



Buna! Isus te iubeste!—"BOOnuh! EesOOs the youBEshteh!" ("Hi! Jesus loves you!")

Thanksgiving

The time we spent in the US has taught us so much, outside of what we've learned at Southern Seminary. One thing we decided to do was to bring Thanksgiving back with us, as a family tradition. As a ministry, we were able to have a Thanksgiving meal with friends and family back



in November. It was a great time! There was delicious food, plenty for everyone of course, but more than that, the fellowship was delightful. Right after everyone finished eating, as we were seating around the table, we had a moment in which each shared at least one thing they were thankful for. One could tell that few of the ones present had done this before. Sure enough, people started getting emotional, and the things that were said became more and more profound.



We have so much to be thankful for! As a family, we are thankful for y'all and are thinking and praying for y'all often. As a ministry, we appreciate y'all's prayers and support!

Trip to Ukraine



At the end of November, I took a quick and unexpected trip to Ukraine again. We took a slightly different load this time. We took generators, lanterns, winter boots, winter clothes, hand warmers, and other things like that. The things we took this time were divided into 3 groups. One of the groups stuck to my mind in particular. They sent us map coordinates of where we were supposed to meet with them. That feeling of 007 I had by going into Ukraine had just gone to the next level. We met with these guys in a rural area, out on the field, in darkness. They came in a very old military truck, a

GAS52. We could tell pretty quickly who the leader of the group was. We didn't spend too much time with them. Just enough to ask a few questions and give them what we brought for them. The leader of the group must've been in his mid 20s. His cheeks were pink, and he and his men showed great thankfulness to us, even smiled. On our way back, I told the guys I was with that I was struggling inside with the thought that we had to little for these guys. One of my dear friends then told me, "We do what we can, with what we have". That has stayed with me ever since!



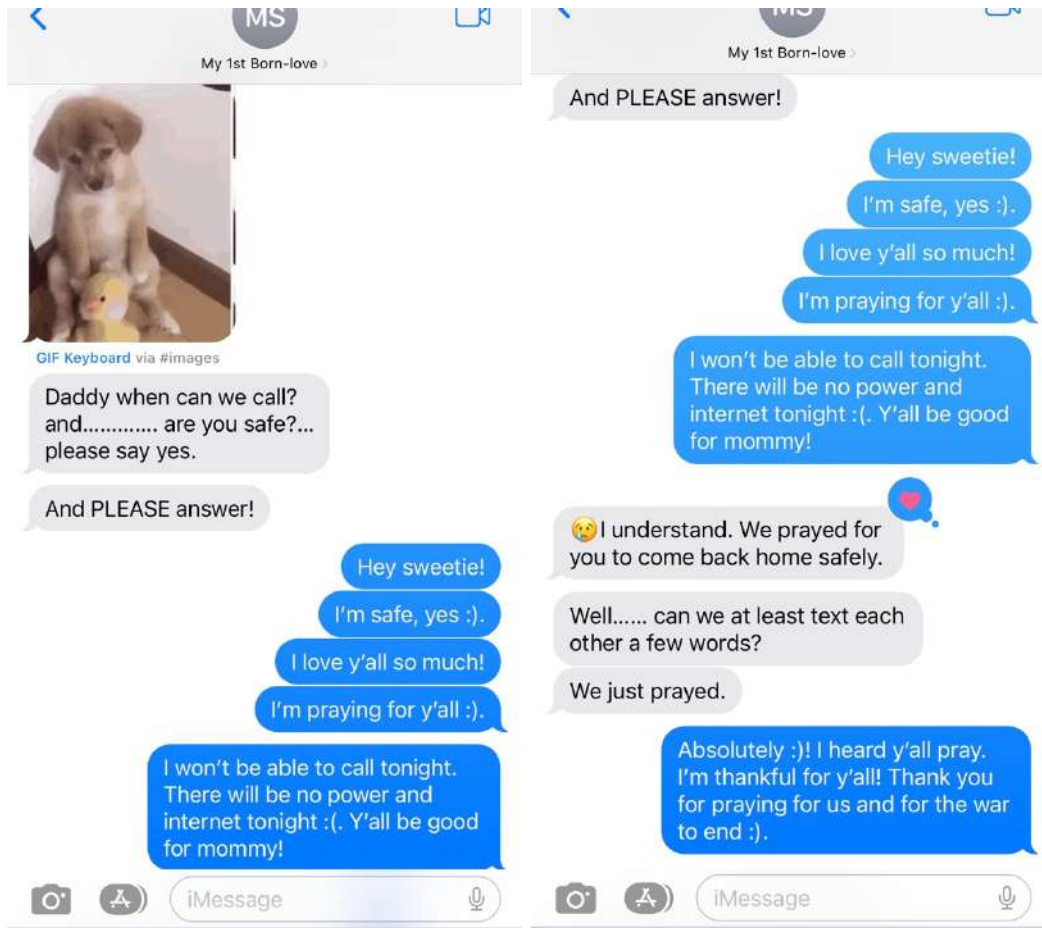
It's winter in Ukraine. This time they need more than food. We took 5 generators, led light sources, winter boots for 82 soldiers, and warmers. The young man who went with us at one point said his wife had been texting him asking him where he was; it's cold at home. They have a daughter that's a few months old.

Snapshot of Ukraine moment: we're in Irpin, in a Georgian restaurant, having lunch. I hear the Happy Birthday song sung in 2 different corners of the place. My first thought is, "but there's war in this country". War changes a lot of things, including one's lifestyle, but...war is nothing! And at the same time, war is everything and everywhere for the believer! The whole time we had lunch (a lawng time because y'all know I'm a slow eater!) the sirens could be heard all over the area. Yet, people still celebrate birthdays, they still live life. We as believers are, and have been, at war since day 1, in Genesis 3:15. We must not forget it. We may have gotten used to it sometimes, and let our guard down, but He is faithful and covers us with His wings (Ps. 36:7).



Come early January, I made another quick to Ukraine and this time, God helped me get to my destination in record time. I needed to get there fast and one small detail helped this time—my US visa. The people at the border saw that I have a US visa and they let me through faster. I could hardly hold in shouts of praise y'all!

These last two trips to Ukraine have been different in other ways as well. My oldest two daughters, Sarah (10) and Emma (8) seemed to have a better understanding that there is danger involved in going on these trips. They prayed for me more intentionally than before, and while I was away, they kept texting and asking if I was ok. It made me think of other people who are doing similar things, even more dangerous, men who are out on the frontlines. Fathers who are fighting for their families. Children who might not see their fathers ever again.



Spring 23

Officially firing the engine on “**echipa+. E61020**”—the men’s Ministry (Word; Steak; Muscle)

We’re excited to announce that we’ve started planning for a men’s event on camp property. In conversations we’ve had with many of y’all, we’ve mentioned that the camp can be(come) a place of equipping for men and women, youth, couples. In this case, “echipat” will be a men’s conference that aims to place our camp on the radar of churches, but not only churches. This will be a one-day event that will have local and international speakers, tackling issues that would encourage men of all ages.

(Quick info on the name: “echipa+”

- *“echipa” means “team” in Romanian —> the “+” at the end will be a “T” in the logo, in the shape of the cross. Thus, we would have the meaning of “team for The Cross”*
- *The same word, with a “T” at the end of it, “echipat”, means “equipped” in Romanian —> thus, we have the idea of men who are “equipped”, prepared, ready*
- *Lastly, E61020 - means “Ephesians 6:10-20 —> the aim of everything we do at this conference, and other men’s events, is to walk alongside men, as they put on the whole armor of God, and encourage them to do the same with other men whom God has placed in their circles)*

Men (and not only men) are under attack, it seems, more than ever. The devil knows that it’s harder on the family, if the father isn’t at all interested in leading his family well, or if he is struggling in doing so. Churches are losing numbers and have a difficult time in engaging men specifically. I know at least one church in the area that even had a difficult time in finding men to be part of the leadership team, all this while having a decent size male membership.

During the “echipat” conference, the participants will be encouraged in their walk with Christ, they will make connections and enjoy outdoor activities together. They will also learn about other men-oriented programs that we organize throughout the year (1-2-3 day outdoor experiences that bind together Scripture/Discipleship, Life skills, and Fun; father-son trips, etc). As a general objective, our aim is to get to a point where we as a camp stir an intentional discipleship attitude in all who will take part of these activities. Ideally, we would also partner with 1-2 organizations who are well established in offering discipleship formation, and who have



materials that could be used and adapted to our culture. Do you know of such organizations? Would you be interested in partnering with us in this ministry? Please let us know if you have any questions!

[Click here for some more pictures of some of our men’s ministry related activities, on the website!](#)

Christmas with the Roma community of Trestia

The month of December passed very fast. We quickly got to December 17 and December 30. On these two dates we organized two events for the Roma community where we are planting a church right now. The place was full and merry. We had good food, Lidia prepared cabbage rolls and gulyas for everyone. There was plenty for everyone and there were leftovers to take home.



All the children received gifts that included toys, clothes and hygiene products, but we also had bags for all the families, with food items prepared. Above all, we shared Christ, and emphasized that He is the reason for everything that we do. We praised Him through song, through prayer, and through short Bible lessons about His coming to us to save us. The place almost shook when the kids sang. They absolutely love singing. We're looking forward to when we'll be able to have many of them play different instruments as well.



The church building construction is advancing every day. We are thankful for the team that is working there right now. They are great guys who aim to do the best they can. We are not there yet with it, but we are confident that God will continue to provide, as He has to this day. If you want to know more about the ministry, please don't hesitate to reach out to us and ask us any questions you might have! If you want to get involved and support this ministry, please reach out to us, we'd be more than happy to tell you more about it!



[Check out some pictures of this ministry, on the website!](#)

Vat family updates

November was a big month for the Vat family—Lucas Benjamin was born on November 13. He is such a sweet boy. Many of y'all know that Raluca and I had had two boys' names picked out since 2009. God, in His great mercy and favor, has blessed us even in such a silly desire. We look to all of our six children, Sarah Nicole (10), Emma Sophie (8), Abigail Karis (4), Hannah Joy (3), David Nicholas (1), and Lucas Benjamin (2mo) and praise God for His grace which He has shown to us. And He continues to do so, every single day. We are excitedly looking to 2023 and are praying that we'd trust God no matter what. We are praying that we would be faithful in everything that God has entrusted us with, and that He would receive all the glory, in all we do.



We are thankful that many of you have shown interest in finding out more about what we do, and some have even shown interest in coming over and serving with us. We are looking forward to serving alongside! And we are letting y'all know, again, that each and every one of you is welcome to come visit! We are looking forward to that day, when we'll be picking y'all up from the airport!

We have recently updated our organization's website. You are more than welcome to check it out. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon!

As always, we welcome y'all's emails, replies, questions, prayers, support, and presence! Come serve with us here in Romania!

Y'all are blessed! Nick, Raluca, Sarah, Emma, Abigail, Hannah, Nicholas, Lucas

Prayer requests:

- that Jesus Christ would shine bright through all that we do
- that the war would end, and that all the enthusiasm in helping the refugees would only grow! The hardest days are ahead of us! When the war will come to an end, the reconstruction begins. Pray that people would be as ready and willing to go and help over there, as they've been, over here!
- good health for all serving and those being served
- faithfulness in everything we do
- Praise God! We are thankful for God's provision and for y'all's support. We are excited for this new year and all God will do.
- that we would be able to finish the church construction in Trestia—we are almost there
 - **UPDATE: Praise God** that the roof is done! We are now working the electrical, have all the doors and windows installed, and will soon start with the interior work. Interior walls are nice and straight, heating system is installed. We are working on exterior walls this week, then continuing work on the interior walls, all the way to paint! We've started thinking about needs like pews/chairs, kitchen equipment, restrooms, sound, instruments, etc.
 - **UPDATE: Praise God** that we are now in the stage in which tile is installed everywhere. Once the tile is installed, the walls will be painted, and then we can start on furnishing it—thank y'all for your continued support!

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Corinthians 13:14)