



Cleaford News

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Memorial Service

A thanksgiving service for the life and work of Abigail Cleaver is planned for Saturday May 23rd at Farnham Baptist Church, starting at 2.30 pm.

We hope many Trust supporters will be able to attend—we know of a number who are planning to be at the service, which we hope will be a great occasion of Christian witness.

As we said at the funeral service in February, it was Abigail's wish that there should be no black clothes, and any donations will be used towards the memorial project in Romania (see page 3), and more information on the day.

For your Satnav or Google maps, the postcode of the church is GU9 7HA, and it is very near the Waitrose store in The Hart, in central Farnham, where there are large car parks.

Refreshments will be provided after the service.

May 2009

Spring Visit to Romania

We had a full week in Romania right at the end of March! The trip was centred around the grand opening service of the new church at Sangeorgiu de Padure on the middle Sunday. We have seen the church construction develop over the last four years, and it was great to see the crowd overflowing that day.

The other objectives of the trip were:

- ◆ to bring ourselves up to date with needs at the Children's Hospital in Brasov;
- ◆ To check with all our associates their needs in terms of things we should send—quantities and frequencies;
- ◆ To review the needs for the big summer programme of Christian Camps—600 children and young people this year!
- ◆ To identify a significant project to serve as a memorial to Abigail Cleaver, one of our founding Trustees who had died at the end of January, and had looked after all the logistical arrangements since day one of the Trust;
- ◆ To give our many friends in Romania the opportunity to celebrate Abigail's life and work with services in their respective churches.

Sangeorgiu de Padure



The construction project, on land donated by the local authority, and in a very good position in the town, has been led by Pastor Janos Totos, and much of the work has been done by church members. Most of the finance has come from the Trust, the majority being provided by the South East Essex Baptist Ladies Fellowship via Revd Phil Andrews.

We were given the honour of cutting the ribbon to open the church officially, and then the visit-

ing brass band and choir, local dignitaries and representatives of other churches, and church members from all over the county, did their best to pack in to the building.

After lunch we returned to the church for music outside in the sunshine, and then went back inside for a memorial service for Abigail, following which more people spoke about the opportunities for the gospel that arise with the availability of a new building to which enquirers can be invited.



Brasov Children's Hospital

We were delighted to be able to tell the Hospital that Mount Alvernia Hospital in Guildford, where Abigail was treated for nearly 5 years, has donated some useful equipment for us to pass on, and to serve as a memorial to Abigail in one of her favourite institutions in Brasov.

Dr Phil Barnardo from Farnham Baptist Church, who was in our team for the trip with his wife Lucy, had been able to look over the 3 defibrillators and two Dinamaps that we will be sending. They were also able to assess the needs of various departments they visited, and as a result of their recommendations we expect to be sending more items shortly.

We told the Hospital that it was highly likely that Mount Alvernia would also be donating 26 Infusion Pumps. (In fact it was only as we were waiting to fly out of Bucharest at the end of the trip that we heard that this valuable gift was 'firm'.)

One of our long-standing Trustees, Andrew Henderson, has agreed to take over the co-ordination of the logistics work of the Trust, so we had a detailed session with Dana Tanasescu, the Principal Therapist, to get



up to date as to her needs for non-medical items for her important work with the children.

Many of the senior staff from the Hospital attended the memorial service in Brasov at the end of the week, where Dr Serban Rogoz spoke on behalf of the Director and his colleagues. We were very touched when he said, "The Children's Hospital has been, over the years, one of the main recipients of the care and help given by the Cleaford Christian Trust which Abigail and her friends set in motion. When this group first came to our hospital with aid more than 10 years ago, it was a time of interest for the problems of Romania, and many foreigners were coming with aid. Our hospital was struggling financially, so we needed much help, but in time, of all those helpers only your group, Abigail's group, continued to come, continued to listen to our needs."

Since the visit, we have sent off another of our quarterly batches of basic medicines, but the cost is increasing all the time. This load, purchased at wholesale prices, has cost the Trust £1,300—it used to be about £800, and then went to £1,000.....

Gornesti

This is a largish village (pronounced Gornesht) on the main route running north out of Targu Mures.

Some years ago we visited this group of about a dozen people meeting in a small rented room beside the main road. Then we were able to buy a small plot of land next to a large school, a few hundred yards up the road.



In due course Pastor Attila Toth and his friends put in the foundations for a new church building. Then, with the help of the American Standard Chapels project, the main

building went up (although the size of the plot was slightly 'non-standard!').

We helped with finance for some of the furnishings, heaters, etc, and last year bought the church 100 new chairs.

This year we were delighted to join our many friends at Gornesti for an impromptu mid-week service one evening, when 80 of the chairs were occupied! This is a mixed congregation



of Hungarian and Roma people of all ages, which is another reason for celebrating this project.

At the start, some years ago, Pastor Istvan Borzasi had told us that it was important to have a proper church building, with a name plate, for two reasons—the village can see that we are serious, and we have somewhere to invite people.



Istvan Borzasi & Attila Toth

The growth of this church is evidence that he was clearly right—an investment of a few thousand pounds is changing many lives.

Peris

The next place up the road from Targu Mures, past Gornesti, is Peris (pronounced Per-rish).

We learned that in this village a few families are meeting in each other's homes, or occasionally going to the church in Gornesti (few can just jump into a car).

If there were a church building in Peris we would expect to see the Gornesti pattern of church growth repeated! The difference is that here we do not need to build a church from scratch, as a large house has come on the market.

When we were taken to see the house we immediately felt that this should be the project in memory of Abigail Cleaver although, as someone said, we have never heard of a St Abigail's church, yet!

At the time of writing, Istvan and Attila are negotiating the final sale price with the family who wish to sell, but it is expected to be in the region of £25,000. Prices of both land and houses have increased enormously since our



early days, but we feel it is still the best option available to create a new village church that would probably seat about 70 people.

Some renovation and alteration will be required, after which there will be a good sized church room and a couple of smaller rooms for children's work, plus toilets, etc. Again, the position of the building in the village is very good.

The response to our request for donations to an Abigail memorial fund has been marvellous, but we will still need to raise some more money to complete this project. If you would like to help with this, please make it clear to us that your gift is designated for the 'Abigail memorial church'.

We will speak more about this at the Memorial Service on May 23rd (see page 1)

Apalina

When we were taken into this extremely poor Roma community, for a short walk between a children's service and an adult service, we had to pinch ourselves to remember that we were still in part of the EU, because this is more reminiscent of TV pictures from a shanty town or favela in South America.

Attila Toth has achieved a remarkable relationship with these people, and is holding services in a small borrowed building. It is clear that he is someone to whom many of the community look for advice, although there is quite a strong criminal element who may not be quite so keen on his presence.

There is a possibility that a piece of land may be made available where we could assist with a simple timber framed church building in the future.



We were all very moved by three characters in the services. The little girl, who seemed so carefree, but who has no father, and whose mother is in prison—she is looked after by 'the street' we were told.



Two men from the community who were prepared to stand up and give their testimonies of how the gospel had brought them from lives of crime and drink.

Briefly...

There is not much space left in this News to tell you -

- ◆ The Better Home project in Zizin and Tarlungeni continues to go well. Peter, the building co-ordinator is still free of alcohol and George, the leading carpenter should have his own home ready for occupation before the winter. You sense how life has changed dramatically for those who are now housed in the warm and dry.
- ◆ We have been introduced to a school in Garcin (pronounced Gar-chin) - which is the largest Roma community in Romania, and as tough as they come. 1,300 pupils, divided over 3 shifts! We will be helping with consumables—pencils, paints, etc.
- ◆ At Fantanele renovation work is just beginning on the house we bought last year to become the new church—we have just sent £5,500 and expect to be worshipping there when we visit in the autumn.
- ◆ Istvan and Marta Borzasi are planning to take 600 children and young people (ethnic Hungarian and Roma) to Christian camps this summer, most of whom have no money to pay. We have made a grant of £5,000, and are sending large quantities of craft materials, etc.
- ◆ The new Roma church plant in Rava continues to meet on the hillside, but we believe there is the possibility of a building in the future. We could not sit down for the service as the ground was too wet—in fact the minibus got stuck in the mud on the way.
- ◆ Daniel Hristea's (of FAST) centre at Sacele is fully used, and is now also the meeting place for Pastor Otto Kis' work with children in this town on the edge of Brasov.

Administration

- ◆ We have carried out a full revision of the Wish List—which covers all the items we wish to send to the various groups and projects that we support. A copy is enclosed with this Cleaford News—ask us for more copies, or download from the website. We are now 'open' to receive, but please check with us first if you have something in mind not on the list.
- ◆ We are grateful all Morag Palmer does at the warehouse sorting and packing.
- ◆ We are delighted that Lucy Barnardo from Farnham Baptist Church, who has been in Romania a number of times, has agreed to become a Trustee.

The Cleaford Christian Trust

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Prayer Points

Thank God for the growing groups of believers, of different ethnic origins, in the villages.

Pray that the summer camps may be life changing for many youngsters.

Pray for protection for Attila Toth and those standing up for the gospel in very rough areas.

Thank God for the financial and prayer support received by the Trust, and pray that the Peris purchase may go through smoothly.

Pray that the Trustees may be guided by God as they allocate resources to the many worthwhile projects presented to them for support.

Pray for peace and harmony in churches of mixed ethnic groups, and that church politics may not impede the gospel.

Pray that funds may be forthcoming for projects we believe to be God's will, even during the financial crisis

Thank God for Abigail Cleaver's life and example, and pray that it may continue to inspire others to make Christ known in a variety of ways