

# Moldova: 5-10 June 2012



by Alan G Heavey

## I first went to Moldova in 2002

After a 10 year gap, I knew this was going to be an emotional return to Moldova, but I wasn't expecting a 50% response to the Gospel, 335 decisions for Jesus, 269 requests for more information and 247 signing up for Next Step meetings. This is quite frankly, amazing!



**Wednesday 06 June:**  
John Grant (Director of Missions for Eastern Europe & The Balkans for the Luis Palau Association) and I took the 01:05 flight out of Luton, arriving in Bacau, Romania at

06:15. Florentin Clipa met us at Bacau airport and we drove the 150 km to the Moldovan Border. From there we travelled another 25 km where we met with the Ungheni Action Group to discuss the days events.

### 13:00 - Couples and Families Lunch Meeting:

The first event was in **Ungheni**. We were concerned whether folk would turn up as it was pouring down with rain; however, many of those invited worked on the fields, so the very fact that it was raining was a blessing - God knows what He is doing! There were 116 of us in the 'Restaurant Drubja'; 52 of these were invited guests. 17 of these 52 guests determined to pray and ask Jesus into their lives; 38 of them requested more information about what they had heard and 24 said that they wanted to attend a 'Next Step' meeting. The Next Step meetings are designed to unpack

what it means to follow Jesus Christ which then leads into discipleship meetings.

**It was literally a decade ago, (June 2002)** when I first went to Moldova and experienced my first venture into sharing the Gospel, the 'Good News', to more than just a few people. This was very new to me and to be honest; incredibly scary! I had been given the opportunity to speak at a meal event as part of an outreach into this nation by the Luis Palau Association. **There was no restaurant available in this place so we met in a very dark 1970's style 'disco'** – I could hardly see anything when we walked in, let alone anybody! When my eyes accustomed all I could see were what looked like hard faced Russian speaking men; sat around tables with their arms crossed. 'Beam me up Scotty' came to mind! Yet, despite me, God called men into the Kingdom. I was amazed – even though everything seemed to go wrong; my notes fell on the floor, twice, as the door opened to let more people in. The waitresses started to bring ice-creams in just as I started my invitation... I was very nervous and just wanted the floor to open up underneath me - "John, take me to the airport", I remember muttering to the Luis Palau Association Mission Director; I just wanted to 'run away'!



Then at the end of that meeting in 2002 I was informed that 13 of these ‘hard looking men’ had responded to the Gospel and prayed to receive Jesus Christ as their

Saviour - well, you could have knocked me over with a feather!

Now listen to this. As we went into this new building today John said to me, “Al, this is the place

you first went to!” The place had been rebuilt or remodeled, but it was the same site - how amazing is that, especially when I had prayed before leaving England, “Lord, would you allow me to see the place where this all started please?” Here I was - stood in the same building 10 years later; unrecognizable, but the same place. I had shared this story with the people at this lunch meeting - **at the end a man came up to me and said that he was one of the 13 men who had given their lives to the Lord!** Much joy and laughter ensued as we thanked God for what He had done...!



**16:00 - Youth Meeting:** For this meeting we had an attendance of 60, with 23 of these young guys being ‘invited guests’. 5 of these recorded giving their lives to Jesus, with 7 indicating a request for more information and 7 requesting to be part of the Next Step meeting.

**19:00 - Dinner for the Medical Profession:** This was a great meeting following on from the Youth meeting; very intimate, with 45 of us present. God really touched people during the message and 13 of the 15 invited guests turned to Christ! 12 wanted more information and 7 want to attend a Next Step meeting. Following the meeting we drove 100 km to Carpineni where we stopped over in the ‘Mission House’.



**Thursday, 07 June – Carpineni:** After breakfast we were taken to the ‘**Rusca Woman’s Prison**’. We arrived at 11:00 and went through the normal process of getting into the prison. Once through all the ‘red tape’, we met with women of varying ages. We started with music and song, however since there were only 12 ladies present, the Pastor of the Church ‘disappeared’ and came back with more ladies increasing the number to 60 - praise the Lord. Following the message, 40 of these ladies prayed with me to receive forgiveness of sins and the life that only Christ can bring; now and eternal. After the meeting a lady told the Pastor, “Today I am being discharged



from prison after a 3 year sentence, for something I didn't do - I was wrongly accused. During that 3 year prison term my life was hell as I had been told by the Orthodox priests on a weekly basis that because of what I had done, I will go to hell”.

This lady then inferred that when she heard today about the love of God for her, she became aware that God had not condemned her to hell and she was set free in her spirit by placing her trust in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ who bore the punishment of hell on her behalf. Now hear this - the day after she heard about her Saviour, she was being released from prison. **What joy - she is now set free, both physically and spiritually!**

## Freedom!



I prayed a prayer of blessing over all the ladies and for their families. I was asked to pray for several ladies after the meeting; one who had 11 children!

Many women are incarcerated for murder, having killed their husbands. It is very sad, since in many cases they are the victims of terrible abuse and have struck out at drunken husbands as a last resort. I saw many women from the very young to the very old; it was a sad experience. However, this day we witnessed many giving their lives to the Lord.

Following the meeting we were able to provide each one with food and provision packs that we had taken into the prison.

I was left with a sad reflection on leaving the prison. Although 60 ladies had come to listen to my message of hope and salvation, many didn't. The Pastor shared with me how he had spoken with one lady who was suicidal. He urged her to come and listen to the message of hope. **She said she would take her chances and refused to go into the meeting place.** How sad is that?

**12:30:** We left the prison returned to the Mission House and prepared for the next meetings.



**16:00: The Youth meeting** in the 'Restaurant Sapte Brazi'. This was a great event. There were 100 of us there; 55 of the young guys were invited guests of the Believers, or Repenters as they are known here. 28 decided on Jesus as the answer to life - an amazing 51% uptake. Young people are not typically this responsive and seldom like to complete response cards - but this was different. Add to this that 46 requested more information and 45 want to attend the Next Step meeting - amazing!



## 19:00: The Couples and Families Dinner

In the same restaurant as the Youth meeting, followed the Couples and Families Dinner. This is quite frankly an amazing story.....

We were expecting a total number, including the team, of 100 people. Well by 19:00 they came, and came and they just kept coming! Further tables were set and then the realization hit the Pastors who were organizing the event - there was no more room! **“What must we do.....?”**, they exclaimed; “the restaurant say they have not enough food”.

## Not enough food....!



Helen - "1 hour"

We smiled and John asked Helen who was in charge of the restaurant how long it would take her to make more food - "1 hour" she said. So John mobilised the Pastors into action and suddenly more tables were being brought in and set up. **We ended up with a total of 218 adults; 120 of these were invited guests!** So we were set. We started late, but no one minded as the music continued and the food started to appear.

At 21:00, I started the message on, 'body, soul and spirit' (1 Thess 5:23), linking it to Jesus telling Nicodemus that no one could see the Kingdom of God unless he was born again.. We saw God move amongst us so powerfully - the silence as people listened was tangible..!

The response cards suggested that 71 of the 120 guests prayed to receive Jesus as their Lord and Saviour; then we found out that because there were so many there they didn't have enough response cards, so the Pastors asked the guests to fill the cards in for their family - which means that the very high number of 71 responses was but a minimum! Who knows how many turned to Christ, apart from God of course - praise the Lord!

Some of the guests told the Pastors that they were very excited about the evening - **"No one got drunk; the food, music and the message were great! It was a great experience and we now think differently about the \*Repenters."** Thank you Lord for this time.

\*Repenters: This is what the Orthodox community call the evangelical Christians.

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## Friday 08 June - Basarabasca and Chisinau

07:30: We said our goodbyes and left the Mission House and headed for Basarabasca for our Action Group team meeting.



Then followed the 'Coffee event meeting' for the Seniors at 10:00. The meeting place was a classic small village/town and the restaurant was an old style communist building.. The people very very poor and their faces showed a complete lack of hope. Fortunately, we serve a great God who fills with hope all who call on His name. There were 56 of us sat around the tables including 40 invited guests; 16 of these prayed to come to Christ.

## 12:30: Couples and Families Lunch

For this meeting, 82 of us sat down together to listen to live music, eat food and once again listen to the life saving Gospel. 18 of the 50 guests responded to the Gospel; 16 requested more information and 14 signed up for the Next Step meeting.



### Next Steps...

So, along with 20 folks from the earlier meeting, the Pastor was going to have 34 coming to his Next Step meeting as part of the follow-up

process; that's if they could wait that long - he was inviting them to come and see him for a Q&A meeting the next day! On closure of this meeting at 15:00 we started our 100 km drive to the capital city of Moldova - Chisinau.

After checking in to our stop-over hotel we headed for the 'Restaurant Sanatate' for the Action Group team meeting at 17:00.

**18:00: Chisinau - Young Couples Dinner event:** 100 in total enjoyed the music and food followed by a message on, "Who am I", looking at our identity and God's plan for each of our lives. 12 of the 35 invited guests responded and prayed to receive Jesus; 12 wanted more information and 15 said that they would attend the Next Step meeting.

### The Sportsmen



**20:00: The next meeting was for Sportsmen.**

They were a mixed age group and very talented men in their sporting activities, many representing their nation.

I felt God prompt me to share my own life story and bring in my sporting activities in football and boxing. 11 of the 35 guests prayed with me to receive Christ. there were 60 of us present in total; a good intimate group for this type and style of meeting. God was indeed in the house.

22:30: It had been a long day, but on reflection another great day I mused as we headed to our hotel.

### Saturday - Bascalia



08:45: After breakfast we travelled the 100 km from Chisinau to Bascalia, where we met at 11:00 for the Action Group team meeting.

**12:00: Lunch in the Village Hall.** This lunch was prepared by the ladies of the church. 60 of us were squeezed into this small hall - but it worked! I spoke on the, 'Wedding Banquet' and 14 of the 20 guests declared that they prayed to receive Jesus Christ - that is a high percentage and a very positive statement of what God was doing in this place. One lady stood up and said that God had led her to pray daily for the whole village and she had been doing this for a long period of time. I was very excited about this, because God was answering

### The Intercessor



her prayers today. I prayed for her that God would continue to use her and other prayer intercessors to see the Kingdom come in power.

### Cahul

14:00: Following the lunch meeting we set off for the 95 km drive to our next meeting in Cahul.

15:45: Action Group team meeting in the 'Speranta Baptist Church', where we met with the team and went through the plans for the Youth Meeting.

**17:00: The Youth meeting** was held in the 'Restaurant Balcan'. It was a great meeting; warm and full of life and fun.

## What a fantastic response...



104 of us sat together and listened to good live music as we enjoyed the food. We saw a high response to the Good News, with 39 of the 50 young guests praying to come to Christ - amazing! Even more amazing when this event was a late comer to the mission; they only had 3 weeks to pull this together.

**Sunday, 10 June – The Combined Churches Evangelistic Service in Cahul.** 140 people came and 45 of them responded, asking Jesus to ‘come in’ as they opened the door of their lives to Him (Rev 3:20).

Even I was amazed at this high response rate at a church meeting, also bearing in mind that the people are very conservative and do not show their ‘feelings’. For me this was a reflection on how the Pastors had, ‘got hold’ of this mission and how they, and the rest of the churches, had prayed to ask God to save lost souls. This is indeed what He did - thank you Lord for your grace and mercy.

## Sunday evening...



**17:00:** There was also a ‘last minute’ opportunity to share the Gospel at Harul Baptist Church. A further 6 people gave their lives to the Lord - praise God!

At the end of the day we met with the Cahul Pastors in the ‘Restaurant Marco Polo’ for a very positive feedback meeting, which ended up with, **“When can you come back Alan?”** We determined to keep in touch and I pray the Lord will use me again to reach the lost in Moldova.

## Today...

So now John and I are home; Florentin Clipa, our valued Romanian assistant in every way conceivable is back in Suceava. **We give thanks to God for what was an amazing trip to Moldova.**

## Thank you...

**I am very grateful and I personally would like to thank you,** because without your prayers and sacrificial giving this couldn’t have taken place.

God bless you

Alan