## Jennifer in North Macedonia

April 20, 2024

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## "The only way to have a friend is to be one." ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

How can I be a true friend? This is just one of the questions we wrestled with at our teen winter event this past January. It was once again a privilege for me to gather with teenagers from all over North Macedonia for two days of fun, fellowship and Biblical teaching. The event was held on January 13 and 14 at the Methodist church in Monospitovo with eleven teenagers and six adults in attendance. The theme for the event was "Вистинско пријателство" or "True friendship" and our key verse was Proverbs 17:17, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity."





Pastor Milen Stefanov gave two talks on what the Bible says about friendship. In the first talk he went over the characteristics of a true friend. A true friend loves at all times – when we are happy, positive, and doing well and also when we are sad, having problems, and in need. He also taught us that a true friend is ready to forgive, doesn't bring up past transgressions once they have been forgiven, is loyal, respectful, trustworthy, honest, and lifts others up rather than tearing them down. He reminded us that Jesus is the truest friend of all and if we want to be a good friend we just need to model ourselves after Him!

In his second talk, Pastor Milen warned us about the importance of choosing our friends carefully. He reiterated Apostle Paul's warning not to deceive ourselves: that bad company corrupts good character. He said that people hide the parts of themselves they do not want to be seen, especially on social media and that it is much easier for someone of bad character to pull us down than for us to pull someone up into the light. Our friends encourage us to do things – either good or bad, so we need to choose friends who will encourage us to become the kind of people we want to be!



Outside of the teaching sessions, we had times of worship, times of praying in small groups, times of feasting on delicious foods, and of course times for games, games, and more games! It was such a joy to witness the teenagers bonding with each other through the games and times of fellowship. I encourage you to click on the photos and join in on some of the crazy games Milen's wife, Irena, prepared for us!



## Are you looking to make some new friends?

Pastor Milen gave us these tips:

- 1. Don't wait. Make the first move.
- 2. Be yourself. You are worth knowing.
- 3. Listen to people. Allow for silence.
- 4. Don't give up. Keep trying.
- 5. Engage in real life. Get off Instagram!

Friends are so important to have as we traverse this thing called life. I pray you have several friends of good character to surround you and lift you up when you need it. But most of all, I pray you have an intimate friendship with Jesus, the best true friend we can ever have!

In Him,

Jenniker Moore

## Loss of a dear friend

In January, I had to say goodbye to a very dear friend and faithful companion. My precious cat, Lizzy, and I had thirteen blessed years together. She taught me a lot about unconditional love, sharing space together, and taking care of another being. I am a better person because of my relationship with her and will forever be thankful to God for bringing us together. Rest in peace, my sweet Lizzy, until we meet again.





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