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### **Gardner-Webb Team Partners with Christian Ministry in Slovakia**

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# Gardner-Webb Team Partners with Christian Ministry in Slovakia

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Office of University  
Communications

June 3, 2019

## *Students Share Their Faith with Adults and Children in Church, School and Camp*



Members of the Gardner-Webb Slovakia Mission Team include, front row, from left, Makayla Fewster, Taylor Hildebrand, Morgan Poindexter and Amy Depetris, and back row, Gabe Gavin, Whitney Peters, Eric Davis and Teresa Davis.

**BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.**—While sharing their Christian faith at a children’s camp in Bratislava, Slovakia, a team of eight from Gardner-Webb University also had an opportunity to introduce the fourth-graders to an American tradition. They roasted marshmallows and showed them how to make s’mores.

The visit to the camp was one of the best experiences of the 12-day trip (May 13-24) for Makayla Fewster, a third-year GWU student. “I connected with several of the little girls as they gave me hugs, showed me their cabins, and taught me words in Slovak—my favorite, being the color purple: fialova,” Fewster shared. “It was wonderful being able to teach and encourage the children, but they gave me equal encouragement and love, and taught me a lot about Slovakia.”

The Gardner-Webb team was led by Teresa Davis, administrative assistant, GWU Office of Christian Life and Service, and her husband, Eric Davis, senior pastor at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church near Boiling Springs, N.C. They were sponsored by the International Baptist Church Bratislava, where the pastor, Dr. Gerhard Venter and his wife Joan, had planned several ministry opportunities. After their arrival on May 14, they spent some time learning the public transportation system. The GWU group joined the Bible study that night and were introduced to the members of the church.

“The people at the church and our missionaries made a huge impression on me,” reflected Taylor Hildebrand, a fourth-year GWU student. “Their kindness and generosity was overwhelming. The church members come from all over the world, and it was so interesting to hear each of their stories and get to know them on a personal level. I had the opportunity to stay with a couple from Indonesia. Gerhard and Joan, our missionaries, encouraged and challenged me to step out of my comfort zone and try new things like new foods and traditions.”

The GWU team worked inside and outside of the Berea Conference Center, where they were housed for three days. On May 18, the women of the church gathered for their monthly group meeting. The GWU female team members shared their testimonies with them and led a craft. Eric brought the message at church the next day, and the team offered music. A work day at the church consisted of cleaning, painting and yard work. The team also shared in six classrooms of sixth- through ninth-graders at the Narnia School-Petrzalka, which is like a charter school in America.



The team visited the Trans World Radio (TWR) ministry office and moved some equipment to assist the office personnel. The largest Christian media organization in the world, TWR provides relevant programming, discipleship resources and dedicated workers to spread hope to individuals and communities in 160 countries. On the final day, the GWU group enjoyed sightseeing in Vienna, Austria.

### ***Slovakia Team members***

Teresa Davis, administrative assistant, GWU Office of Christian Life and Service

Eric Davis, senior pastor at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church near Boiling Springs, N.C.

Amy Colleen Depetris, of Pilot Mountain, N.C., second-year student

Makayla Elizabeth Fewster, of Harrisburg, N.C., third-year student

Gabriel Quinn Gavin, of Lincolnton, N.C., third-year student

Taylor Brooke Hildebrand, of Connelly Springs, N.C., fourth-year student

Whitney Raquel Peters, of Bozeman, Mont., graduated May 11, 2019

Morgan Ruth Poindexter, of Yadkinville, N.C., second-year student

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university. Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*