

Clipă de Lumină



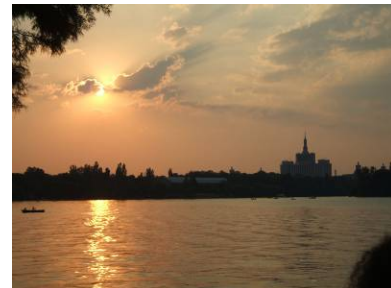
SHARON BEMIS—ROMANIA PROGRAM HOPE! INTERN—CRWRC

Acum Un An (“Now a year”)

I’ve been in Romania for a year. It doesn’t seem like that long, but in some ways it feels like I’ve lived here forever. This is home—more “home” than anywhere else since I left for college. Ironically, I’ve now lived in my apartment for almost eleven months—the second longest I’ve lived in one place in my life (the only place longer was just under eighteen years in my parents house). A year ago at missionary training, we were told to draw a picture that describes ourselves and to use one word to describe the picture. I drew a map of the world...sort of a common picture...but I drew a big stick ME over the map of the world (sounds rather conceited, doesn’t it?!). The word I used to describe the picture (and myself) was “homeless.” I think it’s interesting that I’m a community development

intern who considers herself “homeless”—it seems to be an oxymoron. But it also makes some sense....in the last few years I’ve moved more times than I can count, sometimes across a street, sometimes across the world. I haven’t always known where I would end up next or how long I would be there, or even if I would have a bed to sleep on. But each of those times I’ve moved, I’ve been cared for by people I knew before or by people I would come to know soon. And each time I’ve left, I’ve been told, “You know that you always have a place to stay when you come back!” While I’ve been homeless, I’ve had homes, and now I have homes pretty much everywhere I go. I remember of Jesus’ words in Matthew 8:20, “...the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” When you read the Gospels you realize that

Jesus spent his time in other people’s homes. He had no place of his own to lay his head, but he seemed to have friends wherever he went. Now I’ve been here a year and I’m no longer homeless. Does that mean that I no longer have homes wherever I go? No. But I do have a place to lay my head. I don’t plan to be moving out any time soon, but who knows? If there is one thing I’ve learned this year, it’s what God told to me at the New Year, “I know the plans I have for you...” and He continues, “plans for wholeness [the KJV translates this as “thoughts of peace;” I wonder if the original word is “shalom”] and not for evil, plans to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11, ESV). My plans might change, but wherever I am and wherever I go, my home is with the Lord.



Prayer Requests

- THANKS FOR THE HEALTHY BIRTH OF MY NEPHEW, MERRICK, ON JULY 2!
- THE FUTURE OF OUR WORK IN ROMANIA, AND THAT GOD WILL MAKE HIS WILL AND VISION CLEAR IN OUR FINAL MONTHS HERE
- THE CONTINUATION OF CCD TRAINING AND THE START OF CBCD WORK WOULD BE GLORIFYING TO GOD AND USEFUL FOR PARTICIPANTS
- MY WORK WITH CLINICA PRO VITA
- WISDOM IN MY SPEAKING AND WRITING—SO THAT I WILL GLORIFY GOD

CCD and CBCD

The second and third sessions of Christian Community Development (CCD) training will be held in September and October in the Cluj office. Participants from different organizations and communities from around Romania will be learning more about how to work within their communities, making strategic plans for development, working with diverse groups of people, and using resources already in the com-

munity (people, buildings, skills, etc.) to transform lives. At the same time, a group of pastors, church leaders, and community members from communities in and around Bucharest will be meeting and discussing Church Based Community Development (CBCD). They are forming connections between communities to share knowledge as well as to learn the same skills as those in CCD training, but with a greater em-

phasis on the church being the catalyst towards change in the community.

Continued challenges for both trainings are empowering community members as capable and responsible for transformational change in their communities (as opposed to external organizations making decisions for the community), as well as fighting the view that there is no biblical basis for community development.



CRWRC

Living Justice. Loving Mercy

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<http://images.google.ro/images?q=romania+map>

MY SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS (in chronological order):

- Attending cultural awareness training in Timisoara
- Becoming the proud aunt of Merrick!
- Being visited by my wonderful friend, Erin Blough
- Seeing the reactions of my family and friends when I arrived for a surprise visit in the States at the end of July
- Getting to hold my nephew for the first time
- Spending a week near the mountains with the youth from church. We spent the time in an incredible Bible study, hiking, playing games...
- Celebrating my birthday and a year in Romania!
- Hiking up mountains several times with friends and being overwhelmed again and again by God's glory

What Next?

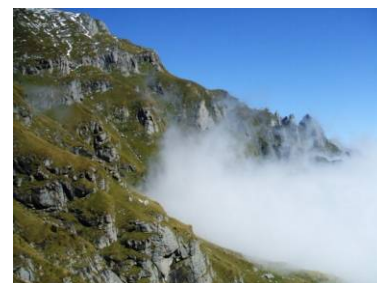
You're probably wondering what will happen with the ministry of CRWRC Romania once the phase over is complete. We currently work in the Cluj area as well as around Bucharest. The work that we have been involved in near Cluj has been more stable and is more prepared to continue on its own. The talks and network we have been building with communities and churches in the South

is more recent and less developed. Some of us are planning on continuing the ministry (not under the umbrella of CRWRC) in the Southern part of Romania. This would be continuing Church Based Community Development with the entire network of churches (within a 2.5 hour radius of Bucharest), while focusing attention on two to three leaders who work in six to nine communities. With these

Right: Happy Birthday in Bucharest!



leaders, we would focus on supporting the church in becoming the change in the community. In this way, the church really becomes the light shining the love of Christ into the community, transforming lives both inside and outside of the church. We believe that it is important to continue with the work that has started, and we have a passion for this work, given by God!



Answers to Prayers

I made a surprise visit to the States at the end of July—beginning of August! It was a time of joy and answered prayers—both celebrating prayer already answered and seeing others answered at the same time!

I often pray and then forget to wait or look for an answer. Or sometimes I see an answer and forget that I prayed, taking the credit for myself. I have been praying since last November for my sister

and brother-in-law, and for the baby that they were expecting. You can probably tell from my pictures that the most beautiful child in the world was born (Merrick, born July 2)! And for three years, my family, friends, and many others have been praying about a job for my father. When he lost his job, we all prayed for provision. In this entire time, I have never once seen him complain, and my faith has been made stronger through seeing the faith of my father. My parents have lived temporarily in Pennsylvania, Nebraska, and Arizona since then. Work has been temporary and unstable (they never knew when their last

day in a place might be). But God is good! In the meantime, my dad wrote a book...which was published earlier this summer! In the midst of my showing up unexpectedly in Ohio (then Michigan and Minnesota), my father was reoffered a job at the same place where he worked until three years ago. Three years ago, we wanted him to have a job. But God has done a great work in this time. This newsletter seems to be a lot about prayers and time. I'm learning that God's provision is absolutely perfect...in its time. In the meantime, who knows when or where I'll be next!

Below: My Dad and Merrick have taught me about faith and prayer.



"GOD'S ANSWERS ARE WISER THAN OUR PRAYERS."

~UNKNOWN