



Healing & Restoration!



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Please Pray...

» **Praise** God that Zeke's Dr is happy with his post-op progress. **Pray** for ongoing protection from respiratory infections.

» **Pray** for our five year 'intent to apply' residency application to be approved.

» **Praise** God for a refreshing Pioneers conference and **Pray** for guidance and discernment about the next steps forward for the RWN.

» **Pray** for all our extended family as we support one another from afar. **Pray** especially for our kids, that God will help them to understand at their level, all that's going on at present, and that we can guide them well through this challenging season.

» **Pray** for us as we make plans for the coming summer, including visits to RWN workers around Romania. **Pray** for wisdom in balancing ministry, rest and family time.

'Because you say so!'...

In the second half of April we were incredibly grateful to finally have our first family holiday in almost two years. After three days of travel, including a stop at the Budapest zoo, we made it to our caravan park and enjoyed a relatively quiet stay.

A little more rested, we then drove a further two hours to Portorož in Slovenia where we were greatly encouraged at our South-Europe Pioneers conference, with about another 250 colleagues. This was just what we needed!

The main speaker for the week shared a quote, ironically from a man named Daniel, the main speaker at our RWN conference in 2022, and this really set the scene for where we were at... "In cross-cultural ministry, depletion is inevitable; therefore, restoration is essential."

The speaker also shared from Luke 5:5... "Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." Sometimes ministry seems empty, exhausting and just difficult, but it makes us all the more thankful for times of healing and restoration, to refresh our focus on Jesus and what He is doing. I'm forever grateful that we don't have to have all the answers but that it's because Jesus says so, which allows us to keep going and trying again, seeing things through His lens and perspective.

Hearts in two continents...

As most of you are aware, we made

an unexpected trip back to Australia over the Christmas holidays to be with our extended family. We again want to say a big thank you to everyone who has personally walked alongside us through our time of personal trial and feel blessed and humbled to have been the recipients of so much love, practical support and many many prayers. Please know these prayers were felt and answered, and God provided amazingly through His timing, the provision of accommodation, meals and groceries, and in other very practical and needed ways. We are even thankful for the help of people we didn't previously know, and pray that the encouragement was mutual.

While the trials continue and we support family from afar as best we can, we are trying to compartmentalise between life in Australia and our life and ministry in Romania. We ask for your prayers for wisdom and discernment to allow us to make plans and yet trust God's timing and plans for the future. We hold up our hands in prayer and our plans in faith and trust.

Basic life...

Weekly routine has become very important over the past few months as we've navigated the transitions and battled the fluctuating emotions and behaviours. We have seen the need to slow down a bit to allow us all to adjust and prioritise what's important.

Isla continues to enjoy school and we are grateful that she is starting to develop some good friendships and that her Romanian language is blooming. She is continuing piano lessons and her teacher wants to start



her on grades in the next school year. She is currently practicing for a concert for Children's Day (1st June). She was so excited to receive her first complete big-girl Bible recently and tells us she has so many questions that want to 'burst out of her head'. She loves reading and is also currently deep in her first long book, Black Beauty.

Tilly is still trying to find her feet at gradi (preschool), as we work with the teachers to help her integrate and develop her Romanian, and improve her behaviour and emotional responses. The week of kids club at our Pioneers conference has been a real boost for her overall communication and we are seeing the positive ripple affects of this. We appreciate your prayers as we parent our TCKs (Third Culture Kids) and some of the unique challenges they face, as well as just general parenting.

Zeke's Update...

A few days before we left for our holiday/Conference, we made yet another long day trip to Bucharest for Zeke to have his six month post-op follow up. He coped relatively well through the tests but is definitely struggling with some PTSD following all his hospital visits, and really doesn't like doctors. He is also continuing to struggle to fight respiratory infections, having croup in December, and several rounds of antibiotics since. He will need further checks and tests till he's at least five years old, but we trust God will take care of each step. Now sixteen months old, he is starting to get adventurous and just today has found his confidence to walk across the room. He's also finding his voice and using basic sign language to communicate.

RWN ministry and life...

You may remember our elderly neighbour who had dementia and who became increasingly difficult to live next to. After she passed away at the end of 2023, she left her estate to the local orthodox priest. While we were in Slovenia the estate sold to a Rroma family who are now preparing the property to build a house. This has somewhat unsettled our neighbours but so far our conversations with the new family have been positive, including when their chickens came into our yard. ;) We'd appreciate your prayers for this new relationship, for mutual respect among the neighbours, and for opportunities to share Jesus love with all of them. In our experience, existing stereotypes are hard to breakdown, and trust is slow to gain.

We also ask you to pray with us as we plan for our fifth conference in mid-2026. We are currently trying to get the location and dates finalised so that we can begin finding the right speakers and helpers. This goes hand in hand with continuing to develop the website to tailor it to the workers' needs. Working alongside a culture that values orality, it can be challenging to help them see the benefits of using online resources to connect with other workers around the country, though they express the need and excitement for such a platform in which to engage with similarly minded Christian workers. It's a delicate balance, and we pray we can hear their hearts and needs clearly to know how to develop the network and earn their trust in the coming years. We particularly pray that we'll be able to visit a number of the workers over the coming summer holidays, including some new workers we are yet to meet in person.

Visas...

After we returned to Romania at the end of January we submitted our next paperwork to immigration. This is simply an 'right to apply' for a five year visa. However, we've been told it will be about a six month wait till we hear if this is approved. Only then (around August) will we know whether we can in fact apply for our five year visa, but please pray with us that this will be approved, which will both help our ministry, and reduce our annual paperwork and cost.

There are many complexities to living and serving overseas, and sometimes it tests every ounce of patience and endurance we have, but we are continually amazed at God's provision in the big and the small things, and so continue to throw down our nets 'because He says so'.

In His Hands,
Josh, Manda, Isla, Tilly and Zeke

Photos: Family Holiday fun (Budapest Zoo; Caravan Park, Krk Island; 'Decebalus' Head'; Târgu Jiu; Women's (church) weekend away; Day out- 10 year wedding anniversary; Aussie contingent at Pioneers Conference; Father's Day at gradi.



99% 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.

www.pioneers.org.au/give

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