

# ARAD, ROMANIA

## SEPTEMBER 2025 - FEBRUARY 2026 UPDATE

Greetings to all of my supporters! Grace and peace to you, and thank you for all of your prayers, financial, and emotional support over the last year and a half!

I want to give an update regarding the work in Arad, Romania, specifically regarding the following five aspects of the work:

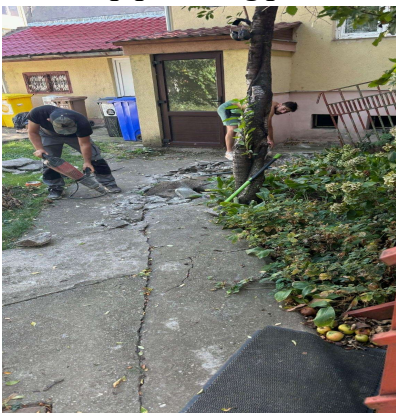
1. Work done at or in the Church building
2. Preaching
3. University Evangelism effort
4. Personal Study
5. Interactions and fellowship with other members and congregations nationwide
6. 2026 Summer plans

It is my hope and prayer that this report will serve as a window and glimpse into the work of our Lord in the hearts of men of Arad, Romania and throughout the country as a whole.

### WORK DONE AT OR IN THE CHURCH BUILDING

As some of you may already know from newsletters and presentations, my arrival in Romania was plagued by two very unfortunate burdens: 1) bureaucracy and 2) inheriting a church building I know nothing about and had little help with (early on). The church building was purchased in the 1990s by previous missionaries, and the members of the Church did the best they could over the years (with the help of American support) to keep the building in a good and clean condition, however, it had been more neglected in recent years.

One major area of neglect was with the pipes in the church yard. The pipes in the yard would burst about every four to six months – including pipes bringing water into and out of the building. This has been a problem for years. In addition to this, water pipes in the church basement would burst from pressure built up from the pipes in the yard. Thankfully, in the summer of 2025, we had a generous donor make a contribution to the work fund which was able to mostly pay for the replacement of the pipes and the refurbishment of the Church yard. ***In the first picture, you can see the initial work being done to remove the concrete path above the pipes in the yard. In the second picture, you can see the removed pipes, which had been in the yard for almost a century! And in the last picture, you can see the new pipes being placed.***





After the pipes were removed, there was then a need to refurbish the yard. Pavers were placed in the drive-way and also as a walk-way to the back stairs leading to the upstairs rooms which house the visiting missionaries. In order to place the pavers, there was a need to change the gate as the existing one was old, broken, and lost its visual appeal. So, a new gate was put at the entrance of the property. You can notice in the pictures the new gate and the pavers. The dirt and grass will be placed in the yard in the Spring. Also, in the back of the yard, you can see the foundation that was laid for a terrace. This is something we also hope to complete in the Spring, and it would serve for us as a fellowship area and a place for my colleagues at the University and I to meet for small group Bible studies.

### **PREACHING**

For the latter half of 2026, we had been going through the book of Acts, but paused half-way through due to the members of the congregation being ready to move to another subject. So, starting in December, I started a study in the Old Testament. We are going through a series of lessons I had developed a couple of years ago which cover Genesis to Malachi over a period of 14-20 weeks

(depending on how lessons are split up). Ciuras Gabriel, one of the members, had assisted with preaching a couple of the lessons, especially as I entered the exam sessions. My most recent lesson was on the nature of the Old Law given to Moses and the people of Israel during the Exodus.

Our attendance at worship has been more consistent the latter half of 2025 and beginning of 2026 than it was in 2024. On average, we have 5 people present for worship. On good Sundays, much like 2024, we can see anywhere from 12-15 people. However, it should be noted that these good Sundays often come with some visitors! A fellow colleague of mine, a muslim girl from Syria named Nendar, sometimes comes to worship. She is neither Sunni nor Shia muslim, and she feels more at home with Christians. Myself and others in the congregation have been trying to be a good influence on her, and we hope she will continue to visit with us. Also, an elderly lady who lives next to the building also visits us semi-regularly. However, she is always the last in the door, and the first to leave after worship so I have never been able to catch her name.

### **UNIVERSITY EVANGELISM EFFORT**

I started my studies in Arad, as many of you already know, last year when I did the Romanian Language preparatory year for international students. However, in October, I started my regular studies



with the University with my chosen major being Romanian and English languages (with German being the third required language). This year, I have been privileged to study with Romanian colleagues, not just international students. Over the first several weeks, I was able to learn that amongst my colleagues (40 of 45 of which are girls) at school, there were many of protestant (Pentecostal, Baptist, and community church) backgrounds. Having talked to a

few of these students, they were interested in a small-group Bible study. So starting in late October, we had our first small-group Bible study and it continued to grow. Currently, we are going through the book of Philippians. I am the only guy in this group currently, but this is changing next week (as of writing this report) because a college aged male, Simon, who I met in the city will be joining us for the next small-group study. Once he joins, we will have 7 in our group. **(Pictured is from our first small-group Bible study)**

Simon, who I already mentioned, is an interesting story. A couple of weeks ago, I was in a coffee shop reading my Bible when he came to my table and asked some questions. I asked him to sit with me and we talked for several hours. He agreed to study the Bible with me and we just started the Jule Miller studies which we have already translated in Romanian. He is also of protestant background, and is very knowledgeable of the Bible, but he keeps an open mind.

### **PERSONAL STUDY**

I have been asked before, “how do you stay encouraged being by yourself so far away from home.” Well, it is not easy. Boredom and loneliness is very common. However, I have found a pattern for myself for studying and making time to strengthen my own relationship with God. Being someone who loves coffee and coffee shops, I have developed a pattern of reading Christian books in coffee-shop and having my Bible open to search the scriptures. Most recently, I have been reading a book about the twelve apostles, and how Jesus shaped and spiritually reset each of them.

### **INTERACTIONS AND FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER MEMBERS AND CONGREGATIONS NATIONWIDE**

There are many congregations of the Lord’s Church throughout Romania, and I had the privilege of meeting with many members, congregations, and families since September. In early December, I was privileged to teach a class to the teens at the family conference in Sibiu. I was told to teach the children a series of lessons about being a Christian in this age of media. In December, there were many other events I was invited to, specifically because it was close to the holidays and I have such wonderful and caring brothers and sisters. Members of the Church in Arad who live in Timisoara, the Muraru family, invited me to their home for Christmas. They also invited Nenar, the muslim girl who visits our Church. And she came! Albert and Lavinia Cook, a couple with a lovely Christian family in Bucharest, also invited me to spend a few days with them. And I was able to worship with the Church in

Bucharest for a Sunday. I was also present at the Church in Oradea for their New Years celebration. Great events, great people, and great fellowship!

### **2026 SUMMER PLANS**

This will be a very exciting Summer for the work in Arad! We will have a group from Michigan and a group from Alabama combining their efforts to teach English and have a gospel meeting! This group will be here in the middle of July, from the 12th until the 19th, with my dad (Michael Dykes), coming a little earlier to help prepare! I have already made many of my colleagues aware of the gospel meeting, and I will be posting ads in the paper and on facebook before the summer arrives.

### **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

Hopefully this gives those who are reading a good look into the work taking place in Arad. I am confident that the Lord will continue to do great things and that the Gospel will grow (even if slowly) in the hearts of those who are ready to receive it.

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