

# RICHARD AND PINUCCIA WILSON

## SERVING IN TRENTO, ITALY

With Stefania, Daniele, Luca and Mattia

Number 102, December 2017



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A lot of churches had special events in October to remember the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, when Martin Luther posted his 95 thesis. However, since the Council of Trent, which was the start of the Counter Reformation, was held in our city (1548-1563), the commemoration had a special significance for us. The church had nine days of activities leading up to Reformation Sunday at the end of the month. During the week there was an exhibition across the road from the cathedral where the decrees of the Council were signed, with conferences in the evening on various aspects of the Reformation. They did not have large attendances, but they were what we were expecting for such events. Then on the final Sunday over 300 people from various evangelical churches in northern Italy came together in a cinema for the Reformation Day service. It was almost certainly the largest ever Protestant service in the city. After lunch, some of us from Trento gave a guided tour of the city, emphasising the significant buildings of the Council of Trent, helping our visitors to pray for the city. We then all ended up in the square in front of the church where the working meetings of the Council were held and the decisions taken. At this place we concluded with another prayer. Weaving through the crowd there was a red thread, to symbolise our connection with the Reformation and with the



believers of the past. On this thread, people attached notes with what they thought would change the world in the future and what they would do about it – a new 95 thesis for a new situation.

This year we are trying something different in the children's ministry, with four "mini camps" during the year. Instead of doing the usual Sunday School, we will try to mimic a camp in the space of an hour. This aims to create excitement in the children for the activities, strengthen relationships (especially



between the classes, that are usually separated), and give other people an opportunity to serve in the children's ministry. Always with an eye on the growth of the children as disciples. In October there was the first such mini camp. The idea was to go to a nearby park for the hour, but rain washed out that possibility. We fell back on Plan B, adjusted our activities a bit, and held the camp in our usual hall. It was a great success, as we did various activities all together, a lesson based on the activities, had a bit of food and free play. It was good to see the older children learning to help the younger ones rather than putting them down because they could not do as much. I'm looking forward to the next mini camp as much as the children are!

In the past few months I have made a couple of trips to Spain and Germany for meetings for the mission. The first trip was for a one day meeting of the small group that oversees all the ministries of the mission in Europe, and the next day for a meeting of the group that looks at the vision and strategies of the mission for the future. I am the only person in both groups, mainly because I also act as the secretary of both. The second group in particular needs a "details" person like myself to help all the visionaries of the group put their thoughts into practice! The second trip was for almost 40 leaders of the mission, from the fields, from the offices that send missionaries, and from the international office. I represent Italy in these meetings, as well as being the secretary again. They were useful occasions, hopefully to all the ministries we are serving, and I was also able to bring back some ideas to improve how all the ECM missionaries in Italy can work better together. Pinuccia stayed at home to look after the family – for the first trip her parents were visiting and helped a lot, but for the second she was by herself and was exhausted by the time I got back.

### Prayer and thanksgiving points

- For the witness we could have in the city—for example, one lady who saw us all walking through the city, asked who we were, and has been attending church ever since.
- That the children of the church will grow as disciples of Christ.
- That I am able to be a part of God's work across the continent as I help other missionaries
- For the family, that we would each learn to serve God with the gifts he has given us
- For our witness in our town, that the way we act might lead to more questions and conversations



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