

Letter from Romania (March 2017)



Thankfully the long, cold winter has all but passed and the beautiful, Romanian spring weather has finally arrived. Presently, villagers are busy, busy cleaning out their animal houses, busy bringing laden cart-loads of manure out to the land, enhancing the growth of their bio crops. However there is another reason for their busyness. On Sunday, 16th April, Romanians celebrate Paști (Easter). In the days leading up to this annual observance, villagers will be outside cleaning and painting the fronts of their houses in particular, making repairs where necessary. The words of the Lord Jesus to the Pharisees and scribes are still very applicable to many of these very religious people, who, sadly are concerned about the outward appearance, not only of their homes, but also themselves.... **for you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness; Matt. 23:27,28**

We have just come back from a youth weekend, catering for forty one young people and leaders. Mark Grattan kindly and sacrificially made the long trip across from Houston, Texas to Romania. Over the weekend we listened to four challenging messages, all taken from Acts chapter nine. Our prayers are that the Word of God will continue to have effect in the lives of these young folk and that the Holy Spirit will bring about real change from deep within.

For prayer and praise!

Around nine years ago I circulated a prayer letter about a young believer, Lenuța, from Gura Râului, who gave birth to a baby boy, defying all the odds. Due to a serious renal condition she was advised to abort the baby before four months had elapsed. God intervened, however and both Lenuța and baby Ilie survived the birth. More than nine years have elapsed since then and for most of this time, Lenuța has been far away from the Lord. In January, she was returning from Germany, with three others in a car, when close to the Austrian/Hungarian border they were involved in a terrifying incident, resulting in their car going out of control at high speed. Thankfully no-one was injured, but during the ordeal, Lenuța cried out to the Lord and close to this physical border, a spiritual border was also crossed. She recommitted her life to the Lord and we have been so encouraged to see the renewed desire in Lenuța to be at the assembly meetings and to send her young son along to the meetings we have for boys and girls. Where Lenuța lives, it is not an easy place to live the Christian life and I know she will deeply appreciate the prayers of God's people for her onward walk with the Lord. **Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Ecclesiastes 11:1**

Family update

As a family, we sincerely thank all who have prayed for and supported us. Rebekah continues with her home schooling and would appreciate prayer as she returns to Northern Ireland at the end of May to sit GCSE exams. Adina and Joshua still attend the village school in Gura Râului. Elena has now been living with us for three years and she has recommenced her education in a Sibiu school, which caters for older students 'doing catch-up'. We are all looking forward to the marriage of our son Jonathan to Ena in Bucharest on April 23rd, DV. At the beginning of May, our daughter Danielle and her husband Ithai are expecting their first child. Please continue to pray for God's work in Romania.

Yours affectionately in Christ,

Jonathan and Ruth