

He's Got This!



joshnmandapidgeon.com

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Please Pray...

» **Pray** for our family, as we wait for the final step of our Residency Permits to be completed.

» **Pray** for good health, energy and rest, as we continue to work out how best to invest in life locally in Vâlcea.

» **Praise** the Lord with us as we celebrated five years of the RWN in November. **Pray** that He will continue to guide us as we develop the Network into the coming years.

» **Praise** God for a good time spent with Manda's Mum and Auntie in November, despite having to change plans due to the visa situation!

» **Pray** for the many preparations for May's RWN conference, that God will take care of each detail, and help us discern what we need to do with each step. **Pray** also for wisdom as we continue to develop the RWN website.

He's Got This...

There has been so much happening for us lately, that we often find ourselves craving that time to sit and breathe and just be.

It was refreshing to read a devotion by Mike Wittmer reflecting on children as they slowly become independent from their parents but yet reminding us that the opposite applies for God's children. Similar to a child learning to ride a bike, comes the warning: "Some of us are busy slapping Jesus' hands off the handlebars of our life.' As if we didn't need His strong hands to hold us, to pick us up, and to hug us when we wobble and flop. We can't grow beyond our dependence on Christ. We only grow by sinking our roots deeper in the grace and knowledge of Him."

Please pray with us that we will continue to deepen our dependence on Christ through each and every day as we serve Him in Romania.

Visa's & Residency Permits...

God continues to amaze us with each step of our process to be able to stay in Romania! It has been a long road to get to this stage, but we were so grateful and relieved to finally receive Josh's and Manda's Religious Visas from Budapest at the beginning of December. Although we didn't receive a visa for Isla at that time, our local immigration office assured us that Isla would not be separated from us even when her tourist visa expired at the

end of December. They acknowledged that our applications are in process with Isla requiring a different visa, and that they put family first. With the Christmas season and multiple public holidays of late, we slowly worked through the necessary papers and paying the various fees before finally submitting our Residency Permit applications on January 27th. With that being the last step for now, we are now eagerly awaiting a phone call to pick up those little pieces of plastic, which we expect to take up to a month.

Thank you to all who have continued to uphold our family in prayer and support through this often stressful season. It's been a long six months to get to this stage, and nothing like we expected but we are grateful that God has provided a way, as well as the right people with every step.

While we know and trust that He's got this, we would like to share that the costs involved ended up being far beyond what we budgeted for our Visa process. Please pray with us that God might provide for these unforeseen costs endured, in a way that He deems fit.

A Place To Call Home...

Before we arrived in Romania we received an email from an American couple who were returning to the USA after 23 years of ministering in Râmnicu Vâlcea. Whilst it was anything but straight forward, it became clear that God had opened the way for us to be able to purchase their house. God



blessed this process in many ways, including through His timing with us being in the country in between receiving our visas in Budapest, and through the provision of a caring and considerate Notary who ensured that all the contracts were handled well for all parties involved. Knowing Romanian bureaucracy, this is no small feat.

Praise God with us that we now have a place to call home and a base to work from as we set up life here in Râmnicu Vâlcea for the long term. There are things to work on in the house, such as making it more toddler friendly, which we are working on, but we pray that this house will continue to be used for His glory in the years to come.

We are so thankful for our friends Mike and Elvira who blessed us in so many ways as we continue to set up life here, not in the least of opening up their lives and granny flat to us for the first four months, and helping us with the insurmountable paperwork.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" 2 Peter 3:18

Local Investment and Christmas Blessings...

We are also grateful to our pastor and local church family for warmly adopting us here, and we pray that we will grow together in Christ in coming years. It was incredibly special to have a group of carolers come to our house, and humbling to be blessed by those who care for us also. We also appreciated the opportunity to share the gift of Jesus' love with some of the Roma children in a nearby village just before Christmas.

Josh: We are slowly finding other ways to connect with the local church and ministry community. Manda has started attending a ladies craft group, aimed at building relationships. I've had opportunity to help with some of the practical fit-out of Mike & Elvira's café ministry, and I have begun playing a borrowed violin in church, adding to the musical variety. These seemingly little things help give variety to our weeks, as well as building relationships with those around us. Please pray with us as we consider various ways to be involved in ministry locally as we grow our roots here.

In mid January, I started regular language lessons with a colleague of Manda's from Timișoara, who is also a professional translator. She has been giving me three Skype lessons per week. While sometimes it is difficult for me to recall the right word for a situation, or to put together a coherent sentence, I'm certainly learning a lot.

Third Roma-Workers Network Conference...

It is a joy to once more coordinate our next Roma-Workers Network conference from 4-8 May. This third conference will be held at Harghita, the same centre as 2018's conference, with this year's theme being "Restoring Dignity Together".

We would really appreciate your prayers in the coming few months, that God will provide the right speakers, translators, and workers He wants to attend. Pray for us as we organise all the various aspects of the program and that God will again provide sponsorships for those who would otherwise be unable to attend. It's a wonderful opportunity to invest in their lives and we pray that this conference will encourage, equip and empower them as they return to their ministries around Romania and Moldova. If God puts it on your heart to sponsor a worker, you can do so at iteams.org.au/rwn2020.

Pray with us for strength, and that God will sustain us as a family through the busyness of these next few months. Pray that we will keep our eyes fixed on Him and that we'll find time to rest.

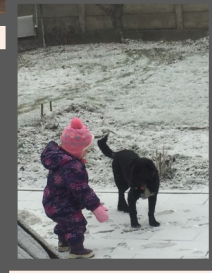
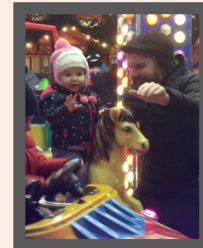
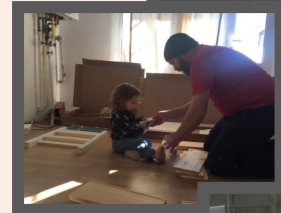
In His Hands, Josh, Manda and Isla.

Upcoming Events

Waiting for our Residency Permits to stay in Romania.

A Friend's Wedding in Timișoara, 4th April

*Third RWN Conference
4-8 May @ Harghita*



97% **Current Support**

We are forever grateful to all who partner with us through your prayers, financial support and encouragement. Please continue to pray that God will provide for our spiritual, mental, physical and ministry needs, and let us know if you'd like to join our partnership team.

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Photos: Our new place; Budapest with Manda's Mum and Aunty; Celebrating 5th Anniversary of RWN; Carolers at our place; Isla and Sully in the snow; Distributing gifts at Roma Village.