



**Eric & Rosemary Barrett's
MULTIPURPOSE MISSION
24 August to 4 September 2021**



Magyar Misszió

BRIEF TRIP REPORT

First, an apology for the 'un-usual' appearance of this Report: on booting up Eric's office computer this morning after two weeks away, the desktop publishing programme in which he composes most '4H' documents would not open, and we don't know why. Thus, this document has had to be prepared in Word, which he does not like... and it will look different as a result! However, it's the contents that matter! These will be brief, because we have much to do on our arrival back home – including the preparation of our Autumn Quarterly Prayer/News Letter, which will contain more details of what we were able to do and achieve on this 'Multipurpose Mission', the first we have been able to make for 18 months.

24 August: the MM begins: We said to the kind friends who dropped us off at Bristol Airport: “Could you possibly be ready to collect us again within an hour if for any reason we are not allowed to fly?” this was almost prophetic, because when we presented ourselves at the check-in desk, the Ryanair clerk took our Boarding Cards... then asked: “And now your Hungarian passports, please, or you can't fly.” Well, despite everything over the years, we don't have dual nationality, and had seen no such requirement when booking our flights. So we were glad we could fish out a clearly very official document secured with the help of a good friend in Hungary some weeks ago. It's from the Hungarian Police Department, according us unconditional entry to Hungary in these strange, CV-19 constrained times, as 'business partners' of the Hungarian Baptist Union.

The check-in clerk took one look at it, and said: “Oh, I can't understand this: it's in Hungarian! You will have to go [on the flight], and see what they say at the other end....”.

UNCERTAINTY has been rife in the world since CV-19 first appeared. So, for more reasons than the virus itself. we were still not sure what would happen all the way to Budapest – or throughout the trip (staying overnight in 8 different places, and averaging more than 100 driving miles per day).

However, Ezra 8:22, the verse we quoted at the top of our Provisional Itinerary, again proved true for us, and although not everything went as planned (indeed, we had to make more running adjustments to our planned activities than in any of our previous 100-or-so mission trips!), overall this one was a great success, and we thank you for all your prayers to that end.

A COUPLE OF THE 'DOWNS' WE ENCOUNTERED:

- The very first Christian leader with whom we sat down to ask how things were began with the words: ***“It's been such a difficult time....”*** We encountered the same sentiment everywhere we went, with many sad stories of the effects CV-19 has had in both Hungary and Romania, affecting churches we know, pastors and their families, and our other friends too. Romania is 'amber listed' to this day because 'anti-vaxxers' are more influential than in the UK, not least because of the stance taken by the Orthodox Church and, we are told, because vaccination fraud has been quite widespread.
- The pallet of 'Aid' items we sent from Avonmouth on 19 August – and that we hoped to be able to collect on 26 August – ***had still not been cleared by Customs by the time we left for home on the morning of 4 September,*** despite our own best efforts and those of some very business-minded and experienced local colleagues. We were never sure what the tax regime would be after Brexit, and as we write this, we still do not know what the end result will be in respect of our 'test pallet'! Nowhere is the process written down for 'customers' like us; we can only learn what happens by trial and error. This has been a ***major frustration*** for us and others, and we are not fully optimistic at this moment whether the VAT- and Duty-free passage of goods from our Registered Charity to others in the EU will be honoured in practice as we believe it should be. Watch this space! We are thankful for Hungarian friends who will help to resolve the consequences of all this once the fog has cleared one way or another.

A FEW OF THE 'UPS' THAT CHEERED US SO MUCH

- The **ENTHUSIASM** that Hungarian Believers have for their faith, wherever we went – whether leaders or ‘people in the pews’! This was a huge encouragement to us, and lifted our spirits enormously. It would not be unfair to say that many of the recent CV-19 related restrictions and difficulties they have had to face have been significantly greater than ours in the UK... but the Hungarian Church is much more buoyant, positive, upward-looking and outward-looking than its UK counterpart seems to us to be today.
- **SCENES LIKE THOSE BELOW**, and many more, that will continue to cheer us as we recall them.



Eric with past and present leaders of the Good News Foundation



Rosemary with leaders of the Hungarian Baptist Union



With leaders & some of the students at an ‘English Language’ Camp



Enthusiasm for the Gospel, even in the Kőszikla Hospice, Debrecen



Enthusiasm for worship, even for a Fellowship with no church building (yet)



Gladness and joy on the faces of this Pastor, his wife and little daughter

WE DID NOT KNOW whether we would be allowed to enter Romania at all until we got to the border... or if, as non-EU citizens now, we would be allowed to take books freely across the border as we have in the past, in large numbers. *Praise God we were able to enter as planned, and did not even spot a Customs Officer!* Then, we did not know if we would be allowed back into Hungary afterwards, without self-isolating or quarantining (either of which would have been very tough for us, and mean we would miss our flights home 4 days later). *In the event we were delayed somewhat on our return into Hungary because of an omission on the part of the officers who should have registered our vehicle on the way in and didn't(!), but in the end they did apologise for that.* We were very glad we had made the effort to go on this MM, though, not least because one pastor told us with a warm grin that *he had emailed us earlier in the year because he had heard that we had died... and was SO GLAD when we quickly replied!!!*

Everywhere we went we found people who were clearly very touched that we had remembered them, and were making such efforts to visit them again. They really appreciate all that ‘4H’ tries to do for them and their churches, and want us to express our love and thanks to all you who pray, and ‘help us help them’. More of our now longer ‘shopping list’ of new projects in our Autumn Prayer Letter!

In the meantime, we thank you all too! With our love,

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