

# Merrill Update May 2016

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Dear Brothers and Sisters at Ebenezer Methodist:

We convey our sincerest gratitude to you for praying and giving to our ministry. I am always so amazed by the generosity of brothers and sisters in Christ. Please know we are very grateful to you all. Without people who pray and give so generously, we would not be able to do the work of the ministry: sharing God's saving grace with the precious orphan children. Thanks so much.

Ministry Update:

The first renovation on the orphanage is complete. The doors are ready to be opened for the kids to come in. We are waiting on the inspections and approvals from the government, though waiting and doing all the paperwork can be a headache. I figure it will be a month or so before all is approved and the children can come in. Please pray that God will expedite this process, since there are many children very eager to come live with us.

While waiting to open the orphanage, we continue to work in the gypsy villages (Roma villages), especially with children. These villages are poor indeed: parasite infested; make-shift, dirt floor shacks; no indoor plumbing; no electricity; very dirty and full of trash. The people live by foraging through the city trash bins, begging, and stealing. No one will hire them because they are gypsies, and most Romanians do not trust or like gypsies.

In these villages, we are trying to get the kids into school (most are illiterate and do not attend school); thus giving them a chance to become educated and break the cycle of poverty. We also tell them about the Lord, and try to get them into church. Usually, we do this by having VBS for the children, or having special gatherings at the church where food is offered. These activities help to break the ice for them to start coming to church with their families. We also provide medical outreach, food/clothing distribution, and small construction projects in the villages.

Gypsies (also called Roma people) are special people, just caught up in a cycle of poverty that has plagued them for centuries. For them, being poor is not a condition they decide on; it's thrust upon them, like the color of their eyes.

My wife Anca continues to work with the adult orphan girls. These are girls over 18 years old, who have been released from the state-run orphanages, but are ill-equipped to function in society without someone first coming alongside them to show them the way. They need help in finding jobs, a place to live, paying bills, etc. Often, they end up living on the streets, making money as prostitutes, or sold as sex slaves, or they simply die because of the harsh environment on the streets. And they are lost—without the Lord. So my wife, Anca, comes alongside them, helping them get their feet on the ground, sharing with them about the Lord, and getting them involved in church. She also conducts a weekly Bible study with them every Saturday morning.

These ministry activities keep us busy indeed. Soon will be busier, since our orphanage will be up and running; plus, we are expecting mission teams from the U. S. this summer. We would love to have some of you from Ebenezer come to visit and help us in Romania one day. We hope that Pastor Eric's plan to organize a mission trip here one day will come true. It would be a blessing to have some of you here, since the need is great and workers are few. We will be able to keep you busy with medical outreach, VBS, building projects, teaching and more. We are praying for you to be able to come.

Please stay in touch with us. We need you so much! This ministry is made possible through the prayers and financial sacrifices of the saints, including you.

Blessings,

Nathan, Anca, Nehemiah, and Isaiah Merrill.

P. S. I know that most of you have already liked us on Facebook; but, if you would like to see pictures and get frequent updates of how God is working here in Romania, please see our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/findinghopeministries](http://www.facebook.com/findinghopeministries). Remember to like us so the updates will appear on your Facebook news feed.

(with editing by Cindy Sears)