



Our dear friends!

After difficult summer "Portico" have started a study year on the 28th of September in Vilnius! We did not get money for the renovation of the underground hall in Vilnius New Testament Church (except precious gift from Sweden), but works have started. We and our friends from Christian School "Rainbow Way" took the challenge, renovating slowly, but steadily, and we hope to inaugurate the hall in few weeks.

Meanwhile Vilnius New Testament Church offered other rooms for "Portico" and "Veranda" activities.

In the first half of the study year there were 8 theological lectures lead by Henrikas in "Portico" (on Tuesdays), 2

thinking, courses "How to read books and articles", "How to write an essay or article".

same theme was the topic for "Šėtra" (platform for informal academic and ecumenic dialogue). The perspectives of theology, political philosophy, spirituality and arts were presented. Our friends, academics interested in the issues and belonging to other Christian communions, were participating. So were the people from "Portico" school. We think, that it was a good start and we hope to continue dialogue meetings on academic level in future together with community based education.

Around 10 people were participating in theological lectures every Tuesday, 6 women were coming to the movement trainings every Monday.



"Portico" theology lectures enlists believers from New Testament Baptist Church as well as young people from wider community

"Evenings for Sharing", 9 movement training sessions lead by Gilija (on Mondays), 13 "Veranda" meetings, more than 20 dance rehearsals with "Mimosas" dance group and 1 "Šėtra" meeting.

"Portico" students have got introduction to critical

The main theological theme in this session was "The Church and Liberation/ Salvation". It was the theme for studies and discussions in "Portico", theme for reflections and presentations of "Portico" students in the "Evenings for Sharing". The



“Wings of Embodiement” in Kaunas

On 28th of November dance group “Mimosas” performed “Wings of Embodiement” in Social Action Event “16 days against violence against women”

Dance



“Mimosas” dance group was created to participate in social action. Working with this group was a new and fresh experience. First, it was possibility to meet and work with new people and have conversations (theological as well) because of the theme (women sufferings in our society). We have got in touch with other NGOs and very active young people working in them.

Performance



Second, “Wings of Embodiement” was performed in the public space. People came to see performance not knowing “Portico”. It was a good possibility to see, how we can reach people through art media.

The small hall of “Home of the Nation” in Kaunas, where event happened, was full - about 70 people came to see the performance.

Social Action



I hope, that we will continue rehearsals with “Mimosas” and perform “Wings of Embodiement” in the Women Jail in Panevėžys.

Drama



After renovating underground hall, we will start movement, dance and drama training sessions more frequently. As I wrote earlier, we hope, that it will be soon...

Visual art



Because of lack of space we had no possibility to work with visual arts. We hope, that in new hall we will invite people to visual art workshops. But this will happen in the second half of our study year.



“Veranda” - the little “Portico”

Movement/ Biblical Drama



“Veranda,” with movement, biblical drama, music, folk art and visual art lessons is already in action for three months (October, November and December) every Tuesday from 10.00 till 12.30! At first there were four mothers with five children. Later others joined and now we have eight families coming. Two mothers come to “Veranda” from the Railway station region, where New Testament Church building is located. One very young mother comes from the wider Vilnius area, Azulauke village. She lives in very bad conditions. We are very happy to serve the families, which need it most.

Though location is not very good for project for families with very small children, “Veranda” community is growing in membership and gains new friends. As in Klaipeda, we hear very good responses from mothers, who come to participate in “Veranda” lessons and activities

Music/ Folk Art



together with their children. One mother was coming to movement training sessions with her little son. We hope, that mothers will join “Portico” activities as well, when they will have possibilities.

Good news reached us from Klaipeda. Klaipeda Baptist Church have got the new leadership and the first thing this new leadership wanted to do was to restore mission work - “Veranda” school. At last active church members and leaders recognized “Portico” work as authentic mission and asked “Veranda” team in Klaipeda to continue work, which was interrupted. We already informed families about this and got a lot of responses of joy and letters, saying that it was a wonderful gift for them for Christmas! So, we hope that re-opening of “Veranda” in Klaipeda on the 4th of January will be very joyful and noisy...

Visual Art



Now we see, that our suffering in summer can yield positive results. May be we have “saved” three years, through which we wanted to pass the project to Klaipeda community and start something like that in Vilnius. Now we see that community in Klaipeda consciously “owns” the project and re-starts it while accepting full responsibility.

We are very thankful for Vinius New Testament Baptist Church for their participation and interest in this mission work. We see this interest in other people, our helpers and our relatives (they all live in Vilnius :)). Also, we always remember you, our dear friends and we know, that you care about us and work in Lithuania. It encourages us continue work sometimes in very bad conditions. But now... we hope for the best!

God bless you through the New Year!

Gilija & Henrikas Žukauskai

Lithuania

