

## **Revival for Kosova!**

Might God be pleased to bless Kosova and Albania with revival power through His Spirit? That was the question that ran through my mind as I pondered the celebration events of Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

The event held in Peja, Kosova was to celebrate, with Gani and Adile Smolica and the church, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the present Rruga e Paqes (Way of Peace) church started following the terrible war of 1999.



Hans Kuipers (ECM Netherlands) presented a painting by Susanne Stoehr – a picture of hands reaching up in desire for and praise of God. Pastor Albert Baxter from 1<sup>st</sup> Portglenone Presbyterian Church in N. Ireland shared about the events from Deuteronomy 8 when the Israelites looked back over the past years of blessing and then looked forward to the future blessings from God as they entered the promised land. He posed the question 'Do we believe that God can bring revival blessing to the Albanian peoples of Kosova and Albania?'

At the celebration were representatives of all those from Kosova, Albania and across Europe who had been linked to the ministry in Peja. It was particularly thrilling to see those from other churches in Kosova and to see Pastors such as Femi Cakolli (Prishtina), Olti and Eva Todo (Tirana) together with ECM Missionaries (past and present) including Will Niven, Berti and Tatjana Dosti, Dan and Primrose Avila (Kamenica), Thera van Dam (with new husband Kujtim Shala). There were also other ECM folk such as Stuart Rowell and Hans Kuipers and also supporters from Hook and Derby Evangelical churches together with many other friends and contacts.



Gani shared something of the history of the church and of their personal journey. He pointed out that there had been an evangelical church in Peja since 1967 (the earliest in the country) and he paid tribute to Pastor Simo Ralevic who fled following the 1999 war. The present congregation which meets in the same location was started in September 2002 and the buildings were purchased from Simo. It was a special thrill to hear again the testimony of Esat Kica who was converted to Christ after experiencing the friendship of Baptist missionaries whilst he and his family were refugees in Albania. Esat is now an Elder in the church and a genuine testimony to God's grace in changing a life of pride to one

of lovely servanthood. Esat told how he threw stones at the church when he was a boy but now he is a stone in the building of God's church. Gani also shared news of about the present building which was badly damaged when 2 metres of snow fell last winter – it now has a new roof, new floor tiles and a new central heating system – another testimony to God's goodness through adversity.



It is important to record all these events and to remember those whom God has used in the story of His church. But in another sense the only name that is important is the Name of God himself for it is He who has implemented His plan in Peja and in Kosova and in Albania and throughout the world. The question that Albert Baxter posed continues to ring out and I wonder whether others would join in prayer for it – “Do we believe that God can bring revival blessing?” Do we believe that the Spirit could work in Kosova and Albania to bring about a tremendous revival and to save many souls through the saving power of Jesus Christ? Much more could be said about the events but that painting of hands raised up to God, that message of reflection and anticipation, and that question about the prospect of revival are the thoughts that continue to go through my mind as I recall my time in Peja.

Will you pray continually with the Christians of Kosova and Albania that God would bless them with revival through His Spirit and the saving name of Jesus? It would encourage those in the ministry if groups of prayer partners would pray for such in the coming months.

The Smolicas are planning their Deputation meetings in April/May 2013. If you would like them to speak at your meetings, please contact them.

Arthur Prescott

Notes:

Copies of the following are available from Gani Smolica ([gani.smolica@ecmi.org](mailto:gani.smolica@ecmi.org)) or from myself ([Arthur.prescott@ecmi.org](mailto:Arthur.prescott@ecmi.org)):

- A copy of the testimony of Esat Kica
- Notes of the history of the Smolica ministry and of the Peja church

Details of how you can get involved in the ministries of Kosova and Albania (teams, projects, support etc) and information to assist in praying for the ministries can be obtained from one of the ECM National offices.