

## SRCOKRET YOUTH FESTIVAL



In June, the Srcokret Christian Youth Festival was held on the coast, near the town of Primošten. "Srcokret" is a play on words that means, "turning of the heart." And that is what we did. For six days, over 1,200 young people gathered from all over the former Yugoslavia to turn their hearts toward God together. It was a great time of camping, fellowship, learning, worship, and prayer. There were two daily worship times, and a prayer tent was kept going 24 hours a day. I took seven teens.



## VISIT FROM SUPPORTERS

In October, we had a visit from the Southside Church of Christ, in Lexington, Kentucky. They are at right: Joshua and Susan Samples, and Suzanna and Jeremy Stewart. Joshua and Susan are their missions committee's Croatia liaisons. Jeremy is their youth minister. They gave an appreciation dinner for Nešto Više, the Bible Institute, and our church, for many years of partnership. They support me and the school. They also helped present the seminar about discipling teens, and they took part in our usual youth group gathering. They will bring their teens for our youth camp next summer. What a blessing to have them here!



## PRAYER POINTS — 2026

- Pray for the fellowship of Jesus and counsel of the Holy Spirit; the life God wants me to live, and the work He wants me to do; that it is done in and through me.
- Pray for grace, mercy, peace, and joy; and for friendships and close fellowship for me here.
- Pray for confidence and increased leadership ability.
- Pray for strong working relationships and good interactions with co-workers.
- Pray that this generation of young people in Croatia are raised up to follow Jesus.
- Pray for "my boys" (Adam, Noa, Yura, Petar, Ivan) that I personally mentor and disciple.
- Pray for Kaleb, Filip, Tristan, and two teen boys who live up the street from me. The last three all lost fathers last year. Pray for opportunities to minister to all of these young men.
- Pray for favor toward our youth ministries from parents, churches, and government.
- Pray for our financial support, both personally and for all our youth ministry activities.
- Pray for the church of which I am a part in Zagreb, the Kušlanova Church of Christ. Pray for myself, Ivan, and Goran, as we serve and lead. Pray for God's Spirit to show us the way.
- Pray for rest amid a full schedule, and for wisdom to pursue what is most important.
- Pray for unity and cooperation among the various churches and mission groups in Croatia.
- Pray God's protection over the missionaries and other servants of God in Croatia. Pray for health and strength in our bodies, hearts, souls, marriages, and homes; and for the protection of relationships. Pray that the enemy's plans are thwarted.
- Pray that my house is a place of both refuge and ministry, for me and for others. Pray that it is a place where people feel the presence of God's Spirit and are drawn to Jesus.
- Pray for a greater hunger and thirst for Jesus in Croatia.
- Pray that in all things the Kingdom of God is advanced in this place.

## TO SEND DONATIONS

On the **Venmo mobile app**, @Pond-Springs-Church is the payee. Make a note that it is for the Croatia Mission.

To donate **Online through Paypal**, scan this QR code:



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# Steve Taliaferro

## 2025 Ministry Report



Zagreb, Croatia

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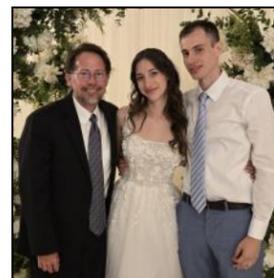
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## GREETINGS FROM CROATIA

Dear Friend,

I hope you enjoy reading here about my life and work in Croatia during 2025. Some highlights of the year are in the photos on this page. Yura (at right), one of the Ukrainian orphans with whom we work, decided to be baptized. In the photo below I am hiking the hills behind my house with boys I disciple. Read on for more about events of this year.



Blessings to you,



## INTERESTING CROATIA FACTS

- The island of **Ugljan** (photo at top) is one of about 1,200 islands off the Adriatic Sea coast of Croatia.
- The city of **Zadar** was the Dalmatian capital of the medieval Republic of Venice.
- Croatia's **literacy rate is over 99%**. Many Croats also speak foreign languages, English a main one.
- Evangelical Christians make up **less than 1/2 of 1%** of Croatia's population.

## 15 YEARS...AND ETERNAL THINGS

As of November, I have been in Croatia for 15 years! Of all the varied ministries in which I am involved, the one I know is **my highest calling here** is captured in the photos on this page: Discipling youth to walk with Jesus. What a great honor and joy! The photo below, left was at the wedding of Melkior, one of the young men I worked with since he was 12, and baptized a few years ago. His father has been unkind to him and his mother the last few years, and left the family. Mel asked me to pray a blessing over the couple at the wedding. Yura, studying the Bible with me above, asked to be baptized after the summer camps. He took that step of faith, as did Tesa, at right. This photo captures well her joy that day. I am grateful for the work God has given me to do here, and for the way he has entwined my life with the lives of these amazing young people.



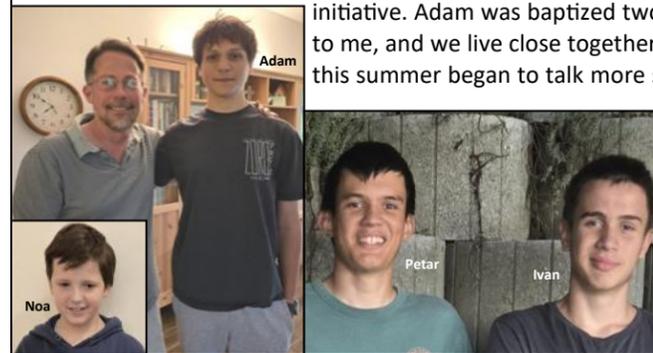
## SEMINAR: DISCIPLING TEENAGERS

In October we presented a seminar, *Teenagers and the Challenges of the Modern Age: Communication, Encouragement, and Discipleship*, in cooperation with the Bible Institute. We had about 45 people in attendance. We heard research both from the USA and out of Poland, the findings of which were the same: The main issue of teens in this age is high anxiety, brought on by the barrage of information coming through technology, combined with the high pressure on them through constant exposure to social media at too early an age. Solutions presented are highly relational, especially with trusted adults in their world, both including, and in addition to their parents. We talked about the importance of mentoring and discipling teens, encouraging them about their identity in Christ, their belonging with His people, and God's purpose for them.



## MENTORING AND DISCIPLING

I am currently discipling five young men. We talk about life, read the Bible together, and discuss it. **Adam** (15) and I have finished the books of John and Acts, and now we are working through Romans. We continued meeting through the summer, again on Adam's initiative. Adam was baptized two years ago and is developing a deep love for Jesus. Adam's family are dear to me, and we live close together. **Noa** (13) is Adam's brother. We are about to finish the book of John. Noa this summer began to talk more seriously about following Jesus. **Yura** (16) is the Ukrainian boy I mentioned on the front page. **Petar** (17) and I started meeting together this spring. He also has a growing heart for God. This year we had special evenings for both Adam and Petar, in which men of our church gave them counsel, and asked God's blessings for them as they grow into manhood. **Ivan** (14), is Petar's brother. I also work with Ivan in the same way as the other boys. I often also give them affirmation, as well as Bible study. I recently told Ivan, "You're a good man and you have what it takes." He responded, "I know, but it feels good for someone to tell me." Amen.



## NEŠTO VIŠE

Our ministry to youth in Croatia is called, *Nešto Više (Something More)*. We engage young people from early childhood, through the teenage years, and on into young adulthood. We work to encourage them toward a relationship with God, through Jesus. We believe that is the "Something More" for which we were created. We do this through camps, regular youth gatherings, individual discipling, and a spiritual magazine. My co-worker in this ministry, Mateja, is at far right in the photo above, with some of the girls at our winter camp. The large photo at right is from our regular youth meetings, held throughout the school year. This year we consistently have 20-25 young people at these gatherings.



## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

I serve as a co-minister with our church in Zagreb, along with Ivan Karadža and Goran Medved (photo below). I met Goran on my first trip to Croatia back in 1996. I have known Ivan since I moved here in 2010. We share preaching duties. Ivan does administration and runs Sunday School. Goran and I also teach the teens in Sunday School when Ivan preaches. I serve as a youth minister with all the teens, and I lead the boys' group.



## CAMPS

This year we again held our Winter Youth Camp, Champs Camp, and Summer Youth Camp. Champs Camp is a day camp for elementary school-aged children. Mike Donahoo came to help, from my sponsoring church in Texas. We have teenagers who have aged out, but still want to stay involved, so we bring them in as junior volunteers. Many of these teens also come to the youth camps, and some hang out with us throughout the school year. For the Summer Youth Camp, My "sisters" from Abilene, Texas, Jan, Jill, and Jayne, came to help in the kitchen, and my friend, Joel Butts, brought his team from his ministry in Ukraine. They are part of a Messianic Jewish congregation, and they brought their Hebrew flavored worship, which our teens enjoyed. The theme for the camp this year was, *Uno*, after the card game. We talked about how *Jesus is "THE ONE"* who came to rescue us. We also talked about how *each of us are "the one"* for whom he came. One day we spent time praying individually for each teen. We were amazed at what they shared with us and this ended up being a highlight of the camp.



## SERVING UKRAINIANS

We continue to serve Ukrainians here. This year it has been mainly the house of orphans we have hosted here the last 3 1/2 years, as the women with their children have become mostly self-sufficient. All of the kids are involved in our youth ministries; and our non-profit organization, *Nešto Više*, serves as a local administrative hub for the operation of the orphans' house in Croatia. In August our church hosted all eight of the orphans at the family Bible camp in which we are involved each summer. Iva Matijević, who has been working closely with them, is in the photo at left with the orphan kids at the camp. Several church members also helped look after the kids that week. Since the camp, Yura and Ilona have been asking what it means to follow Jesus, and expressing a growing desire to be baptized. Yura was baptized, and I think Ilona will soon follow.