



A 'Smidgeon' of news!

Manda (& Josh) Pidgeon

Sitting at our back table watching the spring weather take shape, with bees buzzing, flowers blooming on the thyme and basil, and Lorikeets enjoying the bright red bottle brush tree, I can't help but reflect on this past winter season.

So much of life simply continues on around us, and amidst the joys of celebrating 1st, 30th and 70th Birthdays, weddings, and yet also mourning with friends and colleagues over the loss of loved ones, Josh and I have likewise experienced our own joys and challenges over the past few months.

The dominating theme for us has been the exciting journey of finding out that our family is soon to expand, as we prepare to welcome our little 'Smidgeon' at the end of February. From the overwhelming awe of hearing its' first heart beat, to seeing it do acrobats in my tummy, we are so delighted for our little miracle!

Since I first dropped my new baby cousin on his nose when I was only four, I have always had a deep love for babies and little kids- something that isn't in the least bit surprising to most of you! However, when earlier this year we came to an understanding that not everything was straight forward health wise, we began a fairly intensive process of blood tests and seeing a variety of specialists.

We are so grateful for the medical team

who have worked with us over many months to identify and help resolve a number of concerns, the least of which was a fluctuating thyroid. (We are choosing not to share the other medical details, and thank you in advance for respecting this decision.)

It has been an emotional roller coaster, and we were so grateful for the opportunity to attend an event back in May, with Sheridan Voysey as the speaker. It was called 'From Broken Dreams to New Beginnings', and we're so thankful for the healing it brought as we contemplated the possibility that we might not be able to have kids.

By God's grace, we now feel able to share this heartache and only ask you to rejoice in this blessing we have received but also that you continue to uphold my pregnancy in prayer.

I was very thankful to have had a reasonably smooth first trimester with just some nausea and fatigue, however, only a few days before driving north for Kez and Phil's wedding, I experienced a complication requiring an extra ultrasound to identify what was going on. The outcome meant I was just about on bed rest and given additional medication.

We were relieved that the latest scan a few weeks back indicates that I'm on the mend, but I'm still on limited activity

Please Pray...

» **Praise** God for His every provision and that nothing is a surprise to Him. Please continue to **pray** that He will raise up the ongoing financial shortfall, especially as we re-evaluate our budget in the coming months.

» **Pray** for the development of the new RWN Website and that God will raise up the remaining funds to complete the project.

» **Pray** that a suitable location can be found for the next RWN conference, and for the rest of the details to come together smoothly.

» **Pray** for Manda's health during the pregnancy, that the baby will be kept safe and that there won't be further complications.



Sharing the love of God in Romania & Australia

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until further notice. God is faithful and we're so glad that He has sustained us through all of this process, and pray that He will give us the strength we need in this second half of the pregnancy.

Amidst the hardship, Josh and I have continued with work, uni and ministry, and the only thing that I unfortunately haven't been able to do, due to the complications, was attend the South Pacific Member Care Conference in Melbourne at the beginning of September.

I was so grateful to still be able to drive up to the Gold Coast with Josh and Mum, and to spend some time with Kez both before their wedding, and especially on the day. It truly was a day to treasure, and now that Phil and Kez are living only 10mins down the road ...who would've thought ;) ... it's so lovely that we can spend this next year or so in the same place together!

In August, I also spent time helping Oksana prepare for her re-entry back to the USA, after spending the past eight months as our Intern with ITeams. It was so wonderful to have her with us, from helping develop a member care plan for our volunteers, to working with the Sydney Refugee Team and undertaking preparations for Ride for Refugees.

As I also help with preparations for one of our ITeams' couples to come on Home Assignment, please pray with us that the visa for E. will be granted, so that she might join her husband, meet his family and be introduced to the Australian culture, amidst other ITeams' requirements.

The journey to find a suitable company to undertake the new Roma-Workers Network (RWN) website project has, as seems to be the running theme of this newsletter, chopped and changed over the course of this year. I am pleased that over this past fortnight, I have been introduced to a couple who are working in Romania, to develop websites and other media sources for ministries and churches. We have since begun the design process and I'm excited to see it starting to take shape, for what we pray will be a helpful and engaging resource for those who work with Roma communities right across Romania. I would appreciate your prayers for this new development and that we might be able to have the website ready for use before Christmas. Thank you to those who have given financially towards this project so far, and please continue to pray that God will raise up the remaining funds to see this project through.

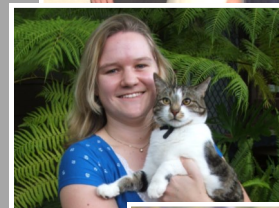
I am also continuing Skype conversations with Roma workers, and working towards finding a suitable location for our next RWN conference (for which you can probably understand that I have made the decision to delay it a little, until June, to wait till 'Smidgeon' is three months old rather than 8 weeks old!)

Josh is now over half way through his thesis this semester, and though it's proving quite stressful due to some setbacks, he is still on track to finish at the end of this year, and graduate in April. He still needs to finish his report for his internship as well, but we are grateful that his work at the lift company has been flexible to allow Josh to swap days as necessary.

There are many changes ahead for both Josh and I, but we are so very thankful for the love and support we have received from family and friends over this year and especially over the past few months. We will need to re-evaluate our budget soon, to accommodate for our new addition, but again, are in awe at just how much God has provided for us this year, particularly with many unbudgeted medical costs. It's just another reminder that God knows what we need before we even ask! Thank you to those of you who have invited us to come and share our journey with you at your Bible Study or to share over a meal. And, if there's anyone else who would like to hear what God is doing in both Sydney and Romania, we'd love to come and share with you also.

We continue to press on and would love to hear how we can also be praying for you, through the good and the hard times, knowing that none of us is in this journey of life alone, and even the fog clears to reveal God's beauty and hope!

In His hands, Manda & Josh.



Photos: Kez & Phil's Wedding;
Brutus- (my cat, who sadly died in September at age 16)
(3rd & front) My nephew Jacob's 1st Birthday

Upcoming Events

Our 'Smidgeon' is due to greet the world on 28th February!



Photo: 16 week scan!