

Wow - What a fantastic time to be a Trustee of Life to Romania Fund!

May I introduce myself - I am Andrew Saxton and I have been a volunteer with Crusaders Romania Project and then Life to Romania Fund since 2000. For most of that time I have also been a Trustee. I was invited to become Chair of Trustees in January 2009 and took up the role the following June. It has been an extremely busy time since then in many ways but I have been wonderfully blessed by God's guidance and the fellowship of a brilliant team of Trustees. This Prayer Letter is long overdue, for which I apologise, and that means that this is likely to be a very long update. I hope you will be encouraged by all the news.

In 2009 God led me on a 1000 mile trip around Romania opening up new opportunities for our ministry. Right now we are in the middle of setting up our Summer 2010 activities at 4 new locations with 13 UK volunteers. The work of Calin Vaduva in the Petrosani area has continued to blossom and is developing wonderfully to support families and youth & children's work in churches in the surrounding region as well as opening new weekly children & youth groups. More details of all of these items follow.

Trustees

The prospect of becoming the next Chair of Trustees was daunting, following in the footsteps of David Moffoot who had led the organisation for many years. We thank God for David's leadership and stewardship of this nation-changing ministry. We have received regular newsletters from David in India and it appears God is using his talents magnificently in his work there. Although we do miss him very much - both his wit, wisdom and his school-masterly organisational discipline.

During the last year each of the trustees has had to deal with significant personal distractions, be it health, work or family, but God has been faithful to us, sustained us and provided all we needed. Thank you so much for your prayers. Even a volcano failed to thwart our plans for a trustees meeting in April as Yvonne Lyon joined the meeting from Glasgow via Video call. How times have moved on!

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Chris Roberts answered the call to take up a full-time Bible Teaching course at Cornhill Scotland in the Summer of 2009 and this January he stepped down from the Trustees so as to focus fully on his studies. Chris had been a trustee for only a couple of years but in that time we have benefitted from his wisdom and insight born out of prayer. Chris created the green Life2Romania brand and his skill and experience enabled us to refresh the web site, bringing our communications style firmly into the 21st Century. The Trustees are very grateful for Chris' work and fellowship and pray God's blessing over his future ministry.

We have welcomed Lia Iurian to the team as a co-opted member. Lia is from Cluj Napoca, has worked with us in Holiday Clubs and is an accountant. She is now taking care of our accounts and helping us to improve communications with our Romanian friends and partners. Lia has already found some ways to increase the funds available for children's work and strengthened our Romanian links.

We are now a team of 5 trustees and we are in the process of inviting new people to join the team. We would value your prayers for the right people to be identified and for God to confirm for them the call into this ministry.

Romania 2009 Report

Last Summer we sent 7 Volunteers to Romania to help run 2 Holiday Camps with Calin Vaduva in the village of Carpinis near Targu Jui. These camps were for children from Calin's regular weekly clubs and the theme of the spiritual programme was the Holy Spirit.



It was great to see Calin at work with the children as he and his team of faithful volunteers ran the camp and the games programme, whilst the UK team ran the spiritual programme and craft activities with great support from Calin's volunteers.



During one night of the second week of camp a storm started to blow up as the children prepared to sleep under canvas. The wind became so strong that the decision was taken to bring the 27 children into the house where they eventually slept on mattresses on the floor. In the morning, as we walked up the hill towards the camp, we could hear the children singing.

We saw that some tents had been destroyed and the roof of the refectory

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area had blown off. As we walked into the house at 7:30 am 27 pairs of tired but happy eyes looked towards us, Nina and Codruta were leading songs and keeping the children occupied whilst the men were putting the camp back together ready for breakfast. The way that the children had been brought to safety through the storm gave an added relevance to the day's teaching on the theme of faith.



Calin Vaduva

Calin is still growing his network of children's clubs in the Petrosani area. Calin has a large team of volunteers and provides training and support for children's workers, families and Pastors as well as overseeing and organizing the children's clubs that we are familiar with. The best flavour of Calin's work can be obtained by reading his monthly report and so I have sent one with this newsletter. Read it and be encouraged by what God is doing in Calin's ministry.

New Direction



In May 2009 I attended a Christian Conference in Bournemouth. One of the presentations was talking about the need for Christians to work alongside those involved in compassionate works. Afterwards I prayed about whether this was something that God wanted from Life to Romania and I was told that if it was right it would be confirmed. When I returned to my seat I found Pastor Calin Talos and his wife Adela sitting adjacent. He quickly invited me to visit him in Zalau, North West Romania. This would be a long way off where I intended to go. Earlier in the year I had been invited to other places - Dobra in the West, Barlad and Medgidia in the East and initially I dismissed the idea of visiting Zalau as impossible. However when I made my travel plans it seemed feasible and so I included Zalau in my itinerary.

My first week in Romania was helping run the camp at Carpinis with a small team as mentioned above. During the second week I was to travel around the country, meeting the people God had put on my heart. First I met with Sergiu & Diana Bradean at Deva. Sergiu pastors the church at Dobra where we



have run several clubs in the past and he invited us to run a club in 2010 in nearby Mihaiesti where he pastors a small church.

Next on to Calin Talos at Zalau. Calin took me to a church plant in a small Gypsy Village where I enjoyed fellowship and powerful worship with 20 Gypsies in a small, dark ground floor room with a soil floor and no wood in the door.

From Zalau I travelled East, almost the full width of the country, to the city of Barlad where Pastor Claudiu Rosca and his wife Ada work with street children and poor communities around the city.

I spent a precious evening with the street children and the next day Claudiu showed me the village of Dealu Mare where he has planted a church and works to support poor families. I met a family of seven who lived in a house of wood and blockwork with tin sheets for windows offering little protection from the weather. He



then took me 70km to a camp site where each year he takes some of the poorest children for a holiday, supported financially by a church in the north of England.

Then I visited Hardi & Beti Kubassek who have a wonderful ministry facilitating health care and education for the Turkish Gypsy communities around the city. They also run weekly children's groups where the children enjoy craft, bible stories, songs and prayer. I visited some of the family

homes and found what must be some of the worst living conditions in Europe. Was God asking me to direct the work of Life to Romania into compassionate works rather than Christian holiday clubs?



The answer came out of prayer at the end of my visit. 1 Peter 4 verses 10-11 spoke powerfully to me to confirm that our gift is to

bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to children and to encourage indigenous children's work in Romania and this was to remain the mission of Life to Romania. Except now God was asking us to do this alongside Christians involved in compassionate works.

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Romania 2010

At the close of applications in April we had 13 volunteers for Romania 2010, the largest number for several years. This will enable us to run clubs at up to 5 locations during July and August. Proposed locations are:-

July 7-20 Mihaiesti and Dobra
Jul 31-Aug 7 Medgidia
Aug 7-14 Zalau
Aug TBA Burlad

Detailed planning is now in progress for these.

Donors

I would like to thank our faithful donors who have given regularly by standing order over the last year. This really is the lifeblood of Life to Romania and it has enabled us to offer job security to Calin Vaduva, our full time Youth Worker in Romania. Thank you also to all those who have made one-off gifts to support our work. Our only sources of income are the donations we receive and the fees paid by volunteers. All of the Trustees are volunteers and so all of the money received goes into the work it was intended for. The Fund's income is significantly augmented by the Gift-Aid we claim back from the Tax Man on donations received.

If you are thinking of donating and you are a tax payer I would encourage you to complete a Gift-Aid form so that we can claim an additional 28 pence for every pound donated.

Last year we put out an appeal that enabled us to send a pallet load of craft and sports equipment to support the work of Calin Vaduva and his volunteers in the Petrosani area. The pallet was delivered by Scottish Aid to Eastern Europe to whom we are very grateful. Thanks also to all those who contributed towards the total of £750 that we were able to spend on this project. This year we are putting together £50 craft boxes and £75 sports equipment boxes to be distributed to the holiday clubs. If you feel able to contribute towards these please contact one of the trustees or write, email or phone me.



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Prayer

The work of Life to Romania over many years has been born out of prayer. We are sustained by your prayers and ask you to pray for us regularly. Specifically we ask you to pray for the following:

- The Volunteers as they are being prepared by God for the Summer activities
- The Preparation weekend planned for 11-13th June
- The preparations for the Summer activities, both in the UK and Romania
- Calin Vaduva and his team of volunteers, his relationships with Pastors and families
- The regular children's clubs that take place in Romania
- The children who have heard the Good News and what God will do through them
- The children who will hear the Good News for the first time this Summer
- Preparation of Romanian children's workers to take the work forwards when we leave
- Finances, supporters and partnerships of Life to Romania Fund
- The Trustees, their health, families and work
- New Trustees who God is preparing to serve with Life to Romania
- Those who almost volunteered this year, that they would be encouraged by the reports we bring back after the Summer

Yours in Christ's Service

Andrew Saxton