



Transitions Abound!

Manda & Josh Pidgeon

CALM BEFORE THE CHAOS...

Since we last wrote at the beginning of December, we have enjoyed both some time to recuperate after a busy year, and have begun 2019 with intense preparations for what's to come.

We had a fairly relaxed Christmas week camping up at Lake Macquarie with my (Manda's) family. It was a special time and a joy to watch Isla embrace her first Christmas, crawling after her cousins, and trying so hard to do 'big kid' stuff. She continues to become more social and waves and says 'hello/hi' to just about anyone she sees! She is somewhat of a chatterbox but certainly a delight!

After arriving back from camping, we had a few days to get washing done and repack, as well as see in the New Year at home. These days it's rare for Isla to wake up late in the night, but she must have known that New Years Eve was different, and enjoyed watching the midnight fireworks with us!

It was also a real blessing to catch up with Mandy, one of our workers from the Roma-Workers Network, who was passing through Sydney amidst other Australian travels. It was helpful to hear where her Roma ministry was up to and to know how we can continue to pray for and support them, but also to hear how God is working in her own life. So much has happened since she joined us at the

RWN conference last June, as she reflects:

"I wasn't sure what to expect as I attended the RWN conference in 2018, but I was so inspired listening to the teaching by the Roma leaders who were present, and gained valuable insight into some of the methods (and importance) of building trust and digging much deeper into my relationships with the Roma people I am serving. The outworking of this has been invaluable, as has the connections I made during the week. I am so grateful to Manda and Josh for bringing us all together for such a great conference, it was a blessed week and very well organised."

TRANSITION TRAINING...

Having attended Transition Training back in 2007, I had a number of expectations and anticipations for how the 10 day training would take shape. In the end, I mostly found the modules reassuring and a helpful refresher, though this time through the lense of going as a family. I recognise that while we are moving to a country and town that I am familiar with, and will be speaking a language I am increasingly comfortable using, that for Josh in particular, the cross-cultural adjustment will take time.

I was somewhat anxious about Isla being away from us for long periods during the training, but she continues to amaze us

Please Pray...

» **Pray** for our family during this somewhat stressful and tiring time of preparation, for good health, energy and rest.

» **Praise** God for safe travels during our time in Melbourne, and **Praise** God for all that we learnt at Transition Training. **Pray** that we will be able to apply what we learnt to our lives and ministry.

» **Praise** God for His provision so far, and please **pray** that He will raise up our necessary financial shortfall to allow us to move (back) to Romania next month.

» **Pray** that we can continue to develop the RWN whilst we wait to get to Romania, and that we can make the most of our remaining time in Sydney.



Bringing the hope of Jesus to the Roma people in Romania

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Photos: Lewis Christmas in Lake Macquarie & Melbourne in Jan.

and go from strength to strength. Thank you for your prayers! She was the youngest of five children attending the kids program, with one little boy celebrating his 1st birthday while we were there. Because he and Isla were close in age, Isla crawled after him and wanted to do everything he was doing. And, I think, largely attributed to her people watching and determination, she has since started 'furniture surfing', started to stand unaided, and is very proud of herself by holding two objects in one hand at the same time- completely by her initiation. She also now has seven teeth, which has been an experience for us all! She does, however, enjoy biting and holding spoons with her cheeky grin!

Josh- "It was very helpful to learn from the experience of others who have gone before us. This wisdom will certainly help to improve our effectiveness, as we serve with others in another culture for the next decade or so.

SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP RAISING...

While in Melbourne we were able to visit two churches, to share our anticipation for the coming years. One of these was the First Romanian Baptist Church, so many have firsthand experience with Rroma in some capacity at least. At both churches we were among the last to leave as many came and asked further questions, and relayed their own various links with Romania. We are continually surprised how many people have known Romanians, are related in some way to one, or even have visited the country.

God has indeed woven a web of people that have an awareness and heart for these people. Praise God for those who like you have already partnered with us. We could not do this on our own, without you walking beside us, and upholding us to the Lord. Pray with us that God will connect us with others also in the coming weeks, to be ready to leave by the end of March.

JOSH'S WORK, JURY DUTY & THE GREAT PACK UP...

Our preparations for leaving have changed up a gear, now. The Melbourne trip marked the last required training before leaving. My application process for International Teams is almost completed, and we only have a few vaccinations left. I've reduced my work down to three days a week to allow time for sorting and packing and various errands and meetings. Now, all our belongings are being evaluated and down-sized. There are mixed emotions of both nostalgia and finality as we decide what to ship, store and what to dispense with. Pray for us to choose wisely.

In God's timing, I was called up for jury duty just two days after arriving home from Melbourne. Thankfully I was temporarily excused, though I still need to go back in a month. Depending on timing, this may also be avoided if we have booked our tickets, or it may slightly delay our departure. The next two months are certainly shaping up to be quite busy. Pray for strength to endure."

(Manda) We are thankful for the opportunities to share what God has been doing in our lives, and look forward to sharing with Students at Sydney Missionary & Bible College next week. One of our prayers is for God to be raising up more workers to join us in Romania, as we grow this project further. We are also praying that God will be preparing nationals for the task of leading this ministry into the future, as we eventually plan to step back to a support role and let the Rroma and Romanian leaders 'own' the ministry.

But before we look that far ahead, we need to get over there and continue to establish the foundations of the Rroma-Workers Network. We continue to step forward in faith, that God will enable us to raise the required financial support for us to book our flights to Romania. We would love to fly out at the end of March- ie NEXT MONTH and continue with what we believe God has clearly guided and shaped our path to be to date! but we can't finalise our plans until we reach 100%. At this stage we have just short of 50%, but we trust that God's plan will come to fruition and pray that He would use us here in Australia until we leave, and of course, once we get there. Please pray earnestly with us for this need.

In His hands, Manda & Josh, and Isla

Upcoming Events

Speaking at SMBC
Ministry Matters
12th Feb!

Isla's 1st Birthday
22nd February!

Hoping to leave
for Romania
at the end of March!