



## Bowling and God

In the midst of the Ukraine crisis, we continue to reach out to people here in Slovakia, especially foreigners living and working in Bratislava. Back in 2019 Gary got connected to a man from a “closed country” who wanted to meet other Jesus followers. A “closed country” is one not open to the gospel, and in this case, where even practicing the Christian faith while living abroad is a risk. Ray (not his real name) works and lives here, so Gary met with him and learned he has a wife and two kids living here as well. We wanted to connect the entire family with other believers, including kids of similar age. But with the heightened security risks, ongoing pandemic restrictions, and then the war in Ukraine, we weren't able to make the connections happen until just recently.

We invited our Slovak friends Roman and Barča (and their 7 kids) to come along for a bowling night. And while we thought the primary focus of the connection was the kids, it turned out the real connection that happened was between Barča and Ray's wife. She speaks Slovak quite well, so they began to meet regularly. Then it happened ... Barča invited her to church! The morning she came was a huge shock and surprise to us (because of their security concerns), but oh, what a testimony. She'd never been to a Christian church before, but said that she loved it, saying the worship music and the word had filled her with something she had been longing for. We are so thankful and are praying God gives the rest of the family a desire to connect with Him as well.

## Encouragement and Blessing from Family & Friends

God is so good to us. We can always rely on Him to bring us what we need, when we need it. Right when we were in deep need of rest, encouragement, and the presence of family and friends, our son Ben came to visit us for two weeks in March. He gave us the precious gift of his time. It met so many unspoken emotional needs. We cannot quantify the incredible value of his visit – when one of your kids, who lives far, far away, comes to spend time with you in the field – especially during the intense trauma that the war has been bringing.



And in April our dear friends Dan and Rosanne also came to support and help to us for a week. Again we were blessed beyond measure and tangibly felt the love of the Lord for us. You can get updates on our work for Ukraine, and read about how they jumped right in to help us at <https://www.podporaeuropa.org/ukraine>. Here in Bratislava, not only did they minister to us, they also ministered to our CCI congregation – by sharing testimony of what God has done in their 30-plus years of short-term medical mission trips, by praying for couples and individuals, and by praying and ministering with us to some deep needs within the CCI family. God met us there, faithfully doing a wondrous work even in the midst of very difficult times!

*Gary & Joy*

**Gary & Joy Peiss**

**Serving Missionaries, Church Planters, & Pastors in Europe**

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