

Joy to the world!!

As we once again celebrate the birth of Christ, we give Him all glory, thanks and praise!

## THANKS

Once more, we want to send a sincere thank you to all who pray for our ministry, donate financially, or simply keep in touch with us; we thank God for you all, and ask Him to bless you as you continue to encourage and support us in such an amazing way.

## RECENT ACTIVITIES

As usual, life is busy as we seek to serve the Lord both inside and outside the church.

Sue spent three days attending a course on family systems, a basic but important part of learning more towards counselling. She continues to sit in on several appointments each week with Pastor John, and is loving the experience and praying for God's way forward with this new venture. Thanks go to J.A.R.S. for its financial help in this area. Without this, Sue wouldn't have been able to attend this course.

We also had a chance to spend three days with friends in Iowa in mid-October. This was our first trip out of state since we arrived back in May, and we enjoyed meeting with Byron and Sondra (who attended some of the summer camps in Brodina some nine years ago), as well as seeing one of the touristic areas on our way back home.

In October, we helped run an evangelism and discipling day at our local missions organisation, which was a huge success.

Our first Thanksgiving here was celebrated with friends, who made us very welcome and served a delicious lasagne followed by desserts provided by us. We had a great time, and were also invited to call on other friends on our way home!

Sue continues to volunteer two mornings each week at Lilypads Too, the charity shop which supports the local homeless shelter. She runs her weekly small group each Monday, and also prays with and encourages various individuals.

Ian has recently followed guidance from God to volunteer with PADs, the homeless shelter itself, in Ottawa. God had been speaking to Ian about working outside the church, and after much prayer, he attended a training session at the shelter and has already worked several shifts and has more lined up throughout the rest of this year.

Ian is also helping many people in practical ways, from fixing vehicles and machinery to assembling furniture at the prayer centre's new venue, and is himself involved in a weekly men's meeting and many other church-based projects.

Amanda, the lady Sue has been visiting since our arrival six months ago, is much better, but still needs prayer for full recovery. Amanda has twice attended special events at CCC, and we continue to support and pray for her and her family.

We both helped set up, serve and clear up another community meal at the end of September, and are generally busy helping with various events at church. Sue is a greeter on a rota basis for the Sunday services, and Ian is still employed by the church on an occasional basis, doing odd jobs around the

building.

## FUTURE EVENTS

We are planning another evangelism and discipling day to be held at the missions venue in January. This time we will be more involved and be helping by actually leading parts of the day's schedule.

Coming up in the near future is Christmas, so like everyone we are busy preparing for it. We are both serving at PADs from 9am to 1pm on Christmas Day.

Sue has volunteered to head up the church's involvement in Explore God Chicago, an evangelical endeavour which has somehow managed to end up in several churches in Ottawa! Sue will be organising (with help) the promotion for the event within the church, and will be leading a small group for people wanting to learn more about God and Christianity. This event begins in January next year, but of course much of the planning and preparation will take place before then. Please pray that God will use Sue to facilitate this event within Christ Community Church (CCC).

Various social events are planned by the church and by friends, so we are looking forward to these, and to sharing the celebrations with our new friends and hopefully newer friends from the greater community as we reach out during the Christmas season.

A young lady we know is willing to make a connection between her fifth grade class and children at our niece's village school in the UK, so Sue will be explaining the plans for this at the school soon. Our niece Ruth is also keen to connect her Rainbows and Brownies with a local pack, so in the New year Sue will visit a Girl Scouts' meeting in Ottawa to start the process rolling there, too.

On December 31<sup>st</sup> CCC is again hosting the community meal for homeless and lonely people around Ottawa. Once again we will be volunteering for setting up, serving and clearing up. This is a great opportunity to show practical love to all kinds of people, and to share our faith with those we chat to during the meal.

## HOME SWEET HOME

At the time of writing there is still no definite news on the house in Romania. Someone viewed it a few weeks ago, and seemed interested, but so far nothing definite.

We are believing God's word to us a couple of months ago that the house is sold, and continuing to pray for the evidence of this.

Despite keeping an eye on the local housing market, we are unable to go ahead with anything more concrete until the Romanian house is sold.

Meanwhile, we are so grateful for the apartment we are using, and thank God and our hosts for this amazing blessing. Not only is it a roof over our heads, it's beautifully appointed and is set in amongst woodland where we see deer, groundhogs, squirrels, chipmunks and other wildlife. We have even seen a beaver, and what we think was a young coyote.

## GIVING

Firstly, we want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who support us financially, either on a regular basis or occasionally. Your giving is much appreciated, and is still needed. Although we are grateful that Ian is able to work on an occasional basis for the church here in Ottawa, the cost of

living here is much higher than that in Romania, so we thank God for all who generously help us with gifts of finance. (By the way, we recently had an opportunity for Ian to up his income through the church, when we cleaned the church building during the regular cleaner's vacation – praise God!).

As those who support us financially via Stewardship already know, things have changed slightly due to the stipulations of our visas here in the U.S. Stewardship will have contacted you with details of this change, and we thank you for continuing your support in this way.

For anyone else who wishes to send financial support via Stewardship, please either follow this link <https://www.give.net/20252329> or contact us for a form to use for this purpose. Stewardship can claim tax back on gifts sent through them, making your donation larger at no extra cost to you.

If you wish to give but don't want to do so through Stewardship, please contact us for details of our bank account.

This verse, which God gave to us several times in the run-up to us leaving our paid employment twenty-seven years ago, has been proved true time after time:

Psalm 37, v. 25: 25 I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

We know that God is faithful in His provision, and once again thank all those who help us in this way.

## ROMANIA

Misu and Livia are still recovering from their busy summer of camps, while Petirca and Viorica are daily ministering to their neighbours, who visit their “open house” which takes place daily. The canteen they run is still taking place as often as they can manage, and someone recently promised a monthly donation towards these meals for the Gypsy community.

Although God has clearly called us out of Romania, and the strong connection we had with the country and its people has been severed by Him, we still rejoice that the work is continuing, and that God is using these dear friends to share His love with those around them.

J.A.R.S. will once again be financing the Christmas parcels in the Gypsy village, and also sending its usual donation to Hannah to be used to help poor families and especially the elderly. We have ordered a consignment of the Scripture verse calendars which will be included in the Gypsy parcels as well as those distributed by Hannah over the Christmas period.

PLEASE PRAY for all the above events, ongoing activities and ministry. We appreciate your part in the ministry God has given us here in Ottawa Illinois.

May He give you a new joy as you celebrate His birth this Christmas, and sustain you as you follow His guiding hand in your own life and work for Him.