

## ROMANIA

Csaba Veres continues to be busy as General Secretary of IKE, a youth movement within the Transylvanian District of the Hungarian Reformed Church that provides leadership training, as well as youth programmes a, mission events and summer camps.

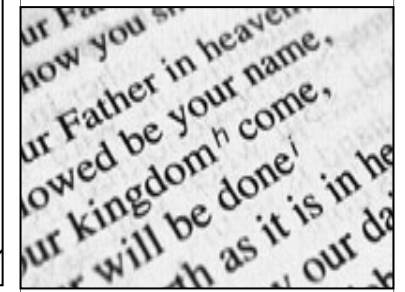
- Give thanks for the many opportunities IKE has to minister to university students in Cluj.
- Currently, IKE's Youth Office staff are carrying out a lot of administration and planning work. February is the month when staff members write a lot of funding applications and also write up reports. Pray for hearts of thankfulness as the staff look back, and also as they plan the year's activities that they will see clearly how God is leading them in this coming year.
- The IKE student ministry will take a group of students on the annual Ski Camp in mid-February. Pray for safety and good times of worship and fellowship, along with challenging devotions. Pray for those university students who have never been to such a camp, that the Word of God would bring real challenge to their hearts. Remember Rev Istvan David, IKE Student Chaplain, who will be leading the camp.

**THE MIDDLE EAST** Fighting has intensified over the past couple of weeks in Syria. Protests against the government have been on-going in the country since last March, and the Syrian government has been repeatedly criticised internationally for its violence against protesters and civilians. It is thought that around 7,000 people have died since the protests began, with activists in Syria reporting that over 500 people have died in the city of Homs alone since 4th February. The Arab League's call for a joint Arab-League-UN peace-keeping mission was rejected by the Syrian government, and was also vetoed by at the UN by Russia and China. The League has since announced it was ending all diplomatic cooperation with Syria, and that it would give "political and material support" to the opposition.

- Pray for an end to all violence and intimidation; and for peace and justice for all the people of Syria.
- Pray that extremists will not take advantage of the current unstable situation.
- Pray for the protection of Christians in Syria, and that they will know the Lord is with them at this difficult and uncertain time.



19h February 2012



The Prayer Team would like to encourage members of the congregation to come along to Prayer Time on Sunday morning (10:30am) or evening (6:00pm). We meet in the Prayer Room and would love to have you join with us. Or why not come along and join us for a **Prayer Breakfast** on the 1st Saturday of each month @ **9.00am** in Montgomery's! - **Saturday 3rd March**

***<sup>13</sup>Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup>Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>16</sup>Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5***

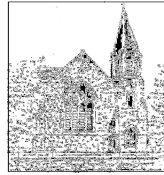
Pray for people struggling to cope in difficult life situations and experiencing varying degrees of stress and depression, families who have been bereaved, & members waiting on appointments with consultants.

***Information concerning people's illnesses is given with permission, but is personal, and should be treated with sensitivity and respect, and used for prayer only.***

**Encourage your friends to pray!** Our weekly Prayer Bulletin is available every week @ [www.westchurchballymena.org](http://www.westchurchballymena.org) or send your prayer requests to West Church Prayer Team "[westprayer@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:westprayer@hotmail.co.uk)"

### **Please do keep Wild West in your prayers.**

The Child Protection rules on training are very strict. We must of course ensure that our children are safe and each leader attends CP training on 27th February. Give thanks for Hilary Taylor our CP Officer. Pray this training will go well and it will be beneficial for all.



Evangelism Team - pray for the up-coming team meeting, for new members of team, and ideas for future events.

*Please pray for our Discipleship Explored course. ; Give thanks for the attendees who came along, for the positive and constructive discussion.*

*Pray those whose walk with Christ would benefit from the course will be moved to come along. Pray as it continues this Monday evening*

Pray that we will fervently seek God's help and direction in overcoming spiritual challenges and accomplishing Kingdom purposes.

Pray for our Service members who defend peace and stability around the globe .

**Pray for all organisations in our town both Christian and secular, who "seek the welfare of the city" including those who tackle the various social problems in our town. Give thanks for the united approach from 1st Ballymena, Methodist and West regarding our Ballymena Friendship Club.**

**Pray that the Holy Spirit would move in Ballymena and the surrounding towns and villages in an amazing way, resulting in an extraordinary sense of God's presence, and an miraculous understanding of and response to Christ, an astounding interest in prayer, in reading the Bible and a transforming change in our community!**

Dear God, I pray for all those who are reading this weeks prayer bulletin, that You will touch their lives in great and mighty ways. Please draw them closer to You and provide: Comfort on difficult days, Smiles when sadness intrudes, Rainbows to follow the clouds, Laughter to kiss their lips, Sunsets to warm their hearts, Gentle hugs when spirits sag, Friendships to brighten their being, Beauty for their eyes to see, Confidence for when they doubt, Faith so that they can believe, Courage to know themselves, Patience to accept the truth, And love to complete their lives. Thank You God for Your blessings. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Latest Edition - David & Besiana's Newsletter on Welcome Desk

**The Stone Soup** A traveller comes into a town beset by famine. The inhabitants try to discourage the traveller from staying, fearing he wants them to give him food. They tell him in no uncertain terms that there's no food anywhere to be found. The traveller explains that he doesn't need any food and that, in fact, he was planning to make a soup to share with all of them. The villagers watch suspiciously as he builds a fire and fills a cauldron with water. With great ceremony, he pulls a stone from a bag, dropping the stone into the pot of water. He sniffs the brew extravagantly and exclaims how delicious stone soup is. As the villagers begin to show interest, he mentions how good the soup would be with just a little cabbage in it. A villager brings out a cabbage to share. This episode repeats itself until the soup has cabbage, carrots, onions, and beets- indeed, a substantial soup that feeds everyone in the village.

This story addresses the human tendency to hoard in times of deprivation. When resources are scarce, we pull back and put all of our energy into self-preservation. We isolate ourselves and shut out others. As the story of stone soup reveals, in doing so, we often deprive ourselves and everyone else of a feast.

This metaphor plays out beyond the realm of food. We hoard ideas, love, and energy, thinking we will be richer if we keep to them to ourselves, when in truth we make the world, and ourselves, poorer whenever we greedily stockpile our reserves. The traveller was able to see that the villagers were holding back, and he had the genius to draw them out and inspire them to give, thus creating a spread that none of them could have created alone. Proverbs is a textbook of wisdom. Most everything worth having has to be worked for and so it is with wisdom. We don't gain knowledge and understanding by sitting idle. Solomon understood the value of hard work and made it a major theme of the Proverbs.

"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame." (Proverbs 10:5) With wisdom comes reward. Solomon's understood that feeding our spirit would benefit our lives. Beyond the physical life, gaining knowledge and understanding, learning holiness, keeping peace and working hard are all goals of those who seek the Kingdom of God. "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools." (Proverbs 3:35)

Our town is full of people like one of the villagers, holding back? We need to come forward and share the love of Jesus AND to offer our spiritual gifts, to benefit others. By doing so we will inspire others to do the same. The reward is a banquet ALREADY prepared by God.

*Thank You, Lord, that You rejoice to see Your people restored and once again fulfil their destiny. Help me to own the mistakes I've made and to forgive those who have hurt me, so that You can have Your way in restoring my life and dealing with the damage caused by the "locusts" which have damaged me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*