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"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." – 2 Corinthians 5:20

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Why Romania?

When we tell people we're going to serve in Romania, this is one of the first questions we're asked. And it's a very legitimate one. The honest answer: because God called us there. I would have failed a geography test that asked me to identify Romania on a map. So before April 2015, Romania was nowhere on our radar for missionary service, until God changed that.

We didn't start this process with a heart for a particular people-group. Instead, we asked ourselves a few questions: What are our passions? How has God gifted us? What breaks our hearts? So let's answer those questions...

Passions: evangelism, apologetics, students, leadership, mercy ministry

Gifts: teaching, hospitality, leadership

Heart-breakers: people not knowing God, hopelessness, people turning away from God and toward atheism because of their intellectual barriers to the faith

With that in mind and with the guidance of both our pastor and MTW, we

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atheists much like the southern United States is full of cultural Christians - people who are "Christian" because they were born into a family that sometimes attends church and believes in God, not because they actually follow the teachings of Jesus. Generally speaking, Europe is a place that prides itself on its intellectualism, secularism, and scientism. And given our experience with apologetics, we really enjoy talking with people like that! And so we wanted to go to Europe to engage people's intellectual barriers to the faith. And since our marriage, God has placed many young(er) people in our path who have asked us many questions about Christianity and are looking for answers to see if Christianity is true. So given our own experiences, we knew we wanted to engage young people, possibly through university ministry.

With those "criteria" in mind, we spoke with the recruiters at MTW and asked where our gifts might be best used. There were two places that were actively seeking people to focus on university ministry, one of which was Romania. So we spoke with the team leaders in both countries, and there were a lot of crazy coincidences with Romania:

1. It is a practically post-Christian culture. Though most Romanians attend - at least sporadically - a Romanian Orthodox Church, many of them are "cultural Christians."
2. The people our age are the first generation to grow up completely outside of communism. Many are asking questions, to which they get no answer, and atheism in this generation is on the rise.
3. The MTW team has focused on developing leaders among the Romanians through their leadership development program. (I have spent the last 6 years developing leadership curriculum for the middle school level at my school.)
4. The MTW team has connections with the local university, and there is potentially an opening for us to teach public speaking to students wanting to learn English. (I have spent the last 6 years teaching public speaking at the middle school level.)
5. The MTW team has a church plant already established but are hoping to expand the church and develop a mercy ministry. (Derek has been serving as a deacon at our church on the mercy team for the last 3 years.)
6. The MTW team wants to ultimately create another church plant near the university under Romanian leadership so that other missionaries can focus on university ministry.

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working.

In the words of [Ace Ventura](#), Romania seemed to fit "like a glove!" So we went on a vision trip last July and God continued to confirm for us that Romania is where He wants us to be, which we could spend a lot of time telling you all about (which, eventually, we will). But these are the reasons we originally started looking into Romania and why we feel like God has led us right where He wants to use us. And we are privileged to get to participate in his Kingdom work there!

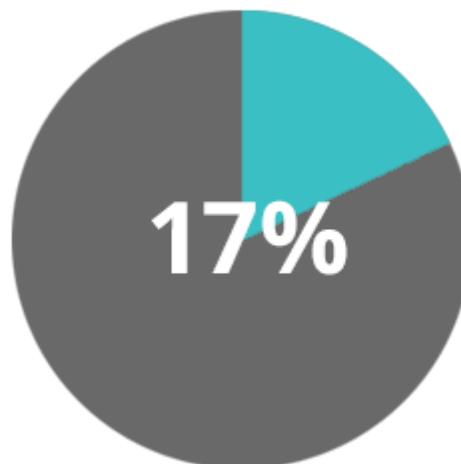
PLEASE PRAY...

- We're traveling to Florida this month for my childhood best friend's wedding. While on our trip we are praying for God to open doors for us to speak with individuals and churches about Romania. Please pray for our safety as we travel for the first time as a family of four, that God would bind together the lives of my friend and her husband-to-be in a Christ-centered marriage, and that we would use every opportunity presented to spread the news about what the Lord is doing in Romania.
- We are praying that we can get to 25% support by the end of this month. To get there, we need about 6 entities (families or churches) to pledge \$100 per month or 12 entities to pledge \$50 per month. Please pray with us that God would move in people's hearts who want to get involved in the Romanian ministry.



We've been learning Romanian!
Check out this video to see how we're doing, but don't laugh!!

This is what we tried to say:
D: Hello, ma'am.



January Stats

- 1 Presbytery meeting

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C: I'm good, thank you. And you?

D: Very well, thank you. Do you know Romanian?

C: I understand and speak a little Romanian but not very well.

D: But yes! You speak Romanian very well!

C: Thank you!

- 9 conversations with families
- 5% growth in our pledged support!

[Would you prayerfully consider joining our team to support what God is doing in Romania?](#)



Our prayer cards have finally arrived! Prayer cards are great reminders to people to pray for us when they see the card, which is why so many people put these cards on their refrigerators as daily reminders. How cool is that? So when someone is doing something as mundane as getting milk out of the fridge, they could be praying for us! Knowing that there are people out there who are actually talking to God on our behalf means so much! We're in the process of distributing all of our



[Meet the Ebbers](#), our teammates in Romania. In fact, this is Derek and Shannon Ebbers, so our Romanian team can now be called the "Derek Team," since that will apply to both families. We were privileged enough to stay with them when we visited Romania in the summer, and it was such a joy to get to know them and their five children (who were AWESOME babysitters!). They have been serving in Romania for 8 years and have been praying for God to grow the team to provide more support. We are so excited to join them in the church-planting ministry in 2017. Please pray for the Ebbers as their oldest daughter goes back to the States for college this Spring, as Shannon continues to homeschool

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wherever else you want to keep yours). It is a great encouragement to us to have your prayer.

the church-plant to reach the people of Codlea, Romania.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

1/12/16 - [Christians as Refugees](#) by Derek

1/24/16 - [What Defines Me: My Kids or Jesus?](#) by Catalina

2/08/16 - [Perspectives Pt 1](#) by Derek

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