



## Dear Friends and Family

Happy Easter! He is Risen!

Thank you for your prayers, support, and concern. Below are some updates from us.

### Five Years Ago...

Five years ago on a cold and wet February day, we arrived in Albania. Our belongings were scattered over three countries and the rest was loaded in the back of our car. The first day we walked around Tirana and thought “**there is no way, we will ever figure this place out.**” Thankfully our friend Kathy took us under her wing and settled us in. After five years, we have actually figured some things out. We can still be confused about some puzzling traffic rules, but we do get around. Even though we are still far from being fluent in Albanian, we can communicate everyday topics. In five years we have met some amazing people, each of them have left their mark on our lives.

The past five years have certainly been an **adventure!** Some of them have been fun, some difficult or simply frustrating, and many have taken us by surprise. Serving in an international ministry has been different than what we expected. Some things we thought would be difficult, turned out to be easy and some things that we thought would be easy, we struggled with.

Most importantly, we have the **privilege** to be involved in this ministry. We are part of other peoples lives, we hear their questions about God, and see some of their struggles. In all of this we do our best to point them to God.

After five years it’s a good time to pause, reflect and also to look ahead.

Wow – a lot has happened, which makes us wonder what’s God has in store for the next 5 years.

### 5 years ago...

- **Us:** Only two of us arrived, ready to take on ministry positions. It was Andy’s first full-time teaching job while Tine started at Campus Crusade, working in the office.
- **School:** The high school was a small community with a handful of staff and students. As a brand new teacher, Andy arrived not realizing that he had a lot more to learn than he could ever possibly give.
- **Religion:** Tirana was generally agnostic about God. Sure, the Muslim call to prayer was obvious but few people wore Muslim dress and even less practiced.



*Left: Tine packing the car in Germany for our drive down to Albania (Feb.2013)*

*Right: Tine waiting to depart the ferry for our first impressions of Albania (Feb. 2013)*



*Left: Our first view of Albania (Feb. 2013)*



*Right: Wiring in the city!*

### **Now...**

- **Us:** We are a family of five! What a blessing! Three kids in five years has changed our life. Andy is the assistant high school principal, doing various administrative duties and meetings in addition to teaching. Tine is home full time with Jonas, Isabella and Sofia.
- **School:** GDQ is bursting at the seams with a few grades already full and we potentially have to turn away Christian missionary families because we have no more room. We are actively looking for a new building or land to buy in order to expand. There are also more opportunities to impact the Albanian education system. A number of GDQ teachers (Andy included) are participating in a conference with the focus of training Albanian Christian teachers working in public schools.
- **Religion:** There is a massive, brand new mosque in the city center as well as numerous new monuments around the city which demonstrate the friendship between Islamic countries and Albania. Islamic dress including head coverings for women and beards for men are noticeably on the rise. Some families are even being paid to dress more Muslim, even if they don't practice Islam. There is a big increase of Muslim evangelism in this tiny country of Albania.

### **In 5 years....**

- **Us:** Lord willing, we will still be serving in Tirana at GDQ International Christian School. We believe this is where God has called us. So as long as he keeps us here and our supporters keep faithfully giving, we have no plans to leave.
- **School:** GDQ school is actively seeking a new building or land to expand. A bigger facility is needed in order to accommodate the growing student body and the needs for Christian education.
- **Religion:** Only God knows! Christ will continue to be proclaimed in Albania. We are here to serve at the school. We want to support the families that are actively doing church planting, evangelism and humanitarian work. We want to serve the students, regardless of their family background in coming to know Christ as their personal Lord and disciple them in their walk with God.



*Five years and a full house!*

As we conclude these brief reflections, we want to say thank you to all of you! You have enabled us to be here. **Without you, we would not be here.** Thank you for being faithful to us and to this ministry. Some of you have given financially, some have prayed, some have helped us when we visited the US or Germany, and some have simply shown concern by asking how we are doing.



**Thank you....**

for your love and support.

*Tine, Andy, Jonas, Isabella, & Sofia*



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 TeachBeyond  
 PO Box 610  
 Downers Grove, IL 60515-0610  
[www.teachbeyond.org](http://www.teachbeyond.org)  
 Account #40227

tel. 630-324-8177  
[info@teachbeyond.org](mailto:info@teachbeyond.org)

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[tvanderlaan@teachbeyond.org](mailto:tvanderlaan@teachbeyond.org)  
[avanderlaan@teachbeyond.org](mailto:avanderlaan@teachbeyond.org)

**Our mailing address is:**  
 KP 119, AEP  
 Andy and Tine Vander Laan Box #89  
 Tirana, Albania  
 Zip 1054

