



MINISTRY THROUGH MEDIA

May 2007

Dear Friend,

We at Mars Hill pray this letter finds you well in His amazing grace!

The HOPE is now in 11 languages with 24 translation projects in process. Every new version of The HOPE brings amazing “God stories,” but none more amazing than the one you are about to read.

This story began in December of 1989 in the Romanian town of Timisoara. Actually, it began much earlier, with the persevering prayers of countless believers and the blood of martyrs. But for the purpose of this letter, we’ll pick up the story on Friday evening, December 15. A group of Romanian Christ followers had surrounded the home of their pastor, Lazlo Tokes, in order to protect him from the government.

Pastor Tokes had been preaching the Gospel boldly, and within the previous two years, church membership had swelled to 5,000. The government had become threatened by the pastor’s influence. In an attempt to silence him, the authorities took away the pastor’s food rations and committed violent acts against the pastor and members of his congregation. Church members had to pass through a gauntlet of machine guns just to attend services. But pastor Tokes continued to preach.



Soldiers at the Church door
- kingdoms in conflict.



Surrounding the pastor
with a prayer vigil.

On that Friday evening things were coming to a head. An edict had been issued ordering the eviction and exile of Pastor Tokes to a remote village. After a 24-hour prayer vigil around the pastor’s home, the police came against the crowd. Some escaped; many were forced into buses and arrested. Tokes himself was arrested on Sunday about 5:00 P.M. But that was not the end of it.

The religious protest – as it so often does – led to a political protest. After the pastor’s arrest, people streamed to the city square and began a full-scale demonstration against the oppressive government. The government responded with force. Hundreds of people lost their lives . . . but they also lit a flame that burned all the way to Bucharest, the capital city of Romania. Inspired by the heroism of the people in Timisoara, the people of Bucharest rose up. And within a short period of time, one of the most ruthless dictators in all of history was taken captive, tried, and executed for crimes against his people.



People flood the square.

Romania today is open to the Gospel. On May 21, 2007, the Romanian version of The HOPE is scheduled to premiere in Timisoara, the birthplace of democracy in Romania. This version of The HOPE is the result of a God ordained partnership between Gospel Communications, Mars Hill, and a Romanian media ministry called Alpha and Omega. I can’t help but believe that those martyred Romanian Christ followers will be rejoicing with a heavenly host on May 21. But this premiere is just the beginning.

Religious instruction is now mandated for all students in Romania. However, students can choose which religion class they want to take. Enter The HOPE. Through our Romanian partner, Alpha and Omega, school teachers across Romania have already signed up to learn how to use The HOPE to teach the Bible in their classrooms. Based upon prior experience with media in the schools of Romania, Alpha and Omega believes strongly that many students will choose a Bible course with The HOPE over other classes. These students will not only receive a survey of the Bible, they will receive a clear presentation of God's redemptive story from creation through Christ . . . the amazing plan of salvation!

We praise God for orchestrating this incredible chain of events, and we pray that many will come to Christ in Romania as a result of this ministry!

As I wrote at the beginning of this letter, every version of The HOPE brings its own set of "God stories." In the months ahead, I'll look forward to sharing more stories with you. I'll look forward to sharing how God is using The HOPE throughout mainland China in conjunction with a project called Chinese Treasures. I'll look forward to reporting on the ministry of the new HOPE website, www.thehopeproject.com, another partnership with Gospel Communications. And there is so much more!

All of this ministry is made possible through the prayers and giving of people such as yourself. Those who surrounded their pastor in Timisoara set off a chain of events that ultimately brought freedom to many, many others. Similarly, those who surround this ministry through prayer and giving are being used of God to bring eternal freedom to people around the world!

Thank you for your interest in this ministry. May God bless you that you might be a blessing.

Sincerely in Christ,



Fred Carpenter
President

P.S. – Just a few more important items . . .

- A) Since the beginning of the year, we've sent out a small number of email updates with exciting reports such as the one in this letter. If you're not on our email update list, but you'd like to be, then just contact us at hopeinfo@mars-hill.org or 281-403-1463 and give us your email address.
- B) We are in need of a few key staff, including a Communications Director and an Executive Assistant to work with me. For position descriptions, please contact us at serve@mars-hill.org or 281-403-1463.