



Need Prayer? Call us at 530-620-2717

Dear Partners,

January 2018

Happy New Year (La Multi Ani)! We hope you had a wonderful Christmas season! We hope you, along with us, are looking forward to what God has in store in 2018. We're wrapping up and reviewing all the videos, pictures and notes from our Christmas project last month and we are in awe of how God has been growing the Annual Christmas project in Romania.

It's amazing that from the late 90's when God put the vision of teddy bears in our hearts until we took a step of faith in 2009, how much this project has grown from a few hundred teddy bear packages to 4000 in this last year. It's incredible to see that our obedience with the Children's project has yielded so much fruit. Since 2012, we've been evangelizing the Moldova area of Romania (Darabani). Three churches have been established in three different villages that we have visited with our Christmas project. This area is bordered by Romania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. Despite the local authorities, directors and teachers resisting our message of Jesus at first, only wanting the packages but not the message, we continued to bring the Good News to schools and villages and plant the incorruptible seed. The Lord has completely done a turnaround in their heart and a lot of the teachers and directors of the schools now welcome us with arms wide open, even telling us to come back next year! That's a praise report! They are not only accepting us into their villages but they are welcoming Timothy, our missionary as well. He continues to visit them throughout the year and becomes a friend to them.

This year we visited 21 different schools ranging from preschool to 8th grade. There was a handful that we revisited from previous years but the majority was all new schools. These areas are isolated in the hills of Darabani with only dirt roads leading to the schools. Some schools only had 15-25 children while others had over 80. The reaction of the teachers, children and parents was priceless. They were very touched by the gifts and our generosity. **Why would someone come all the way from America to bring gifts to their children at Christmas? Because God put on our heart to come visit them!**

As many of you already know from previous years, we include a postcard with our Ministry contact information, television schedule and the sinner's prayer. We've already received feedback from several people thanking us, and asking us to come back again next year and wishing us a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Who could have ever known that a bag of goodies with a teddy bear, some sweets, a toothbrush and a comb would make such an impact over the years? **And most importantly, people were getting touched by the message of Jesus and learning how to have a relationship with Him!**

The Lord provided **5 tons of food** for the Darabani region through a generous sponsor. These basic pantry items included: flour, sugar, rice, cornmeal and cooking oil. In addition to the pantry items, we were surprised to receive another donation of 700 cozonac (sweet nut bread) from a bakery in Sibiu, Romania! It's a Romanian custom to make and give cozonac during the Christmas season and it was a wonderful blessing. This generous donation touched us deeply because we never even considered budgeting for something like this. It's wonderful to see how God can surpass even our expectations during these trips.

After visiting the schools in the morning, Timothy and his team organized meetings for us to share the Gospel in town halls and in some churches. We promised them that if they came to our meetings, they would receive bag of food and a message that would change their life! Who would have known that a simple 30 minute message and some Christmas carols would open the hearts of many to ask Jesus to be their Savior and ask for prayer in areas of addictions, sickness and diseases? We're so thankful that we were able to **give out over 620 food bags to impoverished families!** The remainder of food will be dispersed by Timothy in the coming months as needed.

The Lord also opened the door once again to go back to the Republic of Moldova. We visited this area 2 years ago. This is not an easy territory. Just like when we first visited some of the villages in Darabani for the first time, they are not very open to the Message. The language barrier makes it difficult because part of the country only wants to speak Russian and the other half Romanian. Also the formal Soviet Union attitude and mentality is very evident. We visited 6 different villages and an orphanage in this area. Approximately 800 kids received a goody bag in the Republic of Moldova. We are continually praying for the Lord to send the right missionary to this area and to open the right doors for us. **We know that only Jesus can open their hearts to receive the message of salvation.**

Please continue to keep the Children's Project in your prayers. There are several projects that the Lord has put on our hearts to expand our Children's Ministry in the Darabani area, not necessarily just for Christmas but throughout the year. Please stay tuned for what God has planned!

As mentioned last month, we did have some difficulty with the timing of the shipment of teddy bears and goods that were purchased in America. But instead of dwelling on the circumstances in front of us, we decided to begin thanking God for coming through for this project. Once again, God came through for us in a mighty way! ***Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. Phil 4:6***

This was a gentle reminder for us of how to have an attitude of gratefulness and thankfulness as we enter into the New Year. Choosing **to be thankful in the midst of ANY circumstance we find ourselves in is a daily decision.** We can choose to worry and complain about it or we can pray and to be thankful that God WILL come through. **Our encouragement to you is to make a commitment in 2018 to be thankful every single day.** Start confessing your blessings every day and rebuke the devil! Tell him to take his hands off of everything that belongs to you in 2018! Tell him that he does not have a right to bombard your mind with past mistakes and failures! **The only way we can stay in this frame of mind is by being immersed in God's Word through reading, hearing and speaking it.** Ask God to show you where you can be a blessing in someone else's life while you wait for your own blessings to come through.

We encourage you to have scriptures on hand as weapons against satan's principalities and lies when he tries to attack your mind, your money, your family or your businesses. **Remind yourself to stay immovable even when your current situation is not improving or when you don't see evidence of anything happening anytime soon.** Many of you may think, *What's the point of hoping for anything when my hopes have always been crushed?* The Word of God tells us the opposite! It says, ***But if we hope for what is still unseen by us, we wait for it with patience and composure (perseverance). Romans 8:25***

Make this your daily confession in 2018: I'm expecting God to do great things in my life this year!

In Christ,

John & Alexandra