



Sing to the Lord
a new song.
Sing his praises
in the assembly
of the faithful
Psalm 149:1

news from Novi Most Autumn 2023 New Bridge

pioneering youth work in Bosnia and Herzegovina

@novimost

Inside this New Bridge you will read encouraging stories from summer camps. One of the things that is special about camps are the times of worship. For believers these provide rare moments to be part of, what is for Bosnia and Herzegovina, a large group of worshippers. For those with no experience of church, this provides an amazing window into the reality of our faith. We know both of these things are important.



Encouraging
our musicians
of the future
at Kids Camp

Over the years we have been steadily working to encourage and inspire young people to be part of playing and singing at camps. It has been great to see kids grow up into musicians and singers who can be part of leading others. This year it felt like something fresh was happening with those who were involved. This communicated to the campers: ukulele workshops at Kids Camps were full, teenagers were clearly inspired, and the songwriting workshop at Youth Camp was packed with eager participants.

New faces
singing at
Teen Camp



Matt hopes to
inspire songwriters

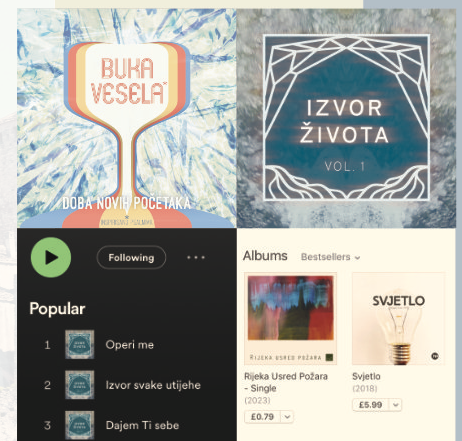


Like last year, those in the songwriting workshop wrote a new song together. They performed it (twice) on the last night of Youth Camp. By the time you read this Matt will have hosted a weekend, at his studio in Jajce, for them to record this song together. It is really encouraging to see the desire in these young musicians to learn and to make the most of these opportunities.

LISTEN UP...OUR MUSIC IS NOW PROPERLY ONLINE!

It is almost ten years since we opened the 'NoviMostMedia' YouTube channel and started uploading the songs we had begun recording. Since then there have been dozens of original songs written. Almost one hundred videos later we decided it was time our songs were widely available online.

Spotify has only been available in Bosnia and Herzegovina for three years, and it is only within the last year that we've seen significant numbers of the young people we work with start to use it. But once they started asking why they couldn't find our songs on Spotify we knew it was time to act. Our songs now show up in all the places you would expect them to. Obviously you can stream them to your hearts content on Spotify, but you can also use them on TikTok or add them to one of your Instagram posts. If you really want to you can even purchase them on iTunes!



Here's a quick recap of our main releases. **Svjetlo** was the first album we produced; Beki is the singer and main songwriter. Many of its songs have become staples of camps and conferences. **Buka Vesela** was Matt and Budo's 'lockdown project' - they pulled in friends and family to make an album inspired by the Psalms, with a Balkan flavour. **Izvor Života** is an EP which saw Matt collaborating with some of the young musicians who have played at camps and conferences in recent years. **Rijeka usred požara** is the song that came out of the songwriting workshop at the Youth Camp in 2022. It features three singers, one each from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia.

How to search for our songs...

- Album: Svjetlo
- Artist: Novi Most
- Album: Buka Vesela
- Artist: Doba novih početaka
- Album: Izvor života vol.1
- Artist: Izvor života
- Single: Rijeka usred požara
- Artist: Novi Most



STORMS AND SUNSHINE IN THE VALLEY OF BLESSINGS THAT IS THE EMEK BERAKA CAMPSITE



We wouldn't usually choose to lead our report on summer camps with highlighting one of the most challenging nights in years. But the Tuesday night of Teen Camp is memorable for more than the destruction it caused.

It is not unusual to get thunderstorms at camp. Heavy rains happen. But what happened on that Tuesday night was something that perhaps has only happened once before in the twenty years of camps at Emek Beraka.

Just after midnight the lightning that had been visible beyond the mountains towards Mostar morphed into a massive storm with ferocious winds and driving rain. Within minutes tents were collapsing everywhere.

As the leaders jumped into action, evacuating young people from their tents into the house onsite, as river started running from the meeting tent down towards the sleeping area. To add to the excitement the electricity went out. Inside the meeting tent, all the PA had to be rapidly dismantled.

The morning after the campsite was a state. Almost all the campers' tents had been flattened, many were also flooded, and the main meeting tent was a mess of damp chairs and PA equipment. But facing all of this, off the back of a largely sleepless night, we witnessed two remarkable things.

The team pulled together to see that breakfast was served. The main meeting tent was cleaned and the PA equipment reset so there was only a two hour delay to the start of the programme. By the end of the day all but two of the campers' tents had been repaired and repitched.

Perhaps more surprisingly, the teenagers never complained; despite the disruptions, the lack of sleep and the fact that some were left without a dry change of clothes. There was a smaller storm a couple of nights later. By the end of the week there were a few who had to change where they were sleeping seven times! Nevertheless, there was a great atmosphere on camp. The storm was destructive but it proved what a positive thing camps are.



Members of the team out surveying the damage the next morning



TOGETHERNESS: DEMONSTRATED THROUGH VOLLEYBALL!

There were six different camps that happened at Emek Beraka this summer. This reports gives you some of the main trends we saw, particularly at the Kids Camp, Teen Camp and Youth Camp.

Sometimes good things are happening that are hard to show in just numbers. One of the things we know we saw this summer was a real togetherness amongst the campers, whether that was at Kids Camp, Teen Camp or Youth Camp. Wherever people had come from, whatever their background, they mixed with one other and made new friends. One of the best ways we can show this is on the volleyball court.

Whether it was day or night, whenever there was free time there were always groups gathering together to play together. Of course, there were tournaments, where there were winners and losers, but even in this there was an atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance where everyone was a winner.



Volleyball games go on right up until bedtime!

Football also has its part to play at camps



ENCOURAGING YOUNG LEADERSHIP



The Novi Most team plays a big part in all the work that goes on at Emek Beraka. All of our team were part of at least one camp this summer, many spent more than a month on site. However, it is not just their contribution that is really valuable to everything that happens at Emek Beraka, it is also the way they support and encourage the development of new leaders.



Beki setting the atmosphere at Youth Camp

"It was so great to be part of summer camps this year! It was a privilege to lead the long-term team of young adults, who served at camp for a whole month. Training young adults in spiritual formation, communication and personal development is always a joy for me. It is great to see young people stepping up into different leadership roles and showing a lot of initiative, boldness and perseverance."

Damir 'Beki' Trbić - Novi Most Director



It is great to see an increasing number of young leaders leading parts of the programme or various aspects of summer camps. Perhaps one of the biggest examples of young leadership at camps has been Arijana taking on the main leadership of Kids Camp. She is still studying at university, but since she took on the responsibility at last year's camp it has been obvious she has a real gift for the role. All this is good news for the future.



Arijana leading at Kids Camp

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE GROUP!

Organising group photos is always fun!



REGIONAL INFLUENCE

We talk all about wanting to see young people affecting positive change in their communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But the reality is the social and political situation in BiH is really influenced by what is going on in its neighbouring countries, particularly Croatia and Serbia.

This is one reason why it has been exciting to see Youth Camp developing into a regional camp over the past couple of years. The growing, strong relationships between young believers from these three countries are a testimony to grace of God and a reason for hope.

We are grateful for the experience we were able to help provide for all these children and young people this summer.

The 113 participants at Youth Camp came mainly from BiH, Croatia, Serbia, with others from England, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Sweden, USA. Within BiH, there were young people from the following cities: Banja Luka, Brčko, Čapljina, Fojnica, Jajce, Konjic, Maglaj, Mostar, Prijedor, Sarajevo, and Tuzla.



Helping to create special memories



Camp is a time to laugh and to learn together



Every camp needs eager participants!



If you want to see more photos - and some video - from summer camp then visit facebook.com/emekberaka

ROYAL RANGERS TRAINING YOUNG PEOPLE

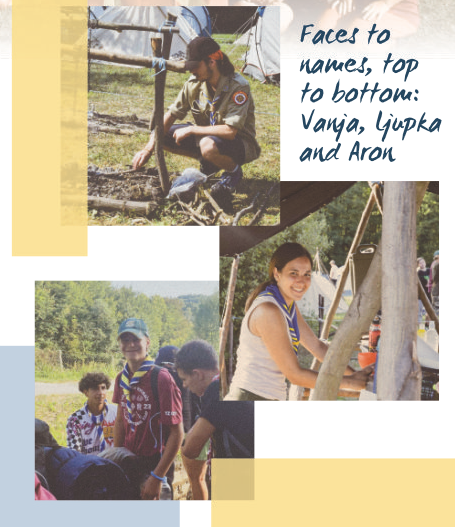
ANOTHER DISPLAY
OF UNITY IN THE
BALKAN REGION



At the end of August, the NTC/JLTC training camp for Royal Rangers took place in Tuzla. JLTC, or Junior Leader Training Camp, is a training camp for leaders between the ages of 12 and 17 where the young person acquires the skills and tools of a scout. NTC, or National Training Camp, is a training camp for those over the age of 17, where young people learn, in a practical way, how to run a Royal Rangers camp.

In total, there were about 60 participants from BiH, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia at this combined camp...plus a few Ukrainians, Dutch, and Italians! The goal of the camp was the development of new leaders in this work and six of us from Sarajevo attended: Ljupka and Aron as participants in the JLTC training, and Mia and Ester as participants in the NTC part of the training. Vanja and Angela served as leader counsellors, as well as in the preparation and organisation of the camp itself.

We are proud to share with you that all 60 participants, including the Sarajevo Rangers, passed the training despite the extreme heat and other demanding conditions. Everyone was delighted with both the experience and the location, and, most of all, with the sense of community. It was great to listen to the stories of other Rangers and learn from them, and to witness the new generations in their endeavours and their walk with God. We are excited for what God has for the Balkans, especially for the youth and for the Ranger's work in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the pastor of the camp, Andreja from Macedonia prayed: May the fire not run out!



Faces to names, top to bottom: Vanja, Ljupka and Aron

RESULTS FROM OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

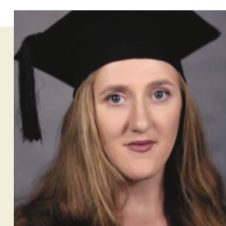
Vanja and Angela are two students living in Sarajevo who have both finished their first year as part of our scholarship programme. This has seen them volunteering in the Novi Most team with Beki in Sarajevo. We asked what this opportunity has given them.

"Being part of the NMI team through their scholarship programme is a huge blessing for me as it has allowed me to take on more responsibilities and push myself towards growth during difficult times. The stipend also helped me do what I enjoy quite a lot which is treating others to coffee, food etc; and bonding with them throughout those activities! Being in the program has also been amazing since our work with the youth in our church has grown and improved quite a lot throughout the past year and I'm very grateful for that and it's clear that the teens we serve are grateful as well!"

Vanja

"I would call my entire experience in the scholarship programme one big adventure. An adventure in which I faced many challenges where I had to step out of my comfort box in faith so that I could continue to grow personally, emotionally and spiritually both in a new environment and in new knowledge. But this experience has also been coloured by various victories; from meeting new acquaintances, developing relationships and hanging out with teenagers to serving at camps and working with people who share a common love for God. This experience has given me and continues to give me hope and joy for the future of the country where I live. And if I can be a part of God's story here, then it is a great honour and privilege for me. Thank you to all of you who are part of supporting this program in any way. You are an immense blessing."

Angela



Congratulations to Malina on completing her Bachelor of Education and Rehabilitation

Malina has just finished in our scholarship programme. This summer she graduated from university and is now working in a local school as a special needs teacher. In her first few months there she found 30 children who had various learning difficulties and has been able to help them by referring them on to specialist help such as opticians and speech therapists. The school has not had a special needs teacher before because before Malina there had been no one in the town who had the necessary qualifications. She has made a huge difference in the school and in the lives of many children in her town. It is exciting to see such a positive outcome from her participation in our scholarship programme.

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NoviMost
pioneering youth work
in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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