

JIM AND KATHIE JENKINS

Christmas 2014



Just a few short weeks ago Kathie and I had the privilege of travelling for the first time to Greece and partnering with some amazing ministries in and around Athens. Another first was the use of Bluegrass music as a platform for the gospel, a longtime dream of Proclaim. God provided some choice musicians from our local church here in Jacksonville and the band **SOUTHERN CROSS** was born. I can say that this was one of the strongest teams **we've ever had the privilege to lead. All were dedicated to the mission of serving local ministries in any way we could for the advancement of the gospel.**

Our Greek organizer, Mihalis Litsikakis, did a wonderful job of connecting us with organizations that minister to a variety of people such as the homeless, refugees, addicts, students, artists and the politically disenchanted. We did 16 concerts in 13 days.

Mihalis works for AMG International, a ministry that is much like Proclaim. They seek to advance the gospel *by any means possible* and are doing some very creative things around world. The origin of AMG International is **compelling: The mission's founder heard the gospel in New York City where a street preacher on the other side of the street was faithfully proclaiming despite the fact that no one seemed to be listening. At least one was listening, and soon after gave his life to Jesus. No one knows who this street preacher was, and so he never knew of the far reaching results that the Lord has brought about through his faithful proclaiming. It serves as a reminder to me to faithfully represent Jesus in word and deed regardless of how receptive people seem to be to the message of God's glorious salvation.**



Comfort and Joy

We weren't at all sure how Greeks would respond to the music and message of Southern Cross. To our delight people of all ages really enjoyed and appreciated our concerts. The word they used most often to describe our presentation was "joyful" (not "happy"). They often remarked that our faces reflected a joy that marked us as different than most musicians they have seen or heard. We all know that what they were seeing was Christ in us.

And our prayer all along was that we would be vessels of Christ's COMFORT and Joy to the lost and hurting souls we encountered.



Already, plans are underway for the team to return next fall to build on what was established this year. One priority between now and then is to have a Southern Cross album recorded to bring with us. Pray with us as we choose songs for the album, find the right studio and raise the needed funds for this project.

Peace and Good Will

As is my custom, I have been playing Christmas music at events around town this month. Two songs I have included this year have really been on my mind these last couple of days. One is an old Latin hymn **Dona Nobis Pacem** which simply means *Grant us Peace*. As I look around at the frenzy that is Christmas in America, I see anything but peace on the faces of most I encounter. Add to that the pressure of trying to be happy and joyful through self-effort, and it is understandable that Christmas is a depressing time for so many.

The other is the old carol **I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day**. The text for this is a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. To put this poem in its proper context it is important to remember that it was written right in the middle of America's civil war, a time that nearly tore our young nation apart. As he struggled with the message of "peace on earth, good will toward men" in the midst of the violence all around him he penned the now familiar words. The following is part of this poem:

*I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And in despair I bowed my head
'There is no peace on earth,' I said,
'For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail
With peace on earth, good will to men.'*

And He will be called
Wonderful Counselor
Mighty God
Everlasting Father
Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9:6

In this day of cyber-attacks, terrorist attacks, and various other threats, lost and desperate people without the hope of Christ are trying to hold on to the empty scaffolds that shore up their lives.

We wish you the reality of the true comfort, joy and peace that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jim and Kathie

jimjenkins722comcast.net
kathiejenkins@comcast.net