



Not Negotiable!

Manda Lewis

Just a few days out from the end of 2013, I have much to be thankful for, as I reflect on how God has brought me through one of the hardest years of my life. As He made it obvious that I needed to stay in Australia this year, He also repeatedly reaffirmed my need to wait on His timing and to allow this year to be a time of growing strong foundations.

I have enjoyed the privilege of working in the ITeams office this year, and seeing the importance of supporting those who serve on the field from another perspective. Likewise, being part of CHBC's Missions Ministry Team (MMT) this year has helped me to understand what being a sending church is all about. It really has been a joy to serve others as I wait to return to the field myself.

In line with this, I have been reflecting on Ian's sermon in October (Gen 11-12) about Abraham, who did not know where God was leading him or how God's promises would all come about, but he knew that God required him to step out in faith regardless. Abraham knew that we don't come on our own terms when we enter into our new covenant, but that we come on the terms of the Lord Jesus Christ, which are 'Not Negotiable!' This should cause us to question if there is anything preventing us from stepping out in faith and following God's call.

These last few months in particular, I have had several opportunities to look back at where God has brought me. I went to my 10 year High School reunion, the end of year dinner and 'official'

graduation for Bible College and caught up with several good friends. And I also enjoyed a road trip with Mum down to Phillip Island, the Dandenongs and doing some family history digging around in Benalla and Glenrowen.

Opportunities to spend time with my family this year has been invaluable. I am glad to have been able to celebrate several of their birthdays and Christmas, knowing that next year I will again become known as the 'aunty in the cupboard,' celebrating such events through Skype, for which I am actually grateful.

These last few weeks have also been full of mixed emotions, as we visited Dad's grave for the first anniversary of his passing and took the time to miss him, grieve him, yet celebrate His life and all the memories we hold so dearly in our hearts. I knew this year would be hard, but you really can never know what to expect until you have to face it. How to amalgamate joy amidst grief is a challenge, especially as each day gets further on in time, but I am certainly thankful for the support many of you have shown, as you have loved and supported me in various ways.

As I begin thinking in terms of 'this year' and all that it entails, I am certainly daunted by all the changes and stress that accompanies it. And, whilst I wouldn't change any of this for a moment, and I am certainly looking forward to moving back to Romania, I am very aware of the limited time I

Please Pray...

» **Praise** God for His provision and for all that He has taught me while working in the ITeams office and with MMT and **Pray** that I will know how to balance work, rest and support raising in the coming months.

» **Praise** God for the opportunity to meet up with those already partnering with me and **Pray** that He will continue to raise up those He is moving to be part of the ministry in Romania.

» **Pray** that both my operations will go smoothly and that my eyes will recover quickly.

» **Praise** God for His faithfulness in bringing me through what has been anything but an easy year and **Pray** for my family and I as we continue to adjust to life without Dad here.



Sharing the love of God through International Teams

E: bubbalewy@hotmail.com | W: manda.lewis@iteams.org | 0424 760 772 | Skype: mandaphonehome

International Teams | PO BOX 1123, Baulkham Hills NSW 1755 | www.iteams.org.au | 02 9890 2244





have left in Australia and everything that comes with that.

It will certainly be a busy six months ahead and I don't want to miss a beat, but I know it will mean making bookings to catch up with people and trying to balance talks at churches and bible studies etc., as well as the more low key, coffees or meals with family and friends. I would love you to help me out by initiating some of these and inviting me to talk or meet up, as it really is a lot for me to do everything alone.

If you know where and when there might be an open window for me to share my story, I really need to find more opportunities to share and ensure I am fully supported come June/July. I am particularly hoping to return to Romania in time to join in with the summer programs. I also want to leave enough time to search out and get settled into an apartment before the winter months and snow begins to set in, in November.

In addition to everything else, as you can see in my 'upcoming events', I will also be enduring two separate surgeries on both my eyes in February and April. These are to remove the two pterygia that have grown on both my eyes over recent years. Whilst they currently are not interfering with my sight, there is a risk that they will continue to develop. The decision has therefore been made to remove them before I lose access to both my private health care and my optometrist. Please be praying for these surgeries and that the pterygia would not regrow.

At present I am encouraged to have about **55%** of my [regular monthly living costs](#) pledged to enable me to move to Râmnicu Vâlcea in June/July 2014. Please prayerfully consider how God might be moving you to be part of my support team. It will greatly help to me to know how much I still have to raise, if you could sooner-than-later, please send in your completed response form to indicate any intended giving. It will also affect how far I need to stretch myself in visiting more churches etc over the coming months. You can also simply give online at www.iteams.org.au/give/

Prayer Calendar: I am humbled to already have 58 of my dreamed 90 people who have committed to pray for me on the same date each month. Please let me know if you want to support me in this way and keep me updated of how I can be praying for you on the same date.

Set-up Costs: In order to begin living and working in Romania, I need to raise the initial outlay for the purchase and set up of an apartment and the purchase of a vehicle. All [one-off gifts](#) will be allocated towards covering these costs, of which only **10%** has currently been raised, meaning there is still a fair way to go. If you don't feel able to commit to giving to my ongoing monthly costs, or if you can generously give an additional gift above your normal support, this is currently my biggest need.

Thank you again, to those who have generously given already, and in particular through the CHBC Christmas Appeal. Every amount, no matter how large or small, will help me get back to Romania.

In His hands, Manda.

Photos: (front page): The Nobbies, Phillip Island; SMBC Graduation (Above): Sculptures by the Sea with Kez; Results from the ITeams Office Working Bee; The jetty in front of our Hotel, Cowes; Koala Conservation Centre; Mum and I on tractor ride, Churchill Island; Glenrowen; Handle's Messiah at the Town Hall and Hope 103.2's Carols with Shez; With my new 'niece', Ellie and the Lewis family Christmas.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Refugee Camp, Cobbitty
31st Jan-2nd Feb

First Eye Surgery
12th Feb (+ 1 week rest)

Canowindra Parish- talking at
9:30am service- 23rd Feb

Bible Study Weekend Away
14th-16th March

Northern Territory holiday
with Mum

My Almost 30th Party
5th April- Galston Rec. Reserve

Second Eye Surgery
30th April (+ 1 week rest)