



Praise & Prayer

Winter 2007

Looking back over the year the first thing to say is *THANK YOU* for all the prayers, gifts and encouragement we have received. So much of EPIC's work in 2007 has related to building projects and the following pictures convey a little of the vision and ideas that are slowly being fulfilled thanks to your help. Nothing is more exciting than being a link in a chain towards helping fulfil the dreams and thus extending God's Kingdom. One of the joys of the job for me is to put friends in contact with each other and seeing the results.

Ivan, a minister in the SW of Bulgaria is extending his church to include a medical centre with surgeries for a doctor and a dentist plus two rooms for sick children. EPIC is funding this project and when it is built we hope to send out all the equipment needed.



The medical centre in Pervomai taking shape

Ivan's vision has been enlarged by firstly hearing about and then meeting a couple living at the other end of Bulgaria, who are using their church as a community centre with a new medical/first aid room. He wants to do a similar thing and work is under way for a dining room/lounge so elderly people can have lunch in the winter months and then stay on at the church and be warm. He already has a youth room for the teenagers who meet most nights.

The other medical centre is much smaller, just one room in the church building but it is functioning and many local people are coming for basic free treatment and finding out at the same time about the other things Friendship Church is offering, - meals at lunch-time and a warm welcome to stay all day.



The church and medical room in Russe

Cornel and Sanda Hudulin will be familiar names and some of you met them last year at the EPIC birthday. In August they were involved in a terrible car crash and Sanda broke both arms and some ribs and Cornel's legs were broken, his right one very badly. They were returning from holiday in the north of the country, so they were in a hospital several hundred miles away from their home. Now they are back in their house, but Cornel is unable to walk as both his legs are still in plaster and he is anxiously waiting to know if he will need further surgery on his right ankle and foot. However he is not wasting the time but preparing sermons which he is preaching to his church by telephone every Sunday!



In the summer a conference was held in Poland for pastors and wives from Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Moldova, Bosnia and Croatia. It was inspiring to hear the messages translated into different languages so that everyone present could understand and take part. It was so successful and enjoyable that the intention next year is to expand and run a parallel teenage conference.



The venue



some of the speakers



the wives



the pastors

One of the real and lasting benefits of a partnership is the exchange visit. This year it has again been two - way with some English church members visiting Poland, Bosnia, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria, some for a weekend, others for 10 days. Now that there are many new airlines and routes, short visits are possible and give a 'taster' of experiences. Of course this works the other way round as well and many couples have blessed English churches this summer as they met different people over meals and days out together and shared their work and vision. We are always happy to help organise a visit in either direction!

Many times I have written about Petru, a pastor in the NW of Romania, whose wife Mary died in February. He has been sustained by his remaining family and friends, many from England, who have kept in touch. He relinquished about 10 of his churches so that he could have more time at home but then after her death he had too much time, so he returned to preaching in the local prison and now takes services there three times a week. The accordion he is playing was a gift from a friend in N. Ireland and he leaves it & an OHP (the prisoners do not have hymnbooks so he writes out the words) in his cupboard at the prison ready for use.



Finally I must give an update on the farm project in Romania as so many of you have contributed towards it. There is good news and disappointing news! Negative first, with all the new regulations involving just about everything to do with buying land, setting up bank accounts, etc there seem so many obstacles to even the simplest things which has slowed everything down. However Virgil who is 'in charge' is persevering, and land has been purchased and seeds sown. By next Spring animals will be with families and the first profits will be made and distributed.

PRAISE GOD FOR

- The new churches linked
- Safe travelling and useful trips this year
- All the exchange visits - both ways

PRAY FOR

- More English churches to get involved
- The medical work to expand - the need is certainly great!