

Steve and Rosie Kennedy

Location: **Cluj-Napoca, ROMANIA**

Mission: **Outreach and teams ministry**



"So you, too, must show love to foreigners, for you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt."
Deuteronomy 10:19

It is not possible to speak about ministry in Cluj-Napoca without considering the plight of refugees fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. Romania shares a 600km border with Ukraine, and over half a million refugees have fled the war by this route. Many stay only for a short time, often transiting to other places. Others are beginning to establish a more long-term base in the city. Yet all have been met with a huge out-pouring of compassion, help and support: at the border crossing points, throughout Romania, and in Cluj-Napoca.

We have been involved through the Royal School in Transylvania, where our girls attend, initially providing some essential supplies and gathering wider school community resources. We have established a partnership between the Royal School and both Kilbride Presbyterian Church, where I served as Assistant Minister, and Kilbride Central Primary School, to support Ukrainian children being welcomed into the school here.

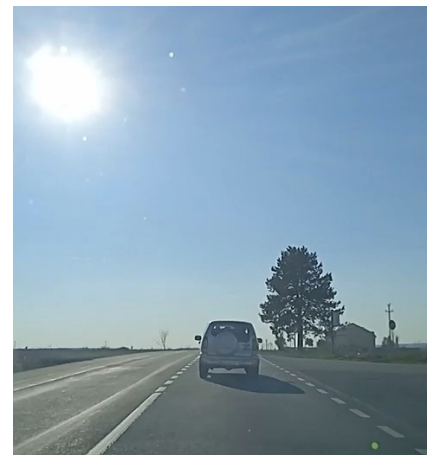
Cluj International Women's Club (CIWC), where Rosie is involved, has established a donation and collection centre where refugees can receive supplies and resources. CIWC has also created a buddy programme, to partner Ukrainian refugee families, women and children with an international family for emotional and practical support.

The congregation at Tóköz Reformed Church has provided accommodation for refugee families, and has gathered funds to be supplied through our sister denomination in

Ukraine. Just this week, Tóköz welcomed into its buildings a kindergarten for Ukrainian children.

In all this, stories are often heart-breaking, and yet there are stories of hope, as gospel love, compassion and welcome are being shared.

I (Steve) was struck recently by the harsh reality of the situation. As a group of us travelled to conduct a church service in a congregation near the Hungarian border, we had a car full of people, musical instruments and sound equipment. As we approached the border, I noticed that the jeep in front had Ukrainian registration plates, and was similarly laden down - but with what looked to be all the worldly possessions that a family could pack as they had fled their home.



Prayer points

- Continue to pray, as you have been, for the situation in Ukraine - for peace to come.
- Continue to pray for the refugees fleeing Ukraine through and to various other nations.
- Pray for those in Cluj-Napoca and in Romania doing all they can to aid the humanitarian crisis.
- Pray for the work of CIWC in providing essential resources through their donation centre. Pray for the CIWC buddy programme.
- Pray for the congregation in Tóköz, not only as we provide accommodation to the kindergarten, but also as we seek ways to provide emotional, pastoral and practical support to parents and families.
- Pray for coordinated and targeted aid efforts for those intended to remain longer: accommodation, language support, employment and training.