

huge financial burden for her family and once they get there she is terrified – not an easy experience for anyone involved. Alexandra is highly agitated and therefore requires a low protein diet. This kind of food is difficult for her family to source, so someone was ‘helping’ them to get it shipped in from Germany. After a bit of my own research, I found these products for a fraction of the price they were being charged by their ‘helper’. I’ve seen how people living in desperate situations are exploited by the greedy and it really saddens me, but thanks to your donations we are able to support families like these who are truly in need.

This update is already a lot longer than I had planned, but we’re in May now so bear with me! May has been absolutely great! My best friends, Rachel and Susan, came to visit. They really helped me with my work that week and we had so much fun together! My beautiful friend Izzy, who I met through Exodus in Romania years ago, got married, and I got a week in Barcelona to see loved ones. One heartbreak from this month is that recently the kids from a family I support were taken into care after their home situation was deemed no longer safe. I know that they are physically safer in care, but I am desperate to visit them so they can see a familiar face and know they are really loved and cared for. Please pray that these wee munchkins know God’s comfort in this confusing time. There are six of them aged 2-11.

We had our second meeting for teenagers just last week where we baked cupcakes, painted nails, had a Wii Mario kart tournament and ate dinner together. Everyone had a great time!



Although there have been some slow days, these four months have absolutely flown by and I know the same will happen with the summer. I am really loving living and working here in Romania. God is showing me my gifts and constantly giving

me new ministry opportunities. My heart is broken a lot of the time, but I thank God for giving me the ability to cope with these situations and for allowing me to serve the most needy. I can get frustrated when the kids don’t go to school and the parents don’t seem to care, but I am learning to love and serve without expectations. He is good and only He can change a community!

I would ask you to pray for my future here. Next month my programmes will wind down in order to get ready for teams arriving in the summer, but I don’t feel like my work here is done. I would love to stay a bit longer and train up new volunteers to take over my role when the time is right. Please pray that some young people would answer the call to come and serve here in Romania next year and that God would show me when it’s my time to move on.

If you managed to make it to the end, thank you for reading! I continue to feel so encouraged by all the support I receive from everyone at home and I hope you feel encouraged knowing that you are really helping to support a community here! THANK YOU!

Rachel Hemphill



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Mission Reports

An update from
Sarah Sim & Rachel Hemphill

St Patrick's

At the heart of the community, with the community on our heart.

Sarah Sim

Ministry Assistant at St Mary's Wollaton Park Church, Nottingham

St Mary's is an Anglican Church of about 80-100 people that holds two Sunday services. The more formal 10.30am service has about 50-60 people of all ages and stages, whereas the 6.30pm service is smaller, with about 30 people, the majority of whom are students and young adults. I've been in St Mary's since I came to Nottingham University in September 2014, and loved attending church here.

I've really enjoyed my year working here so far, getting to know everyone better and getting stuck in. I've been thrown in to doing lots of things, and have been learning lots about my strengths and weaknesses, and developing different skills. This year, I've been helping out with the Explorers Toddler Group on Tuesdays, and the Midweek group on Wednesdays, as well as being involved in the music team, and leading services on Sundays (which is slightly less scary now than it was in September)! I also meet up 1-2-1 with one of our students, attend Midlands Ministry Training Course (MMTC), and do lots and lots of reading. MMTC has been a great chance to learn more about the Bible, and how to teach it, as well as develop skills in writing talks, and teaching Bible studies. Recently, I have also preached my first sermon on John 19:16b-27. It was less terrifying than I thought it would be. I'm on rota to preach at the morning service on Hebrews this term. I'm not sure if I'm looking forward to it or not.

In an average week, I have some things that stay the same, and some things that are completely different. Every morning at 9.00am, and every evening at 4.30pm, the staff team, and occasionally other members of the church, meet to start and end the working day with a time a prayer. We pray about events going on in the life of church, for members of the congregation, for roads in our parish, and for churches in our deanery, along with other personal prayer requests.

Mondays are kept free for staff meetings and a service planning meeting, as it is the only day in a

week where the whole staff team is in the office. Tuesday mornings are our weekly toddler group where we share the gospel with about 35 kids, their parents, and carers, many of whom are not Christian. Currently, I also help run a small group that meets on Tuesday evenings.

Wednesday it's midweek Bible study group with mostly older folk and retirees, Services, lunch club and visits to the local residential and sheltered accommodation home.

Thursday in term time I study at MMTC.

And fitted in to the schedule there are evening activities, regular contact with the curate who is my supervisor, the worship director and there is student contact which is my primary project for the year. The next student event we are planning is a student evening in the summer term (probably June 9th), continuing to look at Ephesians. I'd appreciate prayer that this would be a group that keeps growing, and will be valuable to our students, both in their spiritual growth and in encouraging their personal evangelism.

Personally, I'd value prayer as I look to what I am doing next. Currently, I am applying to PGCE courses, as well as looking for new accommodation come September, and I really want to be in line with God's plan for me, no matter what happens with course applications and housing situations.



Much love, and God Bless,
Sarah Sim xx

Rachel Hemphill

Sutor, Romania

First things first... it's the end of May! How did that happen?! The past four months have passed in the blink of an eye, yet it also feels like an age ago I was writing the last update at home just after Christmas. So much has happened since then, but I'll try to keep it to the point!

I returned to Romania at the beginning of February. After having spent so much time with

friends and family over the Christmas holidays, I found it difficult to readjust to the quiet Sutor life, but thankfully my lovely friend Lauren came to visit me and we spent the weekend with friends skiing in the mountains. This eased my homesickness and I felt ready to get stuck back in to work here.



The kids clubs and feeding programme which were established in October have been going really well. Between the two villages we have around 60 kids, 40 of whom attend regularly. I've been really encouraged at kids clubs recently. The children love to come and I can see that it's a place where they're happy and can simply be kids. They are relaxed, well fed and they learn about their Heavenly Father. I pray as they grow older they will have a greater understanding of how precious they are to Him and how special they are to me.



March came and the snow stayed. A weekend in Cyprus with my friend Daria was just what I needed to cure the winter blues. We had so much fun and it reminded me what a blessing great friendships truly are. Knowing there are people from all over supporting you is so special!

In March we held the first monthly gathering for teenagers. Some had been coming to kids clubs, were disruptive and so neither they nor the children were benefitting. It was clear they needed attention too and so I wanted to come up with something appropriate for their age group that would keep them from falling into the pitfalls so prevalent in the Roma community; teenage pregnancy and alcoholism.

So, on a Wednesday afternoon we drove to Almau, picked up 20 teenagers and brought them to our home. Along with some teenagers

from Sutor we watched 'The Blindsight' and ate pizza and popcorn. Some of them had never seen a film on a big screen before so I think they were stunned into silence! They really enjoyed it and since then, every time they saw us they would ask, "when can we come back to Sutor?!" They are at a crucial age where they'll start coming in to their own and making decisions that will affect their future. I hope and pray that they make sensible choices that will eventually help them out of poverty and into a future where they look to God in and for everything.

Next, my friend Aaron came to help out for a few days which was great! Then the Hemphills (minus James) arrived just in time for my birthday. We spent Easter week road tripping around a few Romanian cities. I really enjoyed having my family here to see where I live and what I'm doing. Of course when they left I felt homesick, but after a few sunny days and a visit from the kids coming to play in our yard, I was back to normal!

Shortly after, we had two work teams come over from NI to spend a couple of weeks fixing up the centre here in Sutor. Among them was my great friend Clodagh! It was brilliant to catch up with people from home and see them come to serve. I was also really blessed by how much they encouraged me (and got involved) in my own ministry.

Another key part of my ministry is home visits. Home visits have been a really great way to get into the community, into people's homes and build up relationships so we can confidently share the gospel with them. It also enables me to see and meet individual needs. I'm able to source medication, clothes and food to meet special dietary requirements for kids and parents who otherwise couldn't afford them.



One of these kids is Alexandra. She is severely disabled and at only seven years old her body has started to develop physically so she requires monthly injections to slow down her hormone production. Getting transport to the doctor is a