

December 2019 Turkey, Riga

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TURKEY

Brother Andy Taylor of the *Windermere UK ecclesia* has just completed an amazing trip to Turkey, and reports the baptisms of 34 Iranians in the Denizli area. This trip worked out far more expensive than planned and we are open to your donations towards this. God clearly blessed it despite all the problems. Andy reports:

"The really good news is that I was able to help baptise 34 Iranian refugees in Denizli who were largely taught the Gospel by fellow Iranians in this city of something like 700 thousand inhabitants. I presented a message with the theme "The Truth will set you free" (John 8). A lively question and answer session followed an exposition of Roman 6, which included multiple key issues such as Law and Grace, Satan and the devil, our attitude to Islam, and some of the more difficult ideas in the OT etc. In all this of course we stressed the importance of baptism, particularly that it implies a lifetime commitment to following our Lord Jesus. After sharing a meal together with those to be baptised and enthusiastic local brothers and sisters, the joyful baptisms took place, one by one, in the warmest hotel pool I remember being in, as they all responded positively to the questions concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. We also looked at important points from Colossians, both its content and its geographical location being so relevant to our new brothers and sisters. We then shared bread and wine together, before going our separate ways, some having to head off for work, even though this was late on Sunday, by now.

During my stay, many issues came up. One particular troubling worry was the vulnerability that Iranian women feel to sexual exploitation by local men, a common problem for those without citizenship in many countries throughout the world. Many members live in poor economic conditions, having to carry out menial work in the black economy just to survive; many very well-qualified brothers and sisters had prestigious jobs in Iran, and find it impossible to obtain employment in fields in which they are highly qualified. The majority wish to get to the 'West', be it Australia, Canada, USA or UK etc, and of course this is difficult, though not impossible, and these brothers and sisters do need our help with this complex and difficult process, and I am aware of some progress in these matters. I am very grateful in particular to bro Arash, who not only translated from English to Farsi, and Farsi to English, but also kindly shared his simple accommodation with me for the nights I was in Denizli. I also enjoyed the time spent in the homes of other brothers and sisters the next day, and I am pretty sure a warm welcome awaits others who would like to visit"

RIGA

Sickness has again struck our group of volunteers working in the soup kitchen leaving a gap in

the intended number of workers early 2020 God willing. We'll cope but do pray for more workers and support in the longer term.

PRAYER POINTS

- For those recently baptized
- For those suffering persecution and living uncertain lives as refugees in hostile environments
- For our sisters who are prone to sexual exploitation
- For Jewish people to respond to the true Gospel and come to their Messiah
- For our work in Riga

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks