

# New ministry in Poland

Since 1 June 2009 I have been the part-time pastor of the Baptist Church in Chociwel, a small town in northwest Poland with a population of about 3000 people. The town is located about 30 miles from the nearest big city of Szczecin. There are about 40 members in the church and the average Sunday attendance is about 20. The church has recently passed through very difficult times because, in January 2009, the previous pastor left in disgrace.

The church has excellent facilities including the chapel, a flat for the pastor and extra accommodation for holiday-makers etc. It is unusual for the local Baptist church in such a small town to have its own building. This church belongs to the Baptist Union of Poland and my candidature for this ministry was approved by my home church in Szczecin.

Chociwel is 50 miles from our home in Police, so each Sunday Monika and I and our 3 children, Mateusz (10), Julia (8) and Bogusia (6), travel to Chociwel. Midweek involvement has not been possible because I have continued my full time employment as an engineer. The focus of my ministry, therefore, has been on Sunday preaching and getting to know people from the church. As a result of their recent sad experience, Christians in



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the church need a lot of encouragement and they need to regain trust in the leadership. Also, relations between many people have been broken and need to be restored.

We have all been conscious that my continuing in secular employment and our living so far away are not good and would not be sustainable for very long. In December I met with the church leaders and an experienced Baptist pastor, who is assisting the church, to review the situation and consider the future. The church leaders invited me to become the full-time pastor at Chociwel from summer 2010. After a time of prayerful consideration Monika and I agreed that I should accept this invitation.

This will involve some real challenges in the coming months. We will need to

find the necessary financial support and also move, as a family, to Chociwel. The church is able to provide a small salary but we will also need additional support from other churches and Christians. We will need to sell our flat in Police and find suitable accommodation in Chociwel.

My biggest desire is to present Christ to people in the whole area. Having such a large and useful facility will be a great help. The big challenge is how to take the Gospel to the people of the town and to nearby villages. I also hope to re-establish my previous ministry of leading a Preachers' Fellowship to provide training in preaching and exegesis for lay preachers.

So, I am very thankful to the Lord for his faithfulness and call to this ministry. I had almost lost hope that I might be of any use in his church. Now Monika and I and our family will need a lot of wisdom and strength to cope with this new ministry and to show love towards all.

We are convinced that it is right for us to take this step in faith and ask you to pray for us and for the church. UFM and our UK sending church at Ogmoresby-Sea are standing with us and will be arranging for me to visit churches in the UK to speak about our work in Chociwel. If you would like me to come to your church or would like to receive our regular prayer letters please contact one of the UFM offices.

**Tomasz Kucharski**

