

# MERRY CHRISTMAS!

MISSION CONNECT ROMANIA

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## PONDERING....

*"But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart..."*

I've always found this little verse, tucked away in the second chapter of Luke, to be an interesting comment on Mary's emotions after the shepherds left. I can relate; I, too, am one who often "ponders." But I suspect Mary's pondering was more productive and positive than mine might be. There were many unusual events she surely treasured, and dwelt on the night of the Nativity. Maybe these were some of her ponderings...

Not so very long ago, she had been surprised by a visit from an Angel.

Joseph had hastily married her when they realized she was with child.

The unexpected trip from Nazareth had been long and hard, but they made it.

The BIRTH! Ah, the birth. She was glad gentle Joseph was there to help.

Holding God's Son (even in a stable), was evidence of God's promise fulfilled.

And those excited shepherds! This birth had been announced to them by a host of angels.

Pondering...pondering...pondering

In the years ahead, there would be many events that would cause Mary's heart to be sad. But for this night, this one Holy Night, she chose to dwell on how God's hand had used her, to bring hope and light to a dark, dark world.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from MISSION CONNECT ROMANIA.

Our hope for each of you in the New Year, is that you will

**"PONDER ANEW WHAT THE ALMIGHTY CAN DO."**



We have talked a lot this past year about Beni, Grati, and their family...and their sacrificial work with the new church in Lugoj. We just recently sent an extra \$500. to cover some medical needs for Grati, and to help with their Christmas. (Thank you, Paul and Vicki for the surprise gift.) They were SO thankful for the help.

**THIS IS AN END-OF-THE-YEAR-APPEAL:** Every special offering we get this EOY will be used to help this church finish projects by the deadline that the EU has imposed on them. They are a very sincere couple who have devoted their life to this work. The church is in a position to grow. But, **THEY NEED HELP.** If you or a Sunday School Class or some other group needs a special project, **THIS IS IT!** We know that God is going to provide for them, for, this is HIS church. Please pray for this to happen soon.

### NEWS FROM THE SWEITZER'S

We are now in our 8<sup>th</sup> year of living back in Georgia. It has been a good time of connecting with our children and grandchildren. We will all be together at our house on Christmas afternoon.

Rachel and Scott live in Alpharetta, about 60 miles north of us. Sophie is 19, and thriving as a sophomore at Wheaton College; Molly is 17, a junior in High School; Ryland is 13, in the eighth grade.

Sam and Kathryn live near us. They are parents to Anna, 13, in eighth grade; and Kate, 10, in fifth grade.

All the grandkids are doing very well in school and with their individual activities. We are proud of each of them for their achievements.

### PRAYER AND PRAISES

#### PRAISES:

- We praise God for the way He has provided for the Romanian ministry for the past 17 years. Our supporters have been faithful and consistent. Thank You.
- We praise Him for our good health, in spite of our age, and some scary moments of testing! All is well, and we continue to serve as best we can.

#### PRAYER NEEDS:

- Ask God to provide for the Lugoj church in a timely and sufficient way. They are SO tired of building, and are so ready to do more for the people around them.
- Ask God to protect our country and direct our leaders at every level.
- Pray for those Christians around the world who are being persecuted for their faith. There are many of our brothers and sisters in Christ suffering right now.