

# THE SMITH FAMILY

Winter 2020

PL #5

*And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*  
**Galatians 2:20b**

Dear friends,

We are thanking God for each of you and trusting that this Christmas season will be a blessed one, whatever it looks like under your regional restrictions! What a precious time to remember what God did for us when He sent His Son in human flesh, and what a model we have for mission when we see all that God sacrificed to bring us to Himself.

## GIVE THANKS

We have so much to be thankful for as we finish the first term at Cornerstone. We have enjoyed varied courses such as History of Mission, Church Planting and Ethics. So far, the majority of classes have taken place in person with very occasional meetings on Zoom, we are very grateful for this. We are conscious more than ever of the privilege it is to study here and experience such tailored preparation for cross-cultural ministry.

We are also rejoicing that Esther has been able to recommence Mother and Toddler meetings, with the help of two other students. Restrictions severely limit the number of people we can welcome to these gatherings, but we have one regular contact who comes with her son, and another mum who shows keen interest. Ben's homeless outreach has not been able to take place, but he is involved in an online ministry, running sessions to excite and encourage people's interest in world mission. It is a six-week course running weekly via Zoom from week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> January, if you would like to participate, you can register using the link below or email Ben for more details (email address at close of letter).



 **MomentumYes** <https://tinyurl.com/yy9d2mva>

## FAMILY NEWS

Praise God also that Reuben has settled in so well to the Childcare facility here. There are two other boys of a similar age there who also live in our section, so he has made good friends and all sorts of mischief goes on in the corridors between our apartments!



We are also pleased to share with you that Reuben is due to be promoted to "big brother" in the middle of April! The pregnancy seems to be progressing well and we are most grateful for your prayers over the coming months. If all goes to plan, Esther hopes to give birth here in the Netherlands.

The due date falls in the middle of what would have been our college internship which we had hoped to spend in Moldova, we are meeting with faculty here to come up with some creative solutions in order for us to meet the necessary requirements for this essential part of the course.

## A TENTATIVE TIMELINE

In these times, when we are all being encouraged to avoid international travel and not plan ahead, we are faced with no choice but to do exactly that! We are becoming more and more conscious that the end of the school year is quickly approaching, after which we feel a bit like we are stepping into the abyss! We wanted to outline for you what our thinking is at the moment so you can pray along with us, with the **disclaimer** that all of these plans are very much subject to change! We trust God to reveal each step to us in His time.



As you can imagine, there are lots of things that need to fall into place in order for any of these events to come to pass. From the purchase of an appropriate vehicle for our needs, to the search for accommodation and decisions regarding language study options (in Moldova and/or Romania) ...among many other things. Sometimes the magnitude of what lies ahead overwhelms us, but it also drives us to our knees in prayer, we know that the God who has faithfully led us so far, will not leave us now.

## CASA MEA PRAYER POINTS

- Sadly, at the time of writing, a number in Casa Mea are ill with COVID-19 related symptoms. This includes people living in two of the four homes as well as members of staff. Pray particularly for Serafima and Aliona in Casa Bucuriei.
- Please continue to pray for those living in state disability institutions, we do not have any further information about the effects of COVID-19 there, but we know that the institution we have visited most often has experienced a number of cases. There are a number of believers there and many more who have heard the Gospel. Pray that God will protect and have mercy on many souls in these days.
- Pray for many across Moldova who are marginalised because of disability. Pray that God will raise up labourers to bring the good news of Jesus to these neglected peoples.
- Moldova has recently elected a new President, Maia Sandu (a pro-European candidate). Pray for her as she assumes her new role. She has vowed to purge Moldova of political and judicial systems of corruption. Pray that God will use her as a force for good and that the country will not experience any unrest.
- Praise God with us for the 5-year anniversary of Casa Ana, the most recent Casa Mea house, home to 6 women who were previously institutionalised. They held a service of celebration in their local church.
- Pray for the future of the work. There are many ongoing changes and transitions and potential for a new house in the coming years.

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