

## **An Ecclesia In Finland August 2006**

11 years ago, CCM workers spent a week in Finland preaching- and got apparently nowhere. It's a joy to report that for some reason the Lord still has His eye on Finland and now He has called together an ecclesia in that land.

Firstly, we're pleased to report that after an extended period on the run as refugees, brother S and Sister P and their two children have been accepted by the UNHCR and are now in Finland. Brother S became interested in Christianity whilst a university lecturer [in fine art] in Iran. A Christian associate of his was arrested and imprisoned, and soon afterwards Police arrived at the University to arrest brother S. He fled home, grabbed his wife and children and fled to Turkey immediately. There he and his wife learnt more of the truth and was interviewed and baptized by Duncan and Liz. At times it seemed that the UNHCR process would never work out- they were hassled by the Police, threatened with deportation, and so a special visit was made to Ankara by our team to make a special appeal.

Photo: brother S waiting in a cafe outside the UNHCR in Ankara last year, whilst we pleaded his case.



We're pleased to say that our appeal was accepted, and now our brother and sister and his children are safely in Finland. They were initially in a holding centre near Helsinki but have moved to some of the cheapest property in Finland- in an apartment in a small town in far north Finland near the Arctic Circle. Life's pretty bleak here, but at least they are safe and the children are at school. They were overjoyed to see us and we enjoyed some very intense fellowship together. They are actively witnessing to other Iranians in the town.

Photo: A joyful reunion with our Iranian brother and sister- this time near the Arctic Circle.



Photo: Presenting our Iranian brother and sister with warm clothes- temperatures will soon start dropping near the Arctic Circle!



Our brother living in such a remote place and not knowing much Finnish or English will find getting a job difficult. He had one canvass on which he'd sketched out a painting, but he had no brushes or paints. On returning to Latvia, Robin and Cindy were able to buy him these and mail them off to him.

Photo: Brother S with his sketched out painting



Photo: Cindy and Robin buying paints and brushes for brother S



All things work together for good when we're seeking to walk with the Lord. It so happened that only 100 km. from this remote town there are two contacts with whom we've had contact online, and who had received our literature. Already strongly anti-trinitarian, our two new brothers HENRIK and MARKKU both have a great knowledge of Scripture. We were delighted to read with them daily according to the Bible Companion, and were delighted to have real in depth discussions with them about things like the enigma of Joab, whether he was a good or bad man, the weaknesses and strengths of David, etc.

Photo: Baptism of Markku in a lake- at 11:30 p.m.! This is the land of 24 hour daylight [in the Summer!].



And so right near our two Iranian members, we now have two new and wonderful brethren in the Lord. Brothers Henrik and Markku travelled with us to see the Iranians and will meet with them when they can. Our two new brethren arranged a public lecture in a community hall in a housing area of their town. They printed and distributed leaflets advertising the talk and invited their contacts. We were delighted to have a total of 15 visitors to the talk. Henrik spoke about the importance of personal Bible study and the error of the trinity and mainstream Christianity, followed by Duncan's talk about the meaning of doctrine in practice, illustrated by the experience of our Iranian brethren. Henrik translated into Finnish although most young people understand some English in Finland.

Photo: Brother Henrik giving his talk



Photo: Eager visitors taking Bible Basics literature



And so we rejoice that the true Gospel has been taken to the "lands of the north". Photo: Entering Lappland with our two new brethren



We also met with brother Rimas, from the Vilnius ecclesia in Lithuania, and sister Ege, originally from Estonia, who have been living and working in Finland. We were delighted to hold a breaking of bread meeting with them in Helsinki.

Our new brethren have already begun producing literature and preaching material in Finnish, including the translation of our booklet What Is The Gospel?- you can view it at <http://www.carelinks.net/languages/finnish.htm>. Our brethren have various preaching initiatives in hand and we pray for God's blessing on this wonderful development in His vineyard.

With love and joy from your brothers and sisters of CCM