

## 2016 Romania Update

I heard a Christmas message from Dr. Charles Stanley about the insignificant events and people that God uses to accomplish His purpose. He said, "Mary and Joseph were ordinary people that God chose to bring His Son into the world. The Lord accomplishes His plans in His way using whomever He chooses." As we landed in Bucharest, Romania, I was overwhelmed to realize this was my fourth continent in 2016. I'm still amazed that God chose a redneck from Cleveland, Georgia to lead teams all around the world. I'm so inadequate, yet God allowed me to return to Romania for the fourth time. As always, plans changed but Gerald assured us he had plenty for us to do so a tiny team of three went, knowing God had a plan. We did a little construction, painted several rooms in the church, shared our testimonies and helped with another medical team in two areas where the Ziemers are currently serving. Only God could put two teams from the USA in the same area of Romania at the same time. I'm reminded that God puts the teams together and His timing is perfect. Some highlights for me were seeing the faithfulness of the Romanians serving in the churches there, spending some one on one time with them and sharing clothes and shoes from my clearance shopping. Kristin and I divided the goods among the families and had Christmas in October. My heart was full as young Naomi grabbed me and said, "I love my boots!"



Matt described it best when he said we had to take one step on faith before God would reveal the next step to us on this journey. Immediately upon arrival, Matt was whisked away to pick up a cement mixer before anyone stole it like someone had tried to steal the windows already installed in the new church. The next day Matt helped build a fence in Piteasca then during the service, he was asked to share his testimony. That was the first of many opportunities that he shared his struggles but what stood out was God's faithfulness to save him, strengthen him during the hard times then call him to service. Matt said he felt that his testimony was insignificant but the people were touched by his transparency, some even commenting and asking questions. I'm reminded that when we say yes to God and move ourselves out of the way, He can use us for His glory! Even if you have to wear dirty socks back home so you can leave most of your clothes for Nicu, who doesn't have a home but worked with us every day, obeying God is best!



Carolyn wanted to return to Romania to serve alongside the Ziemers for another week. She was encouraged by their faithfulness and friendship but when we arrived at our first ministry site, she was so excited to see a friend she met last year, Aureca, the only repenter (believer) in Piteasca. She had come to a neighboring village last year and helped us but this year we had the privilege of helping build a room for her and place to worship in her town. Carolyn giving up a week of work might seem insignificant but to all the faithful servants in Romania, they saw her love for Christ and for them.



It seems so insignificant when a four-year-old boy is asked to pick out some of his toys to share with the children of Haiti and he chooses his favorite monster truck that he plays with every day. His daddy wanted to be sure he understood and explained that he would never see that truck again and Parker innocently replies, "I know but they will like it!" God will surely be pleased that a four-year-old boy gave up his favorite for someone he didn't even know. That's exactly what God did for us. He gave His favorite; His only Son to die on the cross for a sinner like me and you. What will you do with the gift that God has given you this Christmas and in 2017?

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