



Updates

Sharing news of our ministry for praise and prayer

February - April 2025

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ.

Colossians 4:2-3

THE DAMASCUS TRUST

Guitar Class: On 20th December, ACV held a Christmas party for the guitar class (photo). The term had started on 19th September and each week there were two classes, Beginners and Advanced, followed by a joint Bible teaching session. This term, two mums helped with the Bible time along with students at Emanuel University.



Prison Ministry: Also in December there was a celebration at the end of the ACV Mentoring Course. As well as some refreshments, this time included songs, testimonies and a short evangelistic talk by the ACV team. Thirteen inmates completed the course and were given an accredited certificate and a Christian book. Three inmates made a commitment to follow Jesus during the course and continue to be nurtured by the ACV volunteers. At the end of October '24, twenty inmates were baptised in prison - full immersion in a very large plastic tub. PTL!

ACV also helped put on a **Bible Exhibition in Oradea Prison** run by the Bible Society of Romania. This explained the history of the Christian scriptures and the relevance they have for us today giving moral teaching as well as making known the way of salvation in Christ alone. Several historic Bibles were on display for inmates to see.

Christmas shoeboxes from Prison Fellowship were distributed to 93 children from 35 families in 3 villages. Each family has a parent in prison. Each visit included songs, testimonies and a message of forgiveness and a new start in Jesus. Each family was given a Bible.

Emanuel University: In October, Andy and Sorin led another three-day 'On The Edge' teaching course at Emanuel University. Thirty students attended and as well as the morning classroom teaching there were practical sessions with visits to the prison and the night shelter (photo). ACV continue to benefit from students helping at the guitar classes and the prison visits.



Helping the marginalised: ACV visits to the local Night Shelter have been happening most months, though there have been difficulties providing hot meals. Thankfully a Christian brother, who owns a local restaurant, has offered to provide hot food for each ACV visit to the Night Shelter. As well as providing food, each ACV visit runs a very simple service of songs, testimonies, Bible reading and a short message of encouragement (photo).

PRAISE & PRAYER FOR ASOCIAȚIA CĂRAREA VIEȚII

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. 2 Thess 2:16-17

- Give thanks for the 'On The Edge' course at Emanuel University. Pray that what Andy taught will help shape the students' thinking and work in the future.
- Give thanks for the 13 inmates who completed the ACV mentoring programme. Please pray that the teaching will impact their lives. Pray especially for those who made a commitment to follow Christ. Pray that they will grow in their new lives.
- Praise the Lord for the 20 inmates who were recently baptised in prison. Pray that their commitment to follow Jesus will be real and will grow even whilst in prison.
- Please pray for extra help with running the guitar classes, especially with the teaching of the guitar and the Bible times. Pray for those currently involved: Marius, Nic, Lavinia, Damaris, Ana and Claudia.
- Many of the guitar class children come from Christian homes. Please pray that ACV's input into their lives will complement what they have from their parents.
- Give thanks for a local restaurant which will provide hot food for the Night Shelter visits. The owner is a Christian brother and is willing to help in this way.
- Please pray for the ACV Board and Management Team: Sorin, Emil, Iosif, Florin, Noemi and Oliver. Please pray that they remain focussed on what the Lord wants ACV to be doing and that they use their resources and volunteers effectively.
- Give thanks for the ACV partner churches and pray that others will commit to support ACV through prayer and giving.
- Please pray for the orphanage work, that it will be made clear as to how to proceed with this. Also for the work with the local Food Bank distributing food parcels to the very poor families.
- Give thanks for the 35 families visited this Christmas. Pray that the donated Bibles will be read and that the Holy Spirit will continue to work in their lives.
- Praise God for the 'open door' into Oradea Prison. Pray that the staff as well as the inmates will be impacted by the visits of ACV and other Christian groups.
- Each area of ACV ministry requires volunteers, so please pray for the recruitment and use of those needed to help. Pray that they will be blessed as they work and that they will have the compassion of Christ for those that they serve.
- Please pray that the seeds sown by ACV ministry will produce fruit for God's glory.



The situation in Rwanda for church buildings continues to be challenging. The vast majority of churches remain closed until they can meet the required building regulations. In **Byumba** diocese, 27 churches are open, 354 remain closed. In **Gasabo** diocese 17 churches remain closed with only 6 open.

Main requirements include male/female/disabled toilet blocks (as in photo), sound-proofing, car parking (!), concrete flooring and safe seating. Some mud-brick buildings are having to be rebuilt with fired bricks. Some pastors houses are also needing upgrading. This work is costly and time-consuming, but progress is being made. Some church buildings have been able to re-open, such as **Rukizi** (ADoB), **Rubungo** and **Nyabikenke** (ADoG), having done the necessary building work. Others, like **Ngarama** (ADoB) wait for local government approval.

Where church buildings remain closed, congregations may travel to another church building that is open to have a service there. However these can be many miles away making it difficult for people to walk there. Home group prayer times are permitted and so these happen on Sundays and then group members will go out into the community to visit people in their homes.

People involved in the building work, especially the men, can use these times to have fellowship and encourage one another whilst doing a job. For some Christians, the situation has become a catalyst to get them out and about more, interacting on a more personal level with one another as well as within the community. We praise God for this and pray that it will continue, even after buildings re-open.

However, some Christians have become discouraged with the challenges facing them. Much of the work is being done by the local congregations, but many are weary and the list of things to be done is long. Some people have stepped back from being involved, simply waiting for church buildings to re-open, once all the work is done. This attitude can put extra pressure on those who are still committed, especially to raise the necessary funding for the building work that is required.

No church services, no offerings, no income. The impact on pastors and their families is very serious. So the financial help DT has given has made a massive difference for many families (see P&P pt 2). **The Emergency Fund** remains open on our website.



Right: Concreting a church floor - a big and costly job!



Partners

PRAISE & PRAYER FOR DIOCESES OF BYUMBA & GASABO

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Deut 31:8

- Please pray for all pastors and their families during these challenging times. Pray that they won't lose heart or leave the ministry but will know the strength that the Holy Spirit gives to carry on and even triumph over adversity.
- We praise the Lord that our Emergency Help Fund has provided financial support for 33 pastors and their families over the last four months. More details on our website.
- Please pray for those who are discouraged and overwhelmed by the challenges. Pray that they will know the Lord's help to do one job at a time and encourage one another as jobs are completed.
- This is a time for the different church Unions to be active in helping and supporting one another. Please pray for the Aged, the Mothers', the Fathers' and Youth Unions.
- Give thanks for those church buildings that have been able to re-open in the last few months.
- Please pray for those in the diocesan offices who have been impacted by the lack of church income. Pray that funding will be found to cover their salaries.
- Please pray for those parishes that have done the required work and now wait for local government approval. These include Nduba and Kinyanya.
- Praise the Lord that as a result of these difficulties, congregations are sharing and caring for one another more. Please pray that this continues and develops.
- In the diocese of Byumba, out of 381 church buildings, 354 remain closed and only 27 are open. Please pray for those who cannot meet in their buildings, that they will find creative ways to meet and encourage each other.
- Another government requirement is that all church leaders must have degree level qualification, not just certificate level. Please pray for the dioceses as they seek to facilitate this.
- Please pray about the financial pressure that parishes and dioceses are now under. Pray that a spirit of generosity will move amongst the believers so that all are provided for as in the Early Church of Acts 5.
- Please keep praying for a fair resolution to this building problem. Pray that there will be some compromise for the rural parishes where the needs are so different from the urban parishes. Pray for the Bishops and diocesan staff as they try to maintain the spiritual and practical life of the parishes.



Partners

NEWS FROM DAMASCUS TRUST (UK)

**BIBLE
TEACHING**
CHANGING THE WAY WE LIVE

at home

The next **DTAH** on-line course will be a revised and updated version of **THE KINGDOM OF GOD** and be run in April/May 2025. Details and booking form will be available on our website in March 2025.

We have now run nine of these courses since we began in 2020 and will start to repeat them over the coming years. This will be done alongside new teaching courses that will be run each year. So if you missed them the first time round, don't miss them this time! Details posted on our website.

We are in the process of recording some of **Andy's Bible teaching** to make it available to download from our website. This will take time, but we've started and hope the first teaching will be available in February. Teaching notes will also be available to download.

We're planning another visit to **Rwanda** this year. A small DT team will visit our partner dioceses and travel around to see some of the parishes on our SAP programme. We also hope to catch up with what is happening with the Water-Harvesting Projects which may be affected by a government policy to make all water collected from church buildings available free of charge. As far as we know, this legislation has not yet come into force, so our WHPs are still providing financial help as well as water to local communities.

In order to communicate with a wider audience we are bringing the **DT Facebook** page back to life! Having been inactive for some time, Floyd Davis has agreed to resurrect it, so for all you FB fans, look us up and ask to join the group! We may even get round to updating our Instagram page as well.

Since making **EWTB** available each day on our website in June '22 we have had 7600 clicks. This is in addition to those who receive it each day by email. Very encouraging - as is the feedback we get from different readers. Always good to know that EWTB serves its purpose!



ENGAGE
with the Bible

Today's **Engage with the Bible** is available [here](#) or on our website at www.damascustrust.org. Why not sign up and have it delivered each day by email?

Helpful abbreviations: **DT** = Damascus Trust; **TMB** = Tamworth Men's Breakfast; **EWTB** = *ENGAGE with the Bible*;
DTAH = Damascus Trust At Home



Partners

PRAISE & PRAYER FOR DAMASCUS TRUST

But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:13-14

- Give thanks for the way EWTB is reaching people. Please pray that the Lord will use it to encourage his people and also to bring others to know him for themselves.
- Please pray for the ongoing challenge of both writing, editing and recording EWTBs. It's surprising how much time is required to do this - but it is worth it.
- Please pray for the process of making a 'studio' recording of Andy's Bible teaching for putting on the website. Pray that Andy will apportion the time needed to do this.
- Pray too for Gavin Rowden's work with us to make the Bible teaching audio files available on our website. Pray that this will be trouble-free and easy to access.
- We thank the Lord for the those church fellowships based in the UK who support our work. There may be only a few, but they are appreciated. Pray that we will be able to arrange visits for the coming year.
- Give thanks for all individuals (including you!) who continue to support our ministry, through prayer as well as financial support. As changes in our ministry happen, please stay with us and pray for us.
- We thank the Lord for the oversight of the Trustees for DT - Robin, Peter and Floyd. Please pray for them as they listen, discuss and advise. Pray for their families too.
- Please pray for the planning and preparation needed for the visit to Rwanda this year. Pray for the right people, the right time and the right itinerary to all come together.
- We thank the Lord for the way ACV is developing under a new leadership. Please pray for us to know what involvement we should maintain, especially with regard to future visits.
- Please pray for Andy's preaching and teaching ministry both in local churches as well as in other parts of the UK. Pray for the the right opportunities to open up.

WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S WHAT

Trustees: Robin Swan (& Hilary); Peter Harrington (& Susanna); Floyd Davis (& Anne)

Hon. IT Consultant: Gavin Rowden; **Ubushuti:** Pete & Heather Ellis; Liz Paine;

Hon. Treasurer: Joy Dean; **General:** Andy & Liz Paine

Local Coordinators: Sorin Maier (Romania); Placide Nizeyimana (Byumba); Samuel Kayitare (Gasabo)

Christian Partner Organisations:

Asociația Cărearea Vieții / Path of Life Association, Romania, overseen by Sorin Maier

Diocese of Byumba, Rwanda cared for by Bishop Emmanuel Ngendahayo

Diocese of Gasabo, Rwanda cared for by Archbishop Laurent Mbanda

Rwanda SAP Programme:

Parishes/Pastors with ADoB, Rwanda:

Bwambi - Rev. Onesime; wife Marie
Gaseke - Rev. Seth; wife Jeanette
Giheta - Rev. Lucien; wife Dative
+ Giti - Dcn Boniface
Kibare - Rev. Eric; wife Hyacinthe
+ Kinihira - Dcn Aimee
Kinyana - Rev. Emmanuel; wife Felicite
Kitazugurwa - Rev. Evariste; wife Berancille
Mimuli - Rev. Alexis Moses; wife Clementine
Mugina - Rev. Celestin
Ngarama - Rev. Placide; wife Susanna
Nyabihu - Rev. Innocent; wife Marie
Nyande - Rev. Sylvere; wife Seraphine
Rebero - Rev. Augustine; wife Florence
Ruhondo - Rev. Clementine
Ruyange - Rev. Kezia (widow)
Rwasa - Rev. Geoffrey
Rwesero - Rev. Felicien; wife Placidie
Tsimba - Rev. Jean de Dieu; wife Rev. Patricie
Tumba - Rev. Philbert; wife Ernestine

+ sub-parish

Parishes/Pastors with ADoG, Rwanda:

Gacuriro - Dcn Cyprian
* Karama - Rev. Clement; wife Marie Immaculee
* Kayanga - Revd Benjamin; wife Egidie
Kinyinya - Rev. Jonathan; wife Ruth
* Nduba - Dcn Appolinaire; wife Francoise
Nkuzuzu - Rev. Alfred; wife Claudette
Nyabikenke - Rev. Eugene; wife Marie Claire
Rubungo - Rev. Emmanuel; wife Francine
* new parish plants

ACV Romania:

Board / Management Team

Sorin Maier	Emil Bodog
Iosif Rezmives	Florin Maghiar
Oliver Lazar	Noemi Lazar

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