

engage
Kids

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ENGAGE EUROPE



MISSIONARY WORK

AT THE HEART OF IT ALL



“C’mon, Margot, let’s go!” Louie tugged at Margot’s hand as she tried to daintily stuff the last bite of her sandwich into her mouth.

“Louie, may I please finish my lunch at least?” Margot tried to sit back down.

“But I want to try the scooters now!” Louie’s patience was nowhere in sight.

Mr. Tim Teed took pity on him and grinned. “We’re finally ready. We can take off as soon as we’re out the door.”

The day was beautiful. Louie just knew he had found his favorite mode of transportation when he and Margot took a spin around the yard on their scooters. He didn’t even care where they were going or why, though he did know the plan. After seeing a bit of the town, they were going to pick up a few supplies before heading back for tea with Babka.

Harper, the Teeds’ Boston terrier, rode behind Margot as they all followed Mr. Tim down the street. Louie kept asking questions—as usual. “What are the Slovakian people like? Do you guys know Slovak yet? Is it hard to learn? Where is the children’s home? What do you do there? Will we visit it too? What does Harper do each day? Am I asking too many questions?”

Sharron laughed. “Louie, are you always this curious?”

The others answered for him. “YES!”

Tim spoke up. “To answer your very good questions, Slovaks are good people who deeply value home and family. Many of them are religious to some extent but do not regularly attend church or have a relationship with Jesus.”

“That’s right,” said Sharron. “As for the language, well... it’s tough. But as I teach English classes, my pupils teach me Slovak. I’m making progress! I remember that God speaks ALL languages, especially those of the heart. He sees what these precious people need most. That’s why we work in the local schools and at the children’s home. It’s about fifteen minutes away, by the way. As we meet their needs for friendship and learning English, we show them that God sees and loves them. This is also why we regularly have tea with our dear friend Babka, a sweet grandmother nearby. She speaks no English, but we so enjoy the time we spend together. We’ve found ways to communicate, and we’ve become good friends over many shared cups of tea.”

Margot smiled. “I love that so much!”

“Me, too,” Louie agreed. “But...what about Harper? What does he do?”

Sharron chuckled. “Well, I think I’ll let him tell you himself. How’s that?”

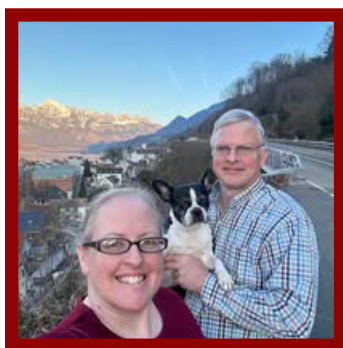
“That’s perfect!” said Margot and Louie as they zipped down the street on their scooters.



Help Harper Learn Slovak

The Slovak language has 46 letters in it (compared to 26 letters in the English alphabet), making it the longest alphabets among all European languages that use the Latin script. Can you help Harper learn a few words in Slovak? Ask Mommy or Daddy to help you by Googling how to pronounce these words in Slovak, so you can help Harper.

ENGLISH	----->	SLOVAK
Hello		Ahoj (Ah hoy)
dog		pes
boy		chlapec
girl		dievča
My name is Harper		Moje meno je Harper
Jesus loves you		Ježiš ťa miluje





MEMORY VERSE

“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
Joshua 24:15

I AM HARPER

Missionary dog, deer protector, guest greeter, and professional fireplace napper...Yep, that's me!

I live in a small village in western Slovakia where the air smells of fields and wood smoke and the nights are quiet—except when I am on duty.

Every morning I check the yard. It is my yard after all. I sniff along the creek where the deer passed last night. I can always tell. They leave soft hoofprints and the faintest scent. And the jackrabbits...oh, they are bold! They hop right through our yard as if they own the place.

But my real work happens on the road. When we're driving, I sit up tall, my nose pressed to the window, eyes sharp. I'm watching. Waiting. And then—DEER!

"WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!!" I bark with all the authority of a trained missionary dog.

"Get to safety! Danger is coming!" I tell them. (It's us coming, but still... safety first.) They leap, startled, and then disappear into the trees. Mission accomplished. My humans say I'm "just barking," but I know the truth. I'm saving lives.

I take my other duties just as seriously. People come to our house often—so many people! Different voices, smells, and languages—I've counted at least five. Maybe six. I greet them all. Every. Single. One. Body wagging (My tail is so short, I just wag my whole self.), ears perked, heart ready.

Some respond with a cheery "Hello!" And some say, "Ahoj, Harper!" I like that one. I am learning more words too. Important ones.

"Poď sem!" (Come here!)

"Sadni!" (Sit!)

"Dobrý pes!" (Good dog!)

That last one is my favorite. I hear it often. As I should.

Some days are quiet. I stay home, watching the road and listening to the wind move through the trees. Sometimes

I curl up by the window. Sometimes I patrol. But winter is different. It's cold outside with snow — the kind of cold that makes even the jack-rabbits think twice.

But inside it is warm. The wood-burning fireplace crackles, pops, and glows. I curl up as close as I'm allowed (sometimes closer), stretching out so the warmth reaches all the way to my paws. This is important work, too, I think. Resting. Being still. Keeping watch... from a comfortable position.



Church days are my favorite. I ride along as we pick people up. Sometimes they pet me. Sometimes they laugh. Sometimes they speak words I don't understand—but I understand kindness. I sit proudly, because I am part of the mission. Not the preaching part... but the welcoming part. The “you belong here” part.

Soon I will meet the children at the orphanage. Will they like me? (They will.) Will they pet me? (Obviously.) Will they laugh? (I hope so.) I'll be gentle and patient. I'll wag my body the whole time. Because sometimes, I think, the best missionary work doesn't need words at all.

Tonight the deer will come again. Tomorrow I will watch the road while we drive. Because I am Harper—missionary dog, deer protector, and friend to many. And I am very, very good at my job.

Woof! Woof!

Louie's Treehouse Lain



WHO CAN YOU SIT WITH TODAY?

As Harper said, sometimes the best kind of missionary work does not need words at all. Sometimes we care for others best when we just spend time with them. Is one of your friends hurting right now? Can you invite them over to your house for some food, fun, and friendship? What about that lonely neighbor? Can you and your parents invite them over to watch the sunset from your backyard? Holidays are perfect times to interact with your community. Who can you and your family include the next time you celebrate a holiday? As you care for people, you are showing them that God loves them. And that is what missionary work is all about.



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