3rd of February 2023 pastor Ebinger was on mission with Hilfe konkret. He reports: "My main interest as a district representative for asylum and migration was to get an impression for the refugee work along the Balkan route, and if possible, to lend a hand myself. But of course I was also interested in all the other aspects of the work in Croatia and Bosnia, where evangelicals are a small minority". His impressions are collected in the following report.

[\(Mein Reisebericht: Mit "Hilfe konkret" auf der Balkanroute für Flüchtlinge – Ebiblog \(thomas-ebinger.de\)\)](#)

Sincere thank you to your committed service!



Thomas Ebinger visits a Roma village in Croatia

Cornerstone ceremony in Slavonski Brod, Croatia: On the 16th of June 2023 we laid the foundation stone for the „House of Hope“ (in Croatian „Kuća nade“)



This city with approximately 50000 inhabitants is located in the second poorest region of Croatia. About 10000 young people have left the city in the last ten years. Pastor Darko Mikulić and his wife Gordana actively work in the local church. They have four kids of their own and five foster children. Their family includes four siblings from a Roma family with a difficult family background as well as a half-orphan from Ukraine. They have a passion for sharing God’s love, building church, and for children and youth who come from difficult family environments. Please pray for the construction and the resources for “Kuća nade” and the work in the city. The 500m2 space in the “House of Hope” enables 20 young people to stay there long-term and be provided for. Further, the house includes common rooms for up to 50 people.

Cornerstone ceremony “House of Hope”: from left: Pastor Darko Mikulić, board of the Baptist Union of Croatia; Pastor Ladislav Ruzička, Karlovac, board of the Baptist Union; Johannes Neudeck; Pastor Filip Grujić, Zagreb, board of the Baptist Union of Croatia; two guests, Ivica Horvat, president of the Baptist Union of Croatia.



Family Mikulić, Slavonski Brod, with children and foster-children, the boy from Ukraine is missing on the picture.

In Zagreb, Croatia, a team works in the “House of Hope” with refugees and provides support in the inner city. The “House of Hope” was opened in October 2021.

Pastor Mihal Kreko reports about new difficulties: thousands of foreign workers came to Croatia during the last year. They come from Nepal, India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. It is rare for them to find good working and living conditions. The “House of Hope” team in Zagreb wants to support them. We help according to the best of our ability in Slavonski Brod as well as in Zagreb.

Katharina Neudeck: Release Concert – Croatian CD

Katharina Neudeck is presenting her first Croatian CD with self-written songs in a church service and concert in Mačkovec by Čakovec on the 10th of September 2023. Please join us for her release concert. She is accompanied by musicians from Croatia (Octoberlight and friends) and her CD was produced and arranged by Petar Horvat and Maasej Kovačević. The CD includes sound versions of bible verses to use for evangelistic purposes and church work.

From the left: Petar Horvat, Katharina Neudeck, Abel Kovačević, Maasej Kovačević, in the studio in Pušćine, close to Čakovec.



Floodaid Ahrtal: Since 2021 a Hilfe konkret team has undertaken seven support missions to people in the Ahrtal, Germany in cooperation with churches and organizations, most recently in May 2023, under the leadership of Matthias Neudeck. Despite all the help they are still in material and spiritual need. Thank you for your prayers and support.



Extension of the school in Čakovec, ground floor:

At the open house of the school we were able to present the primary subjects taught at the school. The picture shows a physiotherapy class: alongside a diploma, it is possible to complete a vocational diploma in the field of medicine. The students are trained in cooperation with the local hospital in Čakovec to complete their apprenticeship as nurses, physiotherapists, and care assistants. The school was founded in 2010 as the first evangelical school as an independent, officially recognized institution in Croatia.

Currently there are 468 students, as well as 48 students with Down's syndrome. In addition, 52 students live in the attached dormitory, where they are supported with their homework, can visit workshops and are mentored. Further, 22 young Romas are in the school and the dormitory. Due to a high demand, we could only accept 111 students from the 609 applications for the next school year 2023/2024. In the senior year of 2023 we were proud to present our **thousandth diploma exam** took place since the foundation of the school.



Extension of the second and third floor in the evangelical school Čakovec:

After the inauguration of the ground floor in April 2022 under the lead and cooperation with the foundation Wertestarter, Berlin the expansion goes on. Around thousand hours of personal contribution include e.g. the relocation of more than 7.000m of cable, ceiling installations, floor installations. To complete the extension of the school we are still in need of further funds.



Petar Horvat (left) explains the heating pump in the new building, talking to pastor Thomas Ebinger.



Bratko Horvat, member of the school board, with a volunteer.

Selling ice-cream at a Youth Conference in Aidlingen 2023

Around 5400 young people were at the Youth conference from the 27th to 29th May 2023 in a Christian conference house in Aidlingen (www.jugendtreffen-aidlingen.de). After the years of pandemic-included break we were able to sell ice cream with over 50 volunteers as usual. The proceeds of the selling benefit the mission and diaconal projects in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina since 1993.

This year we are grateful that our work enabled us to make a contribution of for 4.552,06€ through our ice selling! A particular thank you to all of our volunteers. We also want to thank all the leaders of different youth ministries who have provided and cared for volunteers. With the proceeds we can support people in need: a kids camp in the summer; young and old as well as disabled Ukranian refugees who are in a home in Karlovac; families in a refugee camp in Sarajevo as well as students in need or of Roma origin in our dormitory in our evangelical school in Čakovec to support them in their learning.

We thank the sisterhood in Aidlingen for their faithful cooperation and support, also through visits and encounters. We are already excited for the conference in 2024 and further years of cooperation. As we are celebrating our Jubilee we were able to show a short video of our work before the main church service on Sunday, which you can see on our homepage: www.hilfekonkret.de. It is well suited to shortly present our mission in youth groups or churches. We also created a birthday card for our 30-year anniversary which can be used for that purpose. We can send you the cards in your desired quantities on request.



Earthquake area

Over 160.000 people were affected by the earthquake in the region of Petrinja at the end of 2020. The local churches continue to support the people spiritually and practically. We were able to support with 29 containers as temporary homes, and due to the aftershocks they are still in use. In the first eight weeks of the main earthquake itself in December 2020 there were 1244 aftershocks. Among them were ten stronger shocks (4.0-6.0) which caused further damages.

In the following year 2021/2022 there were over 1400 aftershocks, and though they were not as strong, they caused after-effects on the psychological condition of the people. To this day there are aftershocks. Please pray for elderly, who live in temporary housing, for the pastors and leaders in local churches especially in the cities Petrinja and Glina. We do not have more financial support for this project.

Thank you for all your support.



*Petrinja/Grabovac: any of our containers in the earthquake areas around Petrinja include a canopy, as they are longer in use due to aftershocks. On the picture from the left: pastor Thomas Ebinger; Željko Mraz, general secretary of the Baptist Union Croatia (Zagreb); Baka (Grandma) Nada and Baka Mika.
(Picture: Johannes Neudeck, Hilfe konkret)*

Refugees from Ukraine

Karlovac (Pastor Ladislav Ružička, left, Johannes Neudeck, right):

In this house at the edge of town in Karlovac, a group of elderly and disabled people from Ukraine find refuge. They are accompanied by volunteers from Ukraine, who affectionately take care of them 24/7.

Pastor Ružička, who himself hosts a young Ukrainian man at his house, visits them once a week and if needed. He supports practically and in counseling. Volunteers provide sanitary products as well as additional medical support to facilitate the daily-life there. If they want to visit the church service for community, they get picked up on Sundays.



Over 20000 people fled from Ukraine to Croatia. Since then, we have supported hundreds of refugees in Čakovec, Karlovac, Slavonski Brod, Zagreb and many other places: groceries, sanitary products, finding jobs and housing, participating in retreats, counseling and spiritual support. We still need further support.

Advent weekend 30 years of Hilfe konkret – *Save the Date*

100 years Diakonisches Werk Karlsruhe and 30 years of Hilfe konkret e.V.

On the occasion of the Jubilee we invite you to a Advent reception of the Diakonisches Werk Karlsruhe and the association of Hilfe konkret.

Date: Friday, 8. December 2023, 5 pm | Location: **Karlsruhe** | Further information: 0172 6205250

Regarding our finances:

We are grateful that, thanks to God's provision, we were able to support people in need and churches in their work for over 30 years now. Currently, our financial resources are consumed. Perhaps you are able to support us with a Jubilee donation or a standing order. We would be delighted, if you win one or two new friends with our birthday card attached to this newsletter. Further, our three-minute-long video (see homepage) can be shown in churches or small groups.

In addition, we are thankful for protection of our team over all the long routes of travelling between Čakovec, Bihać, Sarajevo, Zagreb and more. Our vehicle is three years old and has more than 190.000 km on the tachometer. The Christian school and the dormitory as well as other small diaconal establishments confront us with financial obligations, even with a high voluntary commitment. Not all of the 52 young students- coming from Roma villages and socially deprived families can pay for their own monthly personal requirements living in the dormitory, where they can be mentored and learn Christian values. With 30 Euro per month, a residence can be subsidized by 50%. At the same time, the full-time job of Johannes Neudeck needs further support. Sincere thanks!

See [2021.12-hilfe-konkret-rbl_compressed.pdf \(hilfekonkret.de\)](#), page 36, newsletter 2021/2022.

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Pictures: Ben Daumüller; Tomislav Dobutović; Thomas Ebinger, Hilfe konkret