



## CONNECTED CHURCH: Update from Sagoal

### Greetings from Pokhara:

Once again let us express our thanks to you for all your prayers and support. It is our pleasure to write to you and share what has been happening in Nepal and in our work recently.

**A STABLE GOVERNMENT:** Nepal is now fully established as a federal democratic republic with secular values. At all levels, from the federal level down to the local government, representatives have been elected and government bodies are functioning. Their presence is particularly noticed at local levels where there has been a gap for many years. Elected officials at each level have been putting all their efforts into formulating and introducing lots of new policies and guidelines. The majority coalition government, made up of the two largest communist parties of Nepal, is now focused on providing good, stable governance to fulfil the mandate they gained in the election. Hopefully, this will be sustainable and will lead the country towards prosperity.

The following are highlights from Sagoal's work over the last few months: The Sagoal team conducted three Sangsangai workshops in Bardiya and Kailali in August. A total of 49 new facilitators from 29 churches (including 12 churches new to the programme) took part in the training. Between workshops, field officers Kalpana (whom the CCW team met) and Khim, together with the Sangsangai coordinators, have been following up with partner churches regularly to ensure the Bible study classes are going well. Thanks to the previous training about local government planning processes, some more partner churches successfully applied to their local level governments for funding. This allowed them to start projects, like building a boundary wall, that they would not have been able to fund themselves.

Sagoal held meetings at their central office in Pokhara for their executive board, management team and for staff to share what they were learning. It was an important time, where annual targets and achievements for the project were discussed.

Sagoal's General Assembly (similar to an AGM) was held on the 2nd September and a new group of board members were elected to oversee Sagoal for the next two years.



A Bible study group taking part in Sangsangai (left) and training on local government planning processes (right)

Some of our partner churches are reaching the point in the Sangsangai process where they are beginning to look at engaging and working with their local communities. We are learning in this project, that it can take time for local churches to gain the confidence to step out into the community and work together with them.

# CHRISTCHURCH WREXHAM

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*PLEASE PRAY*

On the 2nd September, nine new members were selected for Sagoal's Board of Trustees. Please pray for God's knowledge and wisdom as they lead Sagoal.

We are currently training 49 new facilitators from 17 existing churches, and 12 new churches, to ensure the Sangsangai process is properly facilitated. Please pray that the Sangsangai process would be more effective as the new facilitators are trained up.

The second year of this Sangsangai project is now complete, which means the coming financial year will be the last of the current project. Do pray for the team at Sagoal as they work to support partner churches in completing the process.

## **YWAM update:** Sarah Opper

Things with YWAM Cymru/Wales have been exciting this past year. In January 2018 we ran our 7<sup>th</sup> DTS here in Wrexham with 5 trainees from 4 nations. It was an interesting school as most of the trainees were older than the staff so we all learned a lot from that dynamic. They completed their 12 weeks of lecture phase here and then went out the cross-cultural outreach to Serbia and Croatia. Four of them graduated in July of this year and some are even planned to join YWAM in the future which is encouraging. Two our long-term staff, Paul and Rachel and two our short term staff, Bronwyn and Joe, left the team in August which was tough as that essentially means our DTS department has had to close. On an encouraging note we have a new family (with nearly 10 years YWAM experience) joining us in January who are already living in Wrexham and starting to join in with the team on a part-time basis already. We have met with (or are meeting) various people and families praying about a future with YWAM in Wales but nothing official as yet with those people. We are praying God continues to grow our team so that the work of YWAMers can bless Wrexham and Wales nationally. Please join us in praying for more staff, the continuation of our DTS programme and deepened unity amongst the 10 current staff.



As we head into the winter months there is no sign of any reduction in demand for emergency food parcels and indeed in the first 6 months of this financial year since April 1<sup>st</sup> we have seen a 22% increase. The roll out of Universal Credit is certainly a contributory factor as this can lead to a 5-week delay in clients receiving benefits as they switch to the system.

The 6-month contract for our Project Mangers role (Sally E) comes to an end this month (November) however we have applied for a grant through the Trussell Trust / ASDA collaboration to cover the salaries of a Project Manager and a Warehouse Manager for the next 2 years. Please pray that we will be successful in this as it will really enhance our work.

The summer saw a big upheaval as we had to leave our warehouse based in the Old School Room at St James's. This was due to a combination of Health and Safety issues which unfortunately came to a head and necessitated a relatively sudden and rapid departure. Thankfully discussions with Wrexham Council proved to be fruitful and with the help of Councillor Andrew Atkinson and others we were offered the use of a building in Dean Road that had been used as a Child and Family Centre until relatively recently. It has proved to be generally fit for purpose and we have just been given another 3-month licence to continue to use the building into the new year. Please pray that we can obtain a longer-term lease into 2019 as it has proven very difficult to find any suitable accommodation at a reasonable rent.

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Our Harvest appeal was once again very well supported by schools and churches throughout the whole of the County Borough and it was great to have visits from children from various schools to the warehouse to see what happens to the food donations.



On November 10<sup>th</sup> a group of Foodbank supporters, including 2 local councillors, undertook a sponsored walk starting at our distribution site at St Marks in Caia Park and finishing 15 miles later at the distribution site at George Edwards Hall in Cefn Mawr with stops at our other sites at the Salvation Army and Gwersyllt Congregational Church on route. We were also welcomed by the National Trust Team at Erddig Hall and treated to tea / coffee and cakes!

Wrexham Football Supporters Trust have been supporting the Foodbank for several years now and once again demonstrated this on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November when fans turned up with 478 kilos of cans, packets and cartons as well as digging deep into their pockets to the tune of nearly £250. Shame about the result on the pitch but a big success off it, thanks to John, Micah, Art and the other volunteers who helped out and to Steve Lloyd from the Supporters Trust.



This week sees our annual 3-day collection in Tesco Wrexham and Tesco Cefn Mawr. This requires a lot of organisation bringing together teams of volunteers for each day in the stores; arranging for transport of donations back to Dean Road and then for another team or teams to date / weigh / sort out all the donated food. Tesco do provide a lot of support as these collections are a national (UK wide) event and also give us financial support by giving us cash based on 20% of the total weight collected. We are also anticipating a large influx of donations next week as the public response to our reverse Advent Calendar appeal was incredible with our Facebook post was shared 289 times and reached 27,897 people! We just might be rather busy next week.

We do however need all these donations as currently we have received requests for over 360 Christmas Hampers from the various agencies we work with in the town. Over the past couple of weeks, we have had volunteers wrapping the boxes ready to be filled so a huge thanks to everyone that turned up to help with that.

## Good News Foundation Hungary



Szabina arrived from Hungary on November 6<sup>th</sup> and will be spending 3 months with Christchurch, hosted by Campbell and Glen. She has already been very active and involved with a variety of different ministries including Tiddlers, C2, Chatty books and Crafts, The Tin Can Youth groups, Wrexham Foodbank and Glyndwr Chaplaincy! She has also been to Trinity Church with Gareth to share her testimony and has settled in well to life in Wrexham.

Gareth will be doing video links into the new Sunday afternoon gatherings in Hungary & the provisional plan is to visit again next spring (perhaps March).

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## Street & School Pastors



School Pastors have been invited to do 3 advent assemblies next week (early December) which represents a real breakthrough & an answer to prayer. A really good relationship with the new head has been established.

Street Pastors finances are holding up well in 2018 & we may even break even though long-term financial sustainability remains an area for continued prayer & exploration.

Some interest in both Street & School Pastors by new volunteers. Please pray this will lead to an increase in volunteer numbers for both these important ministries.

## FUNDATIA INCREDEREA (FI)



The children's camp took place in August at a place called Codru and the following report comes, as usual from Ligia. "A total of 36 people attended the camp 26 children and 10 adults (8 leaders and 2 cooks). The camp was called The Conquistadors, making us all conquerors! Apart from the great programme, made for the children, the kids could feel the presence of God in a special way, through the songs which were sung, through the studies that took place; during the small morning meetings; through the wonderful lessons each evening and through the encouragement and appreciation received from every leader throughout the camp. We were very blessed this year to have such devoted and faithful leaders who were so loved by the children that at the end they all cried, but what is truly beautiful is that the leaders have kept in touch with them. 12 children came from the schools where preventative lessons have been held, each of them coming for the first time to a camp. The leaders were all left marked by their life stories, here is a couple of them.

Raul, a 12 year old boy, came to the camp with the sole purpose of having fun and making fun of other children, got to the point where he was telling us about his hard life and the sufferings which he had gone through. At the age of 2 his hair fell out (head, arms, eyebrows) without him knowing the cause, the first thing he told us was "I am not having cancer" him being used to saying that to everyone he meets. He lives in the vicinity of Oradea with his mum and step Father. His parents splitting up left him suffering a lot. After we befriended him, he was the most responsible, he loved the fact that we appreciate him, that we listen to what he has to say, that we consider him valuable, it meant a lot for him!

Catalin is the son of a policeman from Oradea, who told us about how frustrated he was when his parents divorced. We were talking with him like with an adult and he told us about a lot of things which he heard from his mother. The pain of the mother was heard by her son and this marked him really deeply. He knew all about the affair his father had had and spoke vulgarly about the relations his father had (words heard from her mother), He told us how together with his mother they visited a "priest" so that he would tell them their destiny we had goosebumps, we did not think that an eleven year old would know such things and this was a sensitive point where we could tell him that only God knows our destiny, that it is a beautiful one if we have Him, that God prepared us a good future, the verse of the camp being this one from Jeremiah. (We came to the conclusion with Catalin that the person was a wizard, a conjuror, who asked for a lot of money for each meeting, his goal was destroying the father, his mother wishing to have revenge for the suffering he caused her.) What amazed us about Catalin was the fact that he remember the time period when his mother left him at the nursery, where he cried a lot and was beaten, he also told us how he was beaten in the first four grades of school by his teacher in front of the class and when he told this to her mother she replied "he did well if you are such a bad boy".....we were sad when we heard that her mother was supporting this kind of behaviour from the teacher....we prayed from him and we all leaders got teary eyes when we saw him coming out in front of everyone to sing and to welcome Jesus in his heart! A special boy!

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**CURRENT NEWS FROM LIGIA & FI:** In October we received a call from the Primaria telling that they will come to our premises to discuss our work and the possibility of renewing our rental contract. This happened two months ago and no decision has yet been made but we hope and pray that they will renew the contract. Yesterday (December 6<sup>th</sup>) we celebrated Saint Nicholas and we had a great surprise. We had guests at our premises some young people from LEO Black Eagle (a NGO from Oradea) who donated books for our children from the after school program. We had a great time together and the children were encouraged and very happy to talk with them and to receive very good books. We are very enthusiastic as we prepare for the Christmas Celebration. The children will have a nice program with carols and poems. Our goal is to make them understand the real meaning of Christmas. It is incredible how rewarded we feel when we see the changes God make in the life of our lovely children. Blessed be His name!

We are very thankful to God for all His blessings and for His grace that renews every morning.

## MARTINA AND TONY IN TURKEY

*It has certainly been a challenging time for them over the past few months after the sudden tightening up on visas they experienced in the summer. Here are some extracts from Tony's Facebook posts which shed some light on their situation after their visit to Wrexham at the end of August 2018 Not without its ups and downs as you will see!*



**Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Really blessed time in Wales and a great time with a couple from the Church back in London tonight

**Sept 4<sup>th</sup>:** Someone has estimated that there are 20,000 Christian denominations, yet Jesus prayed that we might be one .... what went wrong?

**Sept 18<sup>th</sup>:** Back from visiting Martina's family in Germany. Good and important connections continuing. Also enjoyed making a working break out of it as we harvested from their orchard and tended the land...great to back working on the land for a while! Continuing to pray for the situations we encounter and speak what we hear from God as opportunity presents itself...our calling may be temporarily diverted, but that doesn't mean it should stop!

**Sept 27<sup>th</sup>:** Past 10 days ...visited my parents in Devon, then took a few days away in Cornwall with Martina at the end of this connected with a Church there and spent the afternoon with a couple who came to connect with us. I then travelled to Wales alone stayed with friends and was debriefed and prayed for at prayer morning today. Now back in London after some very constructive times. Sense of time here nearing completion and may fly back to Turkey over next couple of days

**Sept 29<sup>th</sup> / 30<sup>th</sup>:** **Flying back to Turkey on Sunday! / In our flat in Ankara!**

**Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>:** To clarify our situation. I am here alone now Martina should be back towards the end of the month.

**Oct 6<sup>th</sup>:** So... I can probably get a 3 month visa from October to January and Martina can also. After that we will have to leave the country for 3 months (it possible to get temporary visas on a 3 months in 3 months out basis). Ultimately, we want a long term solution but we are considering whether a few months back in the UK might be a constructive thing right now enabling us to prepare better for the future. Heard my name called in the street any turned round to see a Syrian that I spent time with in the early days, but haven't seen for 5 years. He now lives near me and is keen to link up again. Will look forward to meeting up in the week.

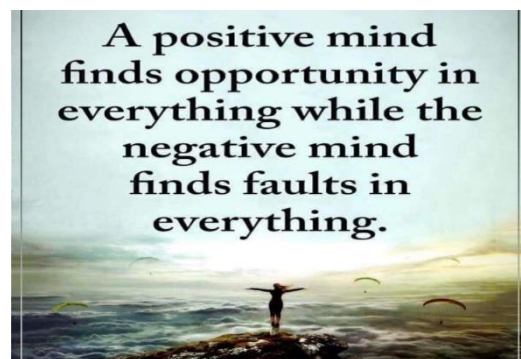
**In Ezra 7:11: we are told that he set his heart to study God's Word, then do it, then teach it. I believe this is God's order for all of us. Some of us don't study the Word enough, others who do apply themselves are so quick to convey it to others that it never impacts their own lives, but those who seek out the truth and then do it will have authority to teach others in an effective way (and probably won't lack opportunity either.**

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**Oct 8<sup>th</sup>:** Update on plans. As mentioned we are looking at being here to the end of January, then going on home assignment for 3 months There are A LOT of reasons why this seems to be a good move - God has been speaking to us about building a " prayer shield" of intercessors behind us, we both have needs to strengthen connections with home supporters, it will be an opportunity to train in something ( e.g. English teaching) that can be a way back in, there may be a clearer perspective on the situation from a distance, every now and then you need a protracted time out of a situation like this and it's about time for one, God is doing things in the UK that we need to pick up on and return with...these considerations and others are leading us to believe that we will be spending the early part of next year on the home front aiming to return in the spring. There is still some working out to do, but that is our plan!



**Oct 18<sup>th</sup>:** Next Wednesday my residency permit expires. I then need to leave the country, be outside for a day or so and then can come back in on a 3 month temporary visa. Martina comes back Friday, also on a 3 month visa. Praying God works it all out and brings everything to His highest purposes, at this faith stretching time.

**Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Flight booked to Cyprus this Thursday, returning Sunday. Need to book an E-visa whilst out of the country and then will be legal here for another 3 months.

**Oct 24<sup>th</sup>:** *Urgent prayer request!! My booking has unexpectedly been refused after initial acceptance. I was due to fly 10.35 tomorrow morning not sure what to do now, but need to leave country tomorrow, then book. Visa and return. Please pray it will all work out. Thanks!*

**Oct 25<sup>th</sup> / 26<sup>th</sup>:** Fine got ticket at airport, now awaiting boarding! Thanks for the prayers and encouragement. Next steps: obtain tourist visa and return.

**Oct 27<sup>th</sup>:** All set for flight tomorrow, E-Visa printed, plane ticket purchased, Martina's back in Ankara. In the meantime being blessed to enter into what the community is doing here in Cyprus. So back to normal on Sunday we trust!

**Oct 28<sup>th</sup>: PTL Back home!!!!Oct 30<sup>th</sup>:** Glad not to have just waited in Cyprus to return here, but got involved in what the team was doing there...great people, great place, great work!

**Nov 5<sup>th</sup>:** Visions and plans...it's probably time to get past the blueprint stage and do some actual building!

**Nov 6<sup>th</sup>:** Both of us will be sharing on prayer with the Filipus students.

**Nov 16<sup>th</sup>:** It's nearly midnight and 20 hours of prayer for the nation is about to begin. Bring it on!

**Nov 17<sup>th</sup>:** Got a few hours sleep at home and joined the meeting around 11 AM As usual God is getting to us before praying for others. Martina coming at 2 and will finish at 8.....all done. Now let's see what God does!

**Nov 27<sup>th</sup>:** *Health Update! Facing the fact that the healing I received a few months ago was a genuine, but partial healing some Parkinsons symptoms have gone, some remain....grateful for what God has done, very conscious of supporting grace and continuing to believe for complete healing in God's good time. I believe God's Hand is on the process and He knows what He is doing....but will no doubt post more on this in coming days.*

PLEASE PRAY FOR THEM BOTH AS THEY CONTINUE THIS WONDERFUL MINISTRY TONY ALSO FREQUENTLY REFERS TO WORKING WITH AND COMING ALONGSIDE E (a person only known as E) SO PLEASE ALSO PRAY FOR PERSEVERENCE AND WISDOM AS THEY WALK TOGETHER