



Paul & Tanya Gericke

MISSIONARIES IN ROMANIA



MAY 2020

MINISTRY IN ISOLATION

Prayer

- Pray for the camp team as they come back to work this week after the COVID-19 isolation regulations
- Pray for wisdom as the camp staff and board determines the right course of action for programs this summer amidst COVID-19 and government regulations
- Pray for continued financial provision as the camp steps into developing the main lodge this spring
- Pray for fruit to come through the new youth Bible study series we are walking through called “Broken and Redeemed”

Praises

- We and the camp crew have all remained healthy during this pandemic
- Camp development has been able to continue during isolation
- Youth group has been able to continue via Zoom and continues to be a source of encouragement

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.”

ISAIAH 43:1B-3A

Ministry in Isolation

This spring has looked a lot different than we expected, as I am sure is the same for all of you! At the beginning of March we were preparing for two construction mission teams to come in the coming weeks/months, preparing for a North America trip for some NAB work as well as my Dad’s 60th birthday and retirement party, and beginning work on our curriculum for summer programs. All of that changed as the pandemic took off worldwide. Romania has taken social distancing measures seriously, requiring that all people remain in their homes unless they have a moving permit, and it’s been regulated by police and military force. We are not allowed to go outside even for walks without a moving permit or else we will be fined. For those in the village this has been difficult as we are in the midst of planting season, so people have been required to apply for

moving permits to just go to their field to plant each day. For us, it has made life and ministry rather difficult, as we have been house bound. Yet we praise God because in the midst of the chaos, uncertainty, and restrictions we have continued to see his great faithfulness, provision, and loving presence in our lives and this ministry.



One of the ways we have continued to see God at work is through youth group. Though we are unable to meet with the youth face-to-face, we started a weekly Zoom meeting. It is quite different than normal youth group, and sometimes we are really grateful for the mute



feature on Zoom . . . but it has been a blessing to be able to connect and support one another amidst the isolation. As we told you in one of our recent updates, we have two new teens attending youth. They are from a gypsy village down the road from us where we have been doing ministry over the past six years. We were encouraged to see that they have continued to “come” to youth even with it being on Zoom. We started a new series with the youth called “Broken and Redeemed,” where we are looking at different broken realities of our lives and this world and how the gospel of Christ comes to redeem these realities, giving us hope and new life. Please pray with us that this study would be fruitful in the lives of these youth, especially as we all process this new reality we are living in.

Last month we shared the strong sense and peace we received from God to stay in Romania during this time. As part of this decision, we decided that as things were shutting in Romania it would be best for us to move up to the camp so that we could continue on with development. We were planning to have two construction mission teams come this spring to help us with our projects, but as a result of the pandemic, we had to cancel both of them. On top of that, the local construction crew was unable to come up to the camp this past month due to the government regulations. However, we are grateful because development has been able to continue on! With Tamas and Tunde and Paul and I all living up at the camp, we were able to work on construction projects. I know Paul and I are not generally the people you want leading these types of endeavours . . . and our bodies have suffered this past month . . . but we actually have really enjoyed the work and the fruit of manual labour. With Tamas’ direction and expertise, as well as Paul’s experience in landscaping and my love for just learning new things, we were able to complete a small patio and two retaining wall/steps, as well as begin work on another larger patio and two other retaining walls around the cabins. One day after we had put in some long hours to finish one of our retaining walls/steps in front of cabin 1 and 2, Paul and I stood back staring at the finished project. We were imagining all of the kids and leaders who will sit on it one day as they hangout talking about Jesus’ work in their lives. It’s amazing what a little landscaping does to clean up a space but also create new spaces for visiting and hanging out with people. Last year, the spot in front of the cabins was the hub for kids and leader hangouts,

so we look forward to how this development will add to that ministry.

Moving forward, the camp construction crew will be able to come back to work starting next week. They will pick up where they left off working to convert an old potato shed into a cabin to sleep 10 more campers. We are continuing to move ahead with the main lodge project and have contracted a construction company to begin building next month. Paul and I will continue to live up at the camp, working on finishing up landscaping around the cabins through making more patios and retaining walls. With all of these projects complete, we will be able to increase the accommodation of the camp, hosting more campers per week and more groups per summer and reach more with the love of Christ!

All of these construction projects were planned in order to help us get ready for summer camp. As of last December, we were fully booked for summer programs! We were overwhelmed by the response from churches to attend or host programs at Camp Falcon Rock. With the uncertainties of this pandemic, there had been rumours that kids may be sent back to school in the summer once things open up to finish up their course work. However, the government announced this past week that schools will not reopen until September. Schools will finish this year as scheduled in June via distance learning. While this means that kids and youth will be available to come to camp, we are still unsure what the government regulations will be come summer regarding gathering limitations. We are seeking your prayer as we wait on the government and seek the Lord’s wisdom for when to make the call about summer programs. We don’t want to respond in fear to this pandemic, yet again we want to ensure that Camp Falcon Rock continues to be a safe place for people to experience the love of Christ. We covet your prayers over this next month as we, and the camp team, discern the way ahead.

Thank you for your continued partnership with us and the ministry in Romania. We pray that you are experiencing the loving presence of Christ in powerful ways as we all walk through this new season together.

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