



Action shot of the tiles flying off the roof!

Irene's Romanian Adventures - Feb 2018

Hi everyone, as I have now been back for a month I thought it would be good to give you an update on what I have been up to. In many ways it's hard to believe that I've only been back for a month as so much has happened.

Over the last few months we have had lots of work done on the property here. The canteen kitchen has been renovated; the roof is currently being retiled. Also we now have new flooring and carpet upstairs in the house I live in. All of this work will help to improve the service we provide here.

We continue to have two girls groups, three English lessons and homework group. We have encountered some challenging behaviour as some of the children struggle to cope with their family situations, learning disabilities and some are bullied at school. We are always trying to work out how to best meet their individual needs. We want to ensure that they have a safe place to just be themselves. It has become clear that although we can help the children with some physical needs such as food, help with homework, clothes, money for medicines etc That what these children really need is to know they are loved unconditionally and completely by our loving father. Many have the head knowledge that Jesus died for them because he loves them. But I am becoming more aware that only when they completely grasp this will they be able to walk in the freedom he has for them. So we take every opportunity to share Gods love for them as we help them.

We have started journaling with the older girls group. This is really a time for them to chill out, be together and focus on what God is saying to us through bible verses. The girls are really enjoying this and we have had some interesting and encouraging conversations. We hope the girls will feel that they can share their lives, thoughts, dreams and worries with us. Since returning I have heard of three girls that I know well and have all run away from home to live with their boyfriends. In the gypsy culture it is normal for them to be in relationships at a young age. However this often stops their education. I have been thinking about girls that no longer come to groups and would like to meet with these girls and try to work out how to support them so they continue their education. Also I have a desire to reconnect with

girls who now have children to provide support to them as they raise their children. Before Christmas I was helping at a day centre for adults with learning disabilities every Thursday. I have really enjoyed this and formed a close relationship with Lausia who runs the charity called Poplars. I now feel its right to stop helping at Poplars to create time to start trying to work with these girls. So am going to meet with them to give them a chance to give their thoughts and ideas and will then go from there.

When I came here in September 2011 I felt that God would use me to work with the children and families but that I may not see the fruit of this work. I felt happy with this knowing that ultimately God works all things for his Glory. However recently I have really felt that I should expect to see him move in the lives of the children and families. One day I read a daily devotion written by Heidi Baker that really struck a chord with me. Heidi Baker works with her husband in Mozambique. She shared about how God calls us to bear fruit in abundance but that we are not called to do this work alone. She writes how she has seen fishermen spreading out huge nets and that at the end of the day all the fishermen come together to haul in the catch. She also wrote this, "I believe he is raising up an army of laid-down lovers who will each hold on to his or her part of the net in order to bring in fish by the millions." I want God to use me in this way. I long to see lives transformed by his love because he loved me first and changed my life absolutely.

So I ask you to join me in praying for all I have mentioned and I look forward to seeing how God will use me over the next few months.

Next few months:

In March we have a team of year 10 students coming for nine days from The Christian Fellowship School in Liverpool. During this time we will be running a holiday club on the 24th and 25 of March. Also we will be going into the state school to run English lessons for the first time!

Pray:

I would value prayers for my health; I have just recovered from a nasty chest infection so please pray that I remain healthy and at full strength!



Younger girls group making hearts on 14th Feb! Older girls starting their journals.