



# You raise me up!

Manda Lewis

These past few months God has provided numerous experiences to help me focus on strengthening the [leadership skills](#) that He has blessed me with.

On the first day of my vision trip to Romania in August, I had the opportunity to go to my old church in Timisoara. During the service, a recording of Andy Stanley's talk called *Helping leaders go further faster*, was played. A helpful talk, it highlighted the need for some tensions in our lives, which should actually be managed rather than omitted, even if this is not always our natural response or desire.

The conference in Germany also focused on leadership and how we are being shaped in our relationship with Christ in light of being Godly leaders. As one ITeams worker said, "The Christian life is a series of new beginnings and transformations" as though being purified through fire (1 Peter 4:13). It is God who has assigned me my field (1 Corinthians 3:5-9), but He is the one doing the work and all will happen in His timing, which can't be rushed.

If nothing else, I have felt God's blessing as He prepares me to step out into a new and somewhat daunting ministry in the coming year. Having now travelled to Râmnicu Vâlcea, I have a real sense that there is a harvest there waiting and lovely teammates who I look forward to working alongside.

Arriving in to [Timișoara](#) 44 hours after leaving Sydney, I began a packed three

days of trying to see as many of my friends as possible. Being the summer holidays, of course, it meant that many were away but I was still excited to catch up with those who were around.

On 7th August, I took a nine hour coach ride to [Vâlcea](#), thankfully sitting next to a lovely girl who was just returning to Romania after living in France for three months and who also spoke English, making it a much more pleasant ride, though the other great blessing was the air-conditioning, it being a 37°C day.

My ten days in Vâlcea were during two of the busiest weeks of the year with two Vacation Bible School (VBS) programs running. This busyness, though tiring, actually provided the extra blessing of being able to meet and work alongside Mike and Elvira (ITeams), John and Cheryl, and Tim and Krista.

With a biennial partnership being established to work with the Roma people in both [Vâlcea and France](#), it was also a privilege to be able to arrange my trip to include working alongside Nico (ITeams Grenoble) and the French youth, who all drove from France for the program. Of course, this also meant stretching my concentration to its' limits, having to think in three languages!

Around the children's programs we managed to fit in visits to the local dam, village museum and salt-mine playground; monastery, Dracula's real castle- which is now in ruins, and

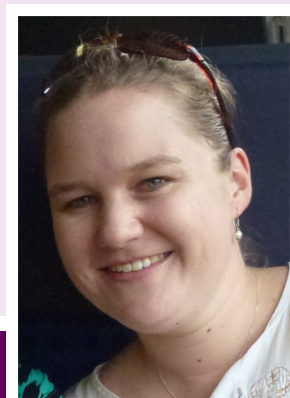
## Please Pray...

» **Praise** God for an affirming and safe trip to both Râmnicu Vâlcea and Germany and for the opportunity to be refreshed and get to know those I will work with.

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

» **Praise** God for a smooth hand-over of the National Director's baton between Janice Collins and Danelle McLeay and **Pray** that we would all continue to adjust to the necessary changes in the ITeams office.

» **Pray** for my family and I as we continue to grieve after Dad's passing, and **Pray** for us as we adjust to life without him here.



Sharing the love of God through International Teams

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markets. One morning we went to see the progress of and help clean up Mike and Elvira's new house and we also joined in two local church services throughout the time.

On the 18th August I flew from Bucharest to Stuttgart, [Germany](#) and the following morning caught several trains, arriving at Schwäbisch Gmünd early afternoon. The conference was a blessed five days of fellowship, workshops, meetings and fun with all the ITeams workers, who faithfully serve around Europe. In one of the workshops, I was particularly refreshed by a time of identifying further, the ways in which I personally connect and keep charged in my relationship with God. We all took the opportunity to reflect on where our ministries had come and where we are going as an alliance of organisations with a common vision to see "lives and communities transformed by the power of God."

As well as beginning to form new relationships and catching up with those I already knew, this vision trip provided the much needed affirmation that this is where God is wanting me to serve Him in the years to come. I honestly didn't want to leave so soon, but knew that there are plenty more steps to take before I can pack my bags.

One thing I never expected, though which is now in the plan, is the reality of actually [buying an apartment](#) in Vâlcea, as opposed to renting. For several reasons, this is to be the best option and though it sees an increase in my initial set-up costs, it actually lowers my ongoing monthly costs. It will also increase my safety and stability, limit the chance of being taken for a ride as a foreigner and it means I can use the apartment much more easily for ministry purposes. Depending on the way God raises up partners for the ministry ahead, this option of buying may also provide the opportunity for several people to provide interest free loans if necessary, which could be paid off within the first few years instead of the wasteful costs of rent.

Since arriving back in Australia, I have now [finalised the budget](#) I will need to hopefully move to Râmnicu Vâlcea in June/July 2014. In working through these costs, my joy and surprise came in realising I already have **46%** of my [regular monthly living costs](#), meaning that I am almost half way to being able to book my tickets.

Please pray as to whether God would have you join my team in one or more of the following ways.

**Prayer Calendar:** I am looking for 90 people to commit to praying for me one day (or more) per month (and in reverse, I will be praying for you on that same day).

**Set-up Costs:** In order to begin living and working in Romania I will need to raise the costs of an initial outlay which includes 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 there is currently **9%** and therefore a fair way to go.

**Regular Giving:** If partnering in this ministry on a more long term basis is something God is placing upon your heart to do, please consider giving on a regular monthly, quarterly or annual basis. While it is easier to give out of our disposable income, I know sometimes the greatest blessing is seen in the opportunity to give sacrificially. And, perhaps for those already giving, maybe increasing that amount is also something to consider. I love watching God work and can't wait to share the stories of how He will move this ministry forward.

I understand we are all busy and would like to help make this process as simple as possible for those journeying with me. If there is something I can help with or questions I can answer, please let me know.

In His hands, Manda.

*Photos: (front page): at Momaia- the Roma village (Above): VBSs in Valcea and Momaia, Mike and Elvira's house in progress; Monastery at Curtea de Arges, ITEU Conference with Mike and Elvira.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

ReachOut Connect Missions Conference- 19th Oct

10 Year High School Reunion 26th Oct

Refugee Camp, Cobbitty 1st-3rd Nov

Holiday with Mum to Phillip Island and the Dandenong's

CHBC- talking at all three services 17th Nov

SMBC Dinner & Graduation 22th-23rd Nov

Holidays with Shez and Lou 24th Nov-1st Dec