



Son-rise in Africa Newsletter

CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Report by EARL & KATHI COOPER

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JANUARY 2009

Ministry Update...

Earl enjoyed his first teaching tour to Romania in January. Normally he teaches a modular Bible college course, however, Romania was different. To give you an idea of one week in the life of a travelling teacher in Romania, here are excerpts from Earl's emails home:

Saturday evening, January 17 (after a 42 hour trip) "I have arrived in Tarnaveni, Romania, a small town of about 25,000, where the temp is 2C, and there is a slight dusting of snow which fell Thursday night to welcome me. The town is in the midst of rolling hills bared for farming but for a bit of forest here and there... Travel here is as good as Canada except that many of the roads are dirt/gravel like our Healey Lake road... Romanian Ministry began Sunday as I spoke at the 10:30 service of the Tarnaveni Bethany Baptist Church where Mike and Mary Lou Rummey (fellow ABWE missionaries) attend. The church was quite full although their main service is at 5 p.m. Pastor Marius Petric translated for me. After church we went home and ate and talked all afternoon, returning for the main service which was more "lively" and a gospel message. The church was again quite full. On Monday we travelled to Bobohalma Baptist Church (20 min) to begin the doctrine study (8 a.m. to 3 p.m.) On the way we saw 3 deer beside the road but the most unusual sight is the farmers drawing their hay or shovelling gravel etc. with horse drawn wagons. I have seen no tractors in this primarily agriculture area. So it's a little like home when I was a boy! The people dress just like the movie "Fiddler on the Roof" and rarely smile (except for the youth which are always smiling). The area is very rolling, more so than Muskoka, but with little forest. So you can be up on a high hill and see for miles because no trees block the view. Because of this terrain the roads are winding (up and down "mountains" or hills like Collingwood's Blue Mountain). We returned home at 3:00. We enjoyed a 20 min break then headed for the ABWE Romania office at Targumures (45 min) where we ran off copies for the seminar on Tuesday. We rushed to McDonalds for a quick hamburger and then over to another mission family for a team meeting. We arrived home at about 11 p.m. Tuesday we were back to Bethany Baptist for the "Spiritual Health Check Seminar" from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., then back home to the Rummey's apartment (where I was staying) for a teen meeting at 6 – I brought the devotional. Wednesday: The doctrine class in Bobohalma was completed, after which Mike and I returned home for an evening of rest. Thursday was laundry day and a chance to prepare for the teaching seminars and sermons for the weekend. Friday, Mike and I headed for Alexandria... Our trip to Alexandria took the long way through the mountains for some sight seeing. We stopped at Count Dracula's birthplace of "Sighishoura" for a short walking tour. We continued to "Rupea," a town with an old castle on a mountain that we walked around. We ate lunch outside the castle wall looking down on the rolling country side. We continued on to another town, "Rashnov," located in the mountains also with a touring castle. It was very cloudy but we got pretty good pictures. Then we pressed on and arrived in Alexandria about 8:30, 12 hours after we left home. Mike and I stayed at a family's apartment who are part of the church which hosted the teacher training conference. Saturday: Mike and I shared the teaching from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. At 5 p.m. we were brought to 'Tsiganesht,' another village church. After a brief tour of the church a service began - probably 50 folks attending. I preached a full sermon, then Mike preached a full sermon. Although we did not plan this, our sermons complimented each other as though it were a design. Sunday morning another pastor picked me up at 9 p.m. and took me to "Piatra" the Gypsytown where I preached from 10:15 to 10:50 in a house church with 12 attending adults. We raced from there to Alexandria where I preached another sermon from 11:20 to 12:15. From there we went to the pastor's home for lunch and an interesting theology discussion then at 4 p.m. we headed back to the Rummey's home town, this time taking the shorter 6 hour route."

Here is a Word in Season from Earl (see our website for daily devotionals)

Several years ago a family crossing Lake Erie in their newly purchased sailboat narrowly escaped loss of life. As they travelled from the Cleveland toward Port Burwell, a storm developed and began to toss their boat around mercilessly. To avert destruction the novice sailors cast their anchor out from the stern. The waves crashed over the stern, tearing the anchor loose and capsizing the boat. Fortunately, although the boat was destroyed, the family was washed ashore in safety, wearing life jackets.

This story reminds me of the words of an old hymn: "Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?" God speaks of an anchor that all men need: "Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain" (Hebrews 6:17-19 NIV). Here God makes a promise and an oath to confirm the hope of salvation as an anchor of the soul.

See first the description of this anchor. It is "sure", meaning safe or unbreakable. Like the four inch steel cables that secure the anchors of great ships, this hope of salvation is an unbreakable anchor. It is also "steadfast", meaning solid, grounded and unmoving. This hope of salvation cannot shift, time and circumstance will not shake or move it.

See next the location of this anchor. It is within "the inner sanctuary", this is the place of the very presence of God "where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf." (Hebrews 6:20 NIV). Our hope of salvation is an anchor as sure and steadfast as the power of God in raising Christ from the dead, our anchor is the Lord Jesus Christ, who "died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ... was buried, (and) ... was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 NIV).

As the storms of life come, many seek refuge in financial security, inner strength, or even "religion" (without a personal relationship with God). Often too late, these people find their error; the anchors do not hold! There is only one sure anchor of deliverance in our present circumstances and for eternity; Jesus Christ the Son of God. To know him is to be assured of safe arrival (like wearing life jackets), but to follow Him (hold to His Word as authority and guide in life - "Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalms 119:105) is to be held secure through storm by the anchor of hope. What is your anchor of security?

Please pray with us...

1. For effective teaching where God leads while BATA is organized in Africa. Our prayer is to labour in the Spirit's power to bring understanding to the pastors and equip them to teach their own people.
2. For travel safety during Earl's upcoming winter trip to Alberta.
3. For preparation of the studies for Cameroon, Trinidad, and India scheduled for 2009.
4. For our support deficit of approximately \$100 month. ***With the Canadian dollar dropping and flight costs increasing, we anticipate a review of our support will result in a necessary increase for 2009. Please pray that the Lord will meet the need.***
5. For ministry opportunities in Canada and U.S. as we continue filling our 2009 schedule.

Present Itinerary:

We are presently making contact with churches to complete our 2009 schedule. This is more difficult this year because Earl's "overseas" schedule is still not finalized. **Please pray** for opportunities to share the ABWE Canada needs throughout Canada as these dates are finalized.

Calgary/Edmonton: Feb. 14 - Feb. 23
Courtland Bible Fellowship: Mar. 4 - 8
ABWE Canada Annual Mtg.: April 4
Consultation for International
Theo. Ed., Harrisburg, PA: May 24 - May 27

Cameroon: May 27 - Jun. 13
Riverside Baptist, Huntsville: June 28
Trinidad: Aug. 29 - Sept. 14
Otterville Baptist, Otterville, ON: Nov. 1
India: Nov. 20 - Dec. 8.23

Kathi's Notes... While Earl was away, I stayed close to home. No need to deal with the 'winter machines', the snow-blower or generator this time. The hydro stayed on and our son-in-law, Adam, kept the driveway clear. It was fun to have Adam & Teresa come with the boys for a sleep-over one weekend. Last Saturday I helped with my school's men's hockey tournament. Yesterday I ran the Winter Carnival events for my school—"curling" on the ice rink, "hockey" in the parking lot, "luge" down the hill, "cross-country" adventure, and a challenging "frisbee golf" on the soccer field where the snow is waist-deep. So in spite of the frigid temperatures and the ever-deepening snow, it has been a good month.

Air Miles Assistance - Cooper Air Miles No. 8006 178 1930

A practical way of supporting our ministry travel costs is by using our Air Miles number at participating merchants. For those who have passed on your earned air miles to us, we thank you.

Dr. & Mrs. Earl Cooper, 1248 Healey Lake Rd., Bracebridge, ON. P1L 1X3

Phone: 705-645-6371 Email: ekcooper@sympatico.ca Website: DiscipleshipMinistries.ca

ABWE CANADA, 980 Adelaide Street South, Suite 34, London, ON. N6E 1R3