



2023 Year in Review



Felipe and Janelle deWaard-Silva

A glimpse at what your support made possible:

Ionut

The financial support that comes from our partners made it possible this year to enroll our local employee, Ionut Bota, in the Athletic Trainer Program at the National Sports Association of Trainers in Bucharest. When we hired Ionut four years ago he was 20 years old. One of our values as an organization is to hire and train local people who come from our valley. Part of this goal is that rather than hiring the most educated and well-trained people, we look for potential leadership in local people who have fewer opportunities and then invest in them and build them up as leaders and employees. After working three years with us, we, and Ionut, are both so blessed to have the opportunity to formally train him. This is a two-year program and when he is finished he will be able to be the official trainer for the kids from our climbing gym who are on the national Romanian team. It will also help his personal development, future employment opportunities, and increase his salary.



Nadia

Nadia is a lady from our community who was baptized this year at Ancora church. Two years ago she lost her husband. They had a hard life financially and he was on a tall building taking scrap metal he had found when he accidentally fell. This was a hard loss for Nadia and, shortly after his death, she found herself searching for God's comfort and presence in her grief. She came to our church and met God, shortly after she was baptized. She has found comfort in a church family that helps her in her aloneness and also with her financial needs as a widow. At the beginning of this winter, the church bought her wood so she would not need to burn clothes and shoes. You could see the church members carrying bags of wood on their backs up to the tenth floor with no elevator! Nadia praises God because she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer about four months ago. She was operated on and, thanks be to God, she is cancer-free. He sustained her through this trial.



Nadia has one daughter, Nicoleta, and two weeks before Nadia was baptized, our area began to have frequent earthquakes. Her daughter, shaken up like the rest of us from these earthquakes began to attend the baptism class with her mother and she too began a relationship with Jesus Christ. They were baptized together on the same day.



Denisa

Every once in a while, Damaris, a teacher in our education program, will identify children who need one-on-one help and meet with them intensify. This was the case with Denisa who was in the 4th grade and was unalphabetized. For a year and a bit, Damaris struggled with her to help her learn the alphabet. The struggle paid off and Denisa succeeded. Denisa, together with her sister Ana, grew up in an orphanage for their first six years of life. They were adopted by a couple from Dallas, who love them, but have limited resources to help them. Thankfully they are incredibly committed to our church and our education program and are both making progress. Now that another year has passed, Denisa is not only able to say her alphabet but is also in the beginning stages of reading. In our area, the schools do not provide extra help for children like Denisa with learning disabilities. If it were not for the Fara Limite afterschool program, Denisa most likely would have gone through life unable to read or write. Praise God for his grace and intervention in her life. She now has a chance to read books, to learn, and to progress in education.



Check out another story from Andreea here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MvUDhEkfgk>

Our challenges of 2023

- Organization and church structure.
- Losing people from the church due to conflict.
- Developing leaders who can become leaders and disciple others.

Please Pray

- Pray for leaders, opportunities, and structures, to be involved in discipleship and leadership
- Prayers for our employees and leaders: Ionut, Ruben, Raluca, Damaris, and Jenna. Also from the church, Marian, Persida, Ioan, Alin, and Irina
- Continued endurance, love, faith, and perseverance