

A Message from the Executive Director of FGCI

January 15, 2008

Dear Friends,

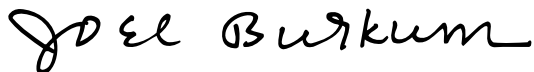
The following review of the ministry activity of For God's Children International in 2007 is not intended to be a comprehensive list of human accomplishments. Rather, its intent is to provide a broad overview of how God is working through your partnership with us to serve His kids to His glory.

Our number one goal at FGCI is to lead people to a saving and growing relationship with Christ by "providing hope, dignity and love in Jesus' name for God's children" around the world.

It goes without saying that we still continue to provide clothes, diapers, medicine, shoes, food, milk, shelter, Bibles, educational and recreational supplies and other necessities for needy children as we are able.

We aim to perform our ministry with effectiveness and integrity as we exercise our God-given gifts and practice good stewardship in all aspects of our ministry. If you ever see us straying from these goals, please be faithful to steer us in the right direction. And, please, don't forget to keep us in your prayers.

Love in Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Burkum". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

brother joel burkum
Executive Director

FGCI 2007 Ministry in Review

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'" (Matthew 19:14 NIV)

Babadag, Romania

We have been renovating our Lida House in Babadag so we can move our 14 children out of the orphanage facility (where we operate our Little Lambs of the Lord Family Center) and into a home

setting with houseparents. Last year, we were told we might have to leave the orphanage by the spring of 2007. We thank God that we were permitted to continue operating from the orphanage until our building project is complete. We've renovated one bathroom and added a second. We've put all new replacement windows (thermal pane) and doors throughout the house. We've also updated the electrical service and wiring in the home and repaired all the ceramic heaters (called *sobas*).

We continued our 24/7 ministry with our fourteen children (ages 3-14) in the Little Lambs of the Lord Family Center: Georgiana, Ionela, Florentina, Danutsa, Vasilica, Dana, Piotsi, Alexandra, Samir, Cristian, Mamut, Marius, George and our newest girl, Roxana. What a joy to care for these kids! We plan to move them out of the orphanage building into our newly renovated Lida House before school starts next fall.

Child Sponsors

We raised our number of monthly Child Sponsors for the children in our Little Lambs of the Lord Family Center (Babadag, Romania) and Home of the Good Shepherd (Nisporeni, Moldova) to 28. In order to underwrite our children's home programs, we need five sponsors for each child at \$40/month. We are currently caring for 25 children, so we are seeking 97 more monthly sponsors.

Nisporeni, Republic of Moldova

At the Home of the Good Shepherd house in Nisporeni we were pleased to finally add on an enclosed stairwell and two new bathrooms! We also installed a new holding tank and pump to provide more water pressure for the house.

We continued our work with Home of the Good Shepherd kids: Ina, Ana, Dima, Mihai, Elena, Sergiu, Stefan, Iulian, Cristina, Dorin, Samuel and Daniel. These children are growing into fine, Christian young men and women. We thank God for Ion and Vera Matveev and their loving care and guidance for the children.

We sent 11 kids to Bible camp in Moldova during the summer.

We were delighted to purchase and see to the installation of a submersible water pump in a municipal well for the benefit of the entire zone of the city where our Home of the Good Shepherd is located in Nisporeni, Moldova. After having gone without water for over a month, in August and September, due to the city's broken water pump and a severe drought last summer during which almost every well in the area went dry, the new pump made a lot of folks in Nisporeni VERY happy! The city manager even offered us 10 years of "free" water!

The drought in Moldova last summer really drove up prices on food. So, in November, we teamed with IDES (International Disaster Emergency Service of Kempton, Indiana) to provide food for folks in Moldova hurt by last summer's drought. FGCI-Moldova ministry director, Ion Matveev, and a team of Christian volunteers purchased, put together and delivered 100 boxes of food for needy families and individuals at Christmas. [We will continue to provide food for these needy families in Moldova for the remainder of winter and into the spring, Lord willing.]

Gypsy Ministry

We ministered with Gypsies in Moldova by working with *O Del si Amenca* (Emanuel), the Gypsy praise band from the Vulcanesti. Some people donated used instruments. Promotional posters were printed for the band. We attempted to bring *O Del si Amenca* to Romania to perform at the National Day of the Gypsy, but they were unable to secure entry visas. We are planning, again, to bring them to Romania again this year in April for a concert tour.

A team from Belleville, Kansas, delivered and installed a beautiful, hand-made, stained-glass window in the new Gypsy church building in Vulcanesti. Ms. Trudy Watson, of Concordia, Kansas, designed and made the large window to fit in the cross-shaped window opening behind the altar in the sanctuary of the church building. Trudy was planning to travel to Moldova to be part of the team delivering and installing the gift. But, sadly, she died of cancer just prior to the team's trip. The window was presented with the message of hope that the cross offers every believer--eternal life through the resurrection of Christ.

Summer Bible Camps in Zizin, Romania

We sponsored six weeks of Summer Bible Camp in Romania (July 2 - August 11), serving approximately 200 children. FGCI staffers Jeremy Befort and Nootsie Ristea established and coordinated the camp program. We used around 20 volunteer Romanian college students as our camp staff. We also had several short-term American team members. The theme of the camp was "All About Jesus" based on Colossians 1:15 - 20. Around 15 kids made decisions for Christ, including 7 baptisms following the camp season.

During the camp season, our camp workers also provided a Vacation Bible School program for around 150 Gypsy children at the Pentecostal Gypsy church in Zizin, Romania.

American Teams and Interns

We sent 52 American missions team members and interns to Moldova and Romania on 11 teams, including: a large, first-timers group from Sunrise Christian Church of Turlock, California to Romania; a large group of veteran and first-time team members from the Ames, Iowa, area to Moldova; two interns to work with the Home of the Good Shepherd in Nisporeni, Moldova; team members to work at camp in Romania; an intern to the Fundeni Hospital (in Romania); our first "Family" short-term missions team to Babadag, Romania.

Fundeni Hospital Playroom Ministry - Bucharest, Romania

We continued our work with children suffering from chronic, severe and life-threatening illnesses in our Anonymous Angels Playroom in the children's wing of the Fundeni Hospital. Each weekday, 20 - 40 children who visited the playroom were encouraged by FGCI personnel who offered inspiration, emotional support, fun, storytelling adventures, creative arts, friendship and a daily dose of the hope of Christ.

We published our first book, "Hope Illustrated" (120 pages; full-color), written and compiled by Jared Neher, featuring FGCI's Fundeni Hospital Playroom ministry children's artwork and photographic portraits (by Jared). Jared and Elena Neher (both FGCI employees) worked for two years to complete this project as a fund-raiser to provide money for the special needs of the children in the Hospital our normal ministry budget could not provide. Many of the children's families cannot afford the costly medicine for their treatment or basic necessities like food, slippers and bus tickets for family members to visit them.

In November and December, FGCI raised more than \$20,000 (in Romania alone!) for the children in the Fundeni Hospital with book and children's art sales, thanks to humongous efforts by Jared and Elena Neher and the entire FGCI-Romania staff. "Hope Illustrated" is nearly sold out of its first printing of 1000 copies. [If you would like to purchase a copy (while they last), please send \$20 to FGCI. All profits from the sale of the books goes directly to aid the children and their families.]

Our Fundeni Playroom ministry, the children we serve and "Hope Illustrated" were twice featured on Romanian national television's "Surprize Surprize," a popular, live talk show (similar to "Oprah") hosted by Romanian model and television celebrity, Andreea Marin-Banica. The show generated much support from Romanian businesses, actors, musicians, sports figures and charities.

Camp of the Good Shepherd - Louisville, Nebraska

We are very excited about the progress we're making in restoring and renovating this wonderful campground facility just off old Nebraska Highway 66 between Louisville and Plattsmouth, Nebraska. We invite you to come out for a visit, anytime, to see what's happening. There is a lot of construction underway, with lots left to go. But we're using the campgrounds for as many activities as we can even as we move ahead with improvements to the campus.

During the summer (May and June), we sponsored 5 Bible camps for children in preschool through the sixth grade. Our theme at Camp of the Good Shepherd was the same as our theme in Romania: "All About Jesus" from Colossians 1:15-20. During our camps we had well over 100 children attend. Three children made decisions to accept Christ as Savior, and were immersed during camp!

We also hosted several camps for other groups using the facilities, including Easter Seals, Stonebridge Christian Church, Auburn Christian Church and Capitol City Christian Church leaders. Some groups used our large, wonderful paintball course our camp managers, the Joneses, constructed in the northern section of the grounds. We are hoping to use our facilities year round by the end of 2008.

Building projects at Camp of the Good Shepherd this year have included: new electrical service to the campgrounds, adding furnaces and air conditioners to all buildings, except the old chapel and boys dorm sleeping areas. We added two kitchenettes: one in the girls dorm building and one in the camp administration area. We made a new conference room (temporary chapel) on the south side of the girls dorm. We renovated the plumbing throughout the campgrounds. We created a bathroom area for the private rooms in the girls dorm. We have gutted the kitchen and dining area, put in a new ceiling in the kitchen, and are getting ready to lay a new tile floor in the kitchen. We hope to outfit the kitchen with some new appliances and tables, soon. We are also painting and decorating the campground buildings inside and out!

One of the most exciting additions to the camp is the new, modular home we are adding on the campgrounds for our Caretaker/Manager residence. This will allow us to use the Administration Building for our new FGCI International Headquarters and Conference Center. This project is in progress right now. Footings have been poured and block is being laid for the basement even as I write! Soon the modular home will be built in Minnesota and moved and set on our foundation. We are hoping to move the house in by the end of February, Lord willing and the weather permits.

All of these renovations are costing a fraction of the price of new construction and, we believe, are providing a home for effective ministry for the future at this ideal location situated between the Omaha and Lincoln metro areas.

New Vehicles!

In 2007, thanks to some very generous one-time gifts, we were able to purchase two badly-needed new vehicles for ministry use in Romania. We purchased a new minivan for our work in Babadag. We purchased a 2006, used, 9-passenger van for transporting teams and goods in Bucharest. Sergiu, our fleet manager and mechanic, also refurbished our aging blue van and breathed new life into it so we can use it for our work in Babadag. We also paid off the remaining balance on our yellow van in Nisporeni, Moldova.

New Bible Clubs in Romania

Jeremy Befort, our American Administrative Liaison in Bucharest, and Andrei Stefan, Administrative Associate, with the help of around 20 college student leaders, started weekly Bible Clubs for kids in five cities and villages in Romania (Buzau, Baicoi, Odobesti, Voluntari, Bucharest). All together, the Bible clubs are reaching around 165 children ages 5-18. The Bible lessons are on the life and ministry of Christ, based on the Gospel of Mark.

Christmas Celebrations

We provided numerous Christmas celebrations for all of our children in various parts of Romania and Moldova. In Romania, Jeremy Befort organized the creation and sending out of over 120 hand-made Christmas cards to children who attended our Romanian Summer Bible Camps.

Accreditation in Romania

We continued work on securing our organization's accreditation in Romania. This is a huge project requiring a great deal of paperwork and legwork. We need this accreditation to continue working "in the system" of social work with Romanian children who are wards of the State.

Deaf Ministry

Joel Burkum and Jared Neher produced and published Romania's first major video compilation of Romanian signs DVD and companion

booklet (featuring more than 1200 signs used by Deaf people in Romania) with the help of Romania's National Deaf Association-Cluj representatives and with sponsorship by In His Sign and Deaf Missions of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Sea Containers

We gathered, sorted, packed, inventoried and loaded tons of donated items onto two sea containers (one to Romania, one to Moldova). Then, we sent them overseas, received them in Romania and Moldova, unloaded them and distributed the contents to needy children and adults. The contents represent hundreds of thousands of dollars and days' worth of time given to help our friends in Romania and Moldova.

Promotion

Joel traveled on the Hi-Plains School of Missions tour (12 churches over a two week period in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas) in October promoting the work of FGCI. He also traveled to the National Missionary Convention in Cincinnati, in November, to represent FGCI.

In December, Jeremy and Oana Befort came to the USA to visit friends, family and supporters. To get regular updates about Jeremy's happenings go to <http://jeremybefort.blogspot.com/>

Jeremy writes:

This last year the Romanian staff and I have seen God's many blessings through your prayers, encouragement and support. The greatest blessing for me last year was my marriage to my wonderful wife, Oana Tepes, on September 30th. She is currently completing her master's degree in graphic design and working for an advertising agency. She has also joined in the ministry through her prayers, direct ministry to our FGCI children, and by designing material to help us reach children visually with the Good News of Christ.

Our weekly village outreaches, started last August, have been reaching children and teenagers from all walks of life. Our six weeks of summer camps have helped several children and teenagers come to a decision to make Jesus as their Lord and Savior, to recommit themselves to fully following Jesus, or to be baptized into Christ. Oana and I personally serve on our church's worship team and I have had several opportunities to preach and share about our ministry outreaches. Last November we also started a Bible Study Support Group for our camp volunteers. More than 15 of us are meeting together every Tuesday evening to share from

our lives and to pray for each other and the children we are serving through FGCI.

These are just a few examples of how God is using your prayers and support to eternally and spiritually change the lives of several children, teenagers, and young adults that many of you have never met. On behalf of the Romanian staff and myself, thank you so much for joining alongside us as we help children meet their Lord and Savior.

With love in Christ,

Jeremy and Oana Befort

FGCI Website

We continued working to develop FGCI's website: www.fgci.org. Be watching for dramatic changes in the near future.

New Work Among Native Americans

We started working with Native Americans at the Rosebud Reservation in Parmalee, South Dakota, under the direction of Dennis Quigley, Chairman of the Board of FGCI. In November, Dennis was ordained into the preaching ministry. He is serving as minister of a small congregation in Bassett, Nebraska.

New Staff Members

We added these full-time and part-time staff members: Andrei Stefan - Administrative Associate (Bucharest), Octavian Bucurica - Social Worker (Fundeni Hospital Playroom), Lori Lalk - Secretary (Iowa), Naomi Keller - Financial Secretary (Iowa) and Trevor Keller (IT/Computer Specialist).

Weddings and Babies

Three staff members and a daughter of a staff member (in *italics*) were married in 2007: *Elena* Hoescu to Jared Neher; *Claudia Ristea* to Dan Ion; *Andrei Stefan* to Tabita Cozmiuc; *Jeremy Befort* to Oana Tepes.

Three babies were born to FGCI staff members (in *italics*) in 2007: Daniel Matveev to Ion and Vera Matveev (Moldova); Benjamin Benko to Paul and Mimi Benko (Romania); Elisha Jones to Nancy and Kelvin Jones (USA).

Current FGCI Staff

Romania: Jeremy Befort (Administrative Liaison); Nootsie Ristea (President of Fundatia FGCI-Romania); Sergiu Ristea (Fleet Manager); Octavian Bucurica (Social Worker/Fundeni Hospital Playroom); Elena Neher (Volunteer Social Worker/Fundeni Hospital Playroom); Jared Neher (Multimedia Specialist); Andrei Stefan (Administrative Associate); Paul Benko (Little Lambs of the Lord Director) and Mimi Benko (Social Worker); Alexandrina "Mariana" Marian (Child Care Assistant)

Moldova: Ion and Vera Matveev (Directors and Houseparents/Home of the Good Shepherd)

USA: Joel Burkum (Executive Director); Nancy Jones (Camp Manager/Caretaker); Lori Lalk (Secretary); Naomi Keller (Financial Secretary); Trevor Keller (IT/Computer Specialist)

Gifts in Honor and in Memory of . . .

In Memory of William Cooper by:

Phyllis Rodenburg
Lois York
Jim Binns
John and Mary Adkins
Donna Shonkwiler
Ron and Bev Dickinson
George and Sandra Plunkett
Robert and Linda Dibel
Gerald Binns
Sherm and Ruby Livengood

In Memory of June Mustion by:

David and Angela Barber

In Memory of Troy Quigley by:

Colby and Rhonda Coash

In Honor of Dennis Quigley by:

Doris Johring

In Honor of Terri McClure by:

Larry and Kathy John

Electronic Funds Transfer Giving Option available in 2008

We created a TierOne Bank account whereby partners may support FGCI through automatic electronic funds transfer. If you desire to give monthly to FGCI, but would prefer to have the funds automatically transferred, rather than to write a check, please consider this option. If you are interested in doing this, please contact us and we'll send you an Electronic Funds Transfer Donor Form. Thank you.

For God's Children International Contact Information

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"Providing hope, dignity and love in Jesus' name . . . For God's Children International"