

ROMANIA UPDATE – August 2026

Greetings from the Vatrans,

By God's grace, we are back in the States for a short home assignment. We had to return in the month of July mainly to attend an important conference and a few meetings organized by our mission organization at the headquarters in Colorado. We are now in California on the West Coast near the city of Stockton and we plan on being here until the month of October. Therefore, during the months of August and September, we desire to do our best to visit and meet with as many of our prayer and financial supporters as we can, to give a ministry update and to express our gratitude in person. Our initial plan was to come back to the States for a normal home assignment next year. Lord willing, we will do that starting March 2027 for a longer period of time.

We realize that summer vacation time is a difficult time for scheduling visits and meetings due to prior church plans, therefore we greatly appreciate the flexibility of those churches we were able to schedule and meet with on short notice during our present short stay. We are deeply grateful for the opportunities we have had to give a ministry update and also for giving me the privilege to preach and share God's Word with the congregation. We were very encouraged by the loving hearts, the welcoming spirit, and the interest in hearing about the ministry in Eastern Europe and the Lord's work in Romania. Below are some updates on the main ministries.

EVANGELISM

By God's grace, in the last few months the evangelistic ministry has borne great fruits, for which we praise the Lord. Several people accepted Christ at the various evangelistic meetings where I was invited to preach and several other people accepted Christ when we shared Christ with them personally, one-on-one. Some of you might recall my message on "Making the Most of Every Opportunity" from Ephesians 5:15-17. I do that when we meet people on the street or in the market. Sometimes we invite people or families for coffee or dinner so we can have a better opportunity for in-depth conversations about the Lord and His saving grace. In the last few months we held baptism celebrations: indoor and in the river. The last baptism I held at the river was the Sunday before we left the field to come to the States at the end of June. The candidate knew I was leaving and insisted that I baptize him before that. He did not want to wait any longer. Praise the Lord!!!

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

This April, we hosted all four classes of the current students from the Theological Seminary at the camp and conference center for a long weekend. We arranged preaching and teaching opportunities for each one of them in nearby towns and villages. This is part of the training and equipping strategy to provide opportunities for theological students to practice their spiritual gifts in "real life," outside of the classroom. In the month of June, I finished the last semester of teaching at the Theological Seminary in Bucharest. By God's grace, a new generation of trained and equipped church leaders and pastors graduated and are ready to serve the Lord. In October, the Theological Seminary starts the new academic year (2026-2027); this is one of the main reasons we need to return to Romania to be ready for a new season of teaching.

YOUTH OUTREACH MINISTRY

The demographic of most Evangelical churches in Europe, as well as in Romania, is getting older and churches are gradually shrinking in membership. Therefore, we are encouraged and determined to continue to strategically invest in the younger generation, since the most open and receptive to the Word of God are the youth (aged 14-25). We want to continue to reach out to the youth and encourage them to gather together weekly to hear the Word of God and come to know the Lord Jesus and His saving grace. We are grateful to the Lord for blessing us with people who come to help and serve the Lord alongside us.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Please pray for safety during our travels.

Please pray for those who received Christ to remain faithful in Him.

Please pray for all the recent Seminary graduates as they step into full-time ministry.

Please pray for John's interim pastoral ministry, for the transition the church is going through in searching for a new pastor.

Please pray for wisdom as we prepare to return to the field in approximately two months.

Please pray for strength, health, and protection.

We thank you again for your love, faithful prayers and financial support that enable us to continue to serve the Lord on the Romanian field. GOD BLESS YOU!!!

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