

MANNA CHURCH – SIGHISOARA - ROMANIA



The beginning goes back to 1994, five years after the fall of communism when the receptivity to the news of the gospel was still high. It was still possible to rally a large group to a stadium with the sole interest to hear a preacher coming from the west to speak about spiritual truth.

That's when I first came to Sighisoara as part of a church planting team and we had a large stadium event with preaching the gospel and witnessing the miraculous saving and healing power of our God.

At the end of the outreach I was part of the follow up team responsible for the events in Sighisoara. Though I started as a translator for mostly American missionaries, soon I was to hear God calling me to become a mouthpiece for Himself, and not merely for other men. In light of that sense from God, I signed up for training in a Bible College in Timisoara.

My calling was to be confirmed by the others on the team and by the end of 1995 I was ordained as the pastor for the young church in Sighisoara.

The initial group of converts from the stadium event was large and diverse but it finally settled to a group of mostly Gypsies. The prejudice against this people group is a real problem in our society and many who showed interest in the beginning started walking away refusing to stay associated with such a group.



In God's economy we learn that he chooses the lowly. Out of his heart for the outcast the passion was imparted and it became **our vision** to grow into a house of God where cultural prejudice will not hinder people groups from worshiping in unity.



We do not call ourselves a Gypsy church but a church where any one, regardless of background can be discipled in the Kingdom culture. Any one is welcomed and any culture needs redemption.

Through out the years people from all walks of life have joined the church, some by conversion others my moving. Today we gather people from many cultures and sometimes we thrive other times we strive to persevere in the unity of the Spirit and honor God with our church life. Our members are: Romanians, Gypsies, Hungarians, Germans, English, Americans, Dutch, Canadians.



Today Manna Church of Sighiosara is preoccupied with planting other churches in the near by villages as well as sending out missionaries to other parts of the world.

In 2007, after 13 years of meeting in various facilities we were able to finally move into a building of our own. It was a 7 years process and the final touches are still to be done on the building, but it is a great resource as it is and we are wanting to turn it into a training center for Christian ministers.

As part of our mercy ministries we are involved in community development, equipping Gypsies to reach out to the gypsy communities and bringing lasting change by making disciples in their turn.

We are also encouraging children and young people from Gypsy neighborhoods to stay in school and get education to the highest level they can afford. The church is running after-school tutoring programs as well as providing scholarships for those among them who make it to university.

It has also become a tradition to distribute about 3000 shoebox gifts to poor communities around Chirstmas time. That brings a great joy to so many families and children, it makes the effort worthwhile.



Soard, Boiu and Secuieni are three of the villages where we have planted a church. Each place has a ministry team leading and the work. We are seeing now the working out of the initial vision – equip a generation of Gypsies in Sighisoara in order to spread the passion for God in the villages around and to the end of the world.

One Gypsy couple and their 4 children are such a testimony. They got saved in the beginning of the church. They have matured fast and been involved with missions around town for many years. Recently they started going on short term mission trios to Greece ministering in Gypsy communities there.



One of the churches in a Gypsy Village

There is a sense of *Macedonian call* ringing in their hearts and it is beginning to be confirmed that the Lord is leading them to move to Greece and work among the Gypsies there in church planting along with some local church that really cries out for help. We are praying with them as a family and hope to be able to find some financial support to help in this relocation.

A young man from Boiu, a village marked by violence and poverty and alcoholism got saved 6 years ago. At the time he had dropped out of school and was going down the cultural path of his environment. We encouraged him to start back in school even though he missed one year. Now he is in University studying political science with a vision to bring change into his world and the world around him. He is also a teacher in the church in Boiu, and not only, imparting the word of God with power. His desire is to bring change in the mindset of his Gypsy fellow people and line them up with true biblical principles. We know this is the kind of testimonies that will bring lasting change in the poverty stricken Gypsy settlements. Humanitarian aid and handouts will ease the stomachache of unfortunate children. We are still doing some of that hopefully with more wisdom now than in the past, but we are after the long-term effect of the spiritual climate change of such communities.

There are numerous testimonies and stories of life changed because of this local church. The full effect is only to be really known on that day, but for now we are encouraged to see some fruit.

Join us in prayer for:

- Right person to commit for assistant pastor position – not paid;
- Administrator to watch the property and maintenance;
- Passion for the lost and evangelism;
- Purity and clarity of focus in a time of worldly crisis that brings weariness, tiredness and business
- finish interior of building: stage, baptistery, stairs, partitioning wall in the toilet, light and sound, alarm system, carpet;
- church van;

Thank you very much:

Procopie (Pilu) and Hadasa Hadarean