

24/03/17

Dear family and friends,

It was so lovely to be home at Christmas and to have time to visit people back home.

Since returning to Romania a lot has happened.

Flexibility is something, I was told when I first arrived, was crucial to living and volunteering here, and over the past year and a half I have seen the evidence of this and things are always ebbing and flowing, growing and adapting, and not always turning out the way you might expect.

It's so encouraging to see more Romanians starting to volunteer, and we now have a hospital shift every Saturday, not just weekdays, so the babies get more cuddles. As more volunteers are stepping in, I've also been able to share out some of my other roles to focus more on Teen Mums and the hospital project, as I have just taken over as Head Supervisor (which basically means organiser of diapers and cleaner of the toys) for the hospital when long-term volunteer Katie returned home to Minnesota a week ago. I'm happy to give my time to this role, but we will really miss Katie who has been volunteering here for 6 years!

- Please join us in prayer for Katie as she settles back into Minnesota and begins her new adventures. Please also pray for the team here as we adapt to the changes and saying goodbye to a good friend and humble, servant-hearted volunteer.

The Teen Mums group in the Roma village has also been blossoming. We now have 10 Mums total who have attended the Teen Mums group, and one more who showed interest. Four of these Mums come regularly, and have 6 children between them, with one more baby on the way! These girls have shown real strength and determination in coming regularly to the group. They appear genuinely interested in the bible stories we share, asking lots of questions, and have requested the group continues long-term.

Recently we have begun following a theme of 'Who is Jesus?' with the girls. Up until Easter the bible stories will follow the life of Jesus as healer, teacher, friend of sinners, Son of God and Saviour, and to help make the stories more relatable we will also be sharing some personal stories that have encouraged our own relationship with Christ and helped us grow in understanding Him.

We have also been working on scrapbooks with the girls, as they showed great interest and excitement about having pictures of themselves and their babies. With the donations I was able to collect from lots of people at home, and others, the girls have made a great start decorating and creating their scrapbooks. They will have an opportunity once every month to add to this. At first the girls were a little unsure of what to do with the books, but now we have to almost drag them away from the sequins, stickers, buttons, feathers etc when it's time for them to leave! In addition, we have been monitoring the babies' weight and are pleased that all the babies appear to be growing and developing well. We have also begun to

have conversations with the girls about the importance of skin to skin contact for them and their baby, and have plans to introduce themes of nutrition and hygiene too.

- Please pray for these 4 Teen Mums and their babies as they seek more in life. That their hearts, minds and lives will be touched and transformed by the love of God as they hear more from His Word.
- Pray also for the Mums who have visited once or twice, that God would open more doors for them to hear about Him, and to be encouraged. Pray that if it is right for them to come back to the group they would be stirred to do so, and any barriers restricting them will be removed.
- Please also pray for us as leaders of the group. For wisdom, guidance and unity and that we would be open and willing to all that God has for us as vessels of His love for the girls.

Nevertheless, these past 2 months have been emotionally draining as I battle with the needs appearing much greater than what we can offer, and as discouragements have built. Yet, I seek to trust that God will use me to meet the needs He requires me to meet and will rest in the knowledge that He is sovereign over all.

- Please pray for peace and trust to grow in myself, and for God's guidance and courage in how He has for me to reach out to those around me, and where I should step back or rearrange priorities.

Finally, Rachel, Kayla and I have been learning so much through the Discipleship Programme. Through January we took the Newthru30 challenge and read through the New Testament in 30 days, we have begun reading the Autobiography of George Muller, and have been encouraged through numerous online sermons, devotionals and times of worship. A particular theme we have been building on recently is communication and relationships with God and with others. In addition, Rachel has been working with me on areas of leadership, including reading a book called Boundaries by Cloud and Townsend. Next week the 3 of us will be travelling to Petrosan, a small town in Romania to lead a short day camp for children at an orphanage there.

- Please join us in prayer as we plan and prepare for the camp, and for a safe journey there are back.
- Pray for the children at the orphanage we will meet.
- Pray for the 3 of us past the halfway point of the discipleship programme, that we will each grow more individually in our relationship with God and the we also continue to grow more together in fellowship and in relationships.

Thank you all for your support and encouragements, it is very reassuring to me. I thank God for how He always provides for my needs as and when needed.

With much love and a grateful heart, Sarah Peters

