



# ANABAPTIST INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

Pointing people to Christ

Summer 2019 | Issue 75

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## **NEW STAFF INTRODUCTION**

### **MEET JEWEL**

Hi! My name is Jewel (Gingerich) Kilmer. I grew up in Virginia and Pennsylvania, taught day school in Georgia and Mississippi, and first moved to Poland in 2013. My oldest brother, Anthony, spent some time in Poland when I was 8 years old, and since then I always thought I'd probably live here someday. I participated in two Hope Singers tours in Poland and began to love the language, culture, and people, long before I moved to Poland to teach at Gateway to English.

After teaching English in Mińsk Mazowiecki for three years, I returned to the States and married Jaden Kilmer. I taught at our church school in Wisconsin for a year and a half before we moved to Poland last summer.

Our church family at Agape is the best part of being here. Brothers and sisters are honest and encouraging. The church wives meet frequently, and it is wonderful to have a safe place to share, seek advice, and pray for each other.

The American team is wonderful. We each bring our strengths and weaknesses, fears and passions, experiences and history. Putting these together in a small group of people has its challenges, but we learn so much about ourselves, each other, and God as we become a strong team.

Over the past nine months, I have enjoyed getting to know each of my students. I co-teach a group of children and a group of teens. I also teach a number of students, ages 6 to 40, individually. While groups can be fun, I certainly prefer one-on-one. The stories and laughter that we share in an hour remind me that I easily receive as much as I give in each lesson.

I really felt like I was coming home when I returned to Poland. It was more of an adjustment than I expected (even though many people tried to tell me that coming married would be very different than being here single!). God has taught me and so mercifully brought growth and healing these nine months of living here. I am learning again that my identity and value can be found only in God, regardless of my feelings



Jaden and Jewel Kilmer

and surroundings. He is giving me strength to believe in His goodness and timing. I am so grateful for His gentle leading!

I want to live faithfully for God and His Kingdom here in Mińsk Mazowiecki. I pray that He uses every conversation, interaction, or smile to show His light. One of the beautiful mysteries of God is that He works in spite of who we are and with a completely different sense of time. We never know when a moment listening to someone, a note of care, or a story of God's goodness will touch a hungry heart.

## MEET JADEN

My name is Jaden Kilmer. In the early 90s, my family moved from PA to west-central WI to help start a church in Sparta. I have many great memories from Sparta and after 25 years of living in the same area it was difficult to uproot and move away. But it happened and I am glad to be here.

I have been fascinated by Europe for many years. I first had the opportunity to come here with my parents when I was a teenager. We were in Romania for two weeks, and I remember the lively market and old Roman ruins, walking to school with my friend, and eating bread slathered with honey. This way of life gave me new perspective. The pace was different where I grew up. We did most of our shopping at the supermarket. We had to rely on vehicles to reach church, school, and work. We did not have many landmarks from the past. For these reasons and more Europe appealed to me. Oh yeah, the bread is better here too!

Now, 15 years later, I find myself living on the 4th floor of an apartment building and not having a car. How did I get here? I met my wife Jewel in 2013 a few months before she moved to Poland. I was able to visit her in 2015 and sing with Hope Singers in 2016. Both of these trips helped me experience life and culture here. Jewel and I married in October 2016 and decided to move to my hometown. That same year the board of AIM was thinking ahead to the need of a school administrator. They asked us if we would be willing to consider the role. We felt like it would be a good idea to live near my family and church in WI for a year or two. The role of the administrator was filled by the time we became available, but AIM decided that there would be value in another couple living here. After an extremely busy summer, we arrived here in late August 2018.

Currently, I teach 10 hours of English lessons a week, have two Polish classes a week, and do bookwork for AIM operations in Poland. Researching a business venture to help support us here has also occupied me. I try to make myself open and available where needed. We have been enjoying times of rest, and reconnecting with my love of cooking has brought me joy. On the other hand, learning Polish is providing plenty of hard spots. Being a part of this little community of believers at Agape reminds me that God has much to teach me. Sometimes the uncertainty of what God has for me here is unsettling. At the same time, breaking away from my old life has been good for me and has influenced growth. My goal in this season of my life is to be flexible yet disciplined. I am excited by the ways we can serve others here and let more of the peace of Jesus into our city.

## FAMILY CONFERENCE

*by Lolita Hershberger*



*a ladies' discussion group at the family conference*

Our biennial family conference was held on the third weekend of May. There were around 80 attendees from across the country, making it one of our larger conferences. Donny and Angela Yoder and Greg and Hannah Yoder from the Word of Life congregation in Montezuma, GA were our speakers. Donny spoke to the married couples and Greg shared with the youth. It was a truly wonderful weekend of connecting and encouragement, and we are so grateful to Donny and Greg and their wives for their willingness to come and bless us in that way. One Polish brother remarked that no one would be able to leave the conference unchanged. Praise God and pray that Christian marriages and families in Poland would be strengthened and filled with God's love.



*Shalom Mennonite Church (Cochranton, PA) presented a gift to the Agape Mennonite Fellowship, expressing love and brotherly commitment.*

## BOARD VISIT TO POLAND

*by Matthew Mast*

In the last week of April, Anthony Gingerich (the head pastor of Shalom Mennonite Church) and I traveled to Poland on behalf of the AIM Board. Our goals were to encourage the AIM team and to strengthen the connection between the board and the team.

We interacted with the team leaders (Matt, Lavern, and Jaden) about their roles and the needs of the team. We shared a meal and extended conversation with each couple: Lavern & Lolita, Jaden & Jewel, and Matt & Deborah. We were able to spend time with the volunteer teachers, learning to know them and hearing about their experiences in Poland. We were also privileged to participate in the Sunday morning service with Agape Mennonite Fellowship and to interact with Piotr & Jola Ławrynowicz and their children. On our last day in Poland, we spent time at Gateway to English, enjoying the rhythms and activity of the school.

This trip renewed my friendships with people in Poland and strengthened my connection with the activities and work of the AIM team. The visit brought back many memories of my experiences when I lived in Poland 15 years ago. More importantly, this visit refreshed my on-the-ground connection with the team and the work of AIM.

I am deeply grateful for the commitment and competence I observed in the team members. It is a joy to see their commitment to the Lord and to each other. They are pursuing the mission of AIM with vision and passion. The interaction of the brothers and sisters at Agape Mennonite Fellowship encouraged me; these men and women love the Lord and each other. I returned home with renewed courage for the work of bringing the Good News of Jesus to the people of Poland.



Anabaptist International Ministries  
P.O. Box 62  
Guys Mills, PA 16327  
*Address Service Requested*



## AIM Financial Report

January 1, 2019-June 30, 2019

<b>Available balance January 1, 2019</b>	<b>\$10,299</b>
Restricted funds January 1, 2019	\$-0-

### **Income**

Unrestricted donations	\$51,032
Restricted donations	\$16,883
English lessons	\$35,519
Other Income	\$441
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$103,875</b>

### **Expenses**

Labor	\$66,191
Administrative	\$1,741
Facilities	\$3,765
Personnel	\$10,207
Public relations	\$3,929
Publications	\$11,286
Supplies	\$1,127
Travel & Events	\$1,171
Utilities	\$2,766
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$102,183</b>

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,692</b>
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<b>Assets released from restriction</b>	<b>\$16,762</b>
Restricted funds June 30, 2019	\$121
<b>Available unrestricted funds June 30, 2019</b>	<b>\$11,870</b>

## NEEDS

We have an opening for a female volunteer teacher to provide instruction in conversational English at Gateway to English, starting in September 2019 or January 2020. Teaching experience is preferred but not absolutely required. To volunteer or to recommend someone for this position, please contact Matt Gingerich at [personnel@aimpoland.org](mailto:personnel@aimpoland.org).