

UU Transylvanian Pilgrimage

(On a budget)

(May 14 - 26, 2011)

2 life-changing weeks in Transylvania for under \$1,150! This is the same quality Unitarian pilgrimage that the UUPCC has been facilitating for a decade – but at 60% of the price. We have just replaced hotels with dorms & guest-houses, substituted village meals for restaurants, and eliminated the long van ride from Budapest. (You could easily add days in Budapest onto either end of the pilgrimage). Beginning and ending in Kolozsvar/Cluj, this tour will visit the most significant of the Unitarian holy places including Torda, Meszko, Gyulaferhervar & Deva. You will also visit the frescoed Unitarian churches of, Szekelyderz (a UNESCO World Heritage site) and Karacsonfalva, the spectacular 13th century castle at Vadjuhunyad, the medieval walled city of Sighisoara/Segesvar, and the Saxon fortress church at Biertan (Segesvar & Biertan are both UNESCO World Heritage sites). You will spend a weekend with your partner congregation – make new friends and revitalize your partnership. If you do not have a partner in Transylvania the UUPCC will arrange for you to stay in one of the many beautiful Unitarian villages with other pilgrims. For more details please review the tentative daily itinerary.

*13 days/12 nights \$990 per person (standard accommodations) + \$150 registration fee. Standard accommodations are a combination of B&B, guest-house & dormitory style facilities - some with shared bathroom). You should be able to climb stairs and handle your own luggage. Travelers with mobility issues or who simply prefer 3*** hotel accommodations should select the “deluxe” option which is an additional \$210 double occupancy or \$300 single accommodations. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed in standard accommodation facilities. Includes ground transportation, meals (as detailed on itinerary below), lodging, guides, interpreters, and fees. Cost does not include international airfare and other travel to/from Cluj/Kolozsvar, Romania.*

Sample Itinerary: (hotels may change due to availability at time of booking)

- (Sat – May 14) Gather in Kolozsvar/Cluj Romania. UUPCC staff will be at the Unitarian HQ building in central Kolozsvar to check you in, get you oriented and answer your questions. Kolozsvar is roughly equidistant from both Bucharest and Budapest. There are multiple inexpensive train and bus options daily to Kolozsvar from both cities. You may also want to consider flying to Kolozsvar/Cluj (CLJ). CLJ served by a number of air carriers including Lufthansa, Austrian Air, Alitalia, Malev, & some of the European discount carriers such as Carpatair & Wizzair. The UUPCC Pilgrimage service can assist you with schedules and transfer options. Because of the staggered arrival times everyone will be their own this day. Late evening reception & orientation. Overnight Unitarian Center for Students & Pilgrims (UCSP) or Hotel Transylvania*** (deluxe).
- (Sun – May 15) Sleep in. 11AM services at 1st Unitarian Church, the church which houses “THE ROCK” upon which Francis David is said to have stood when he converted the city to what became known as Unitarianism. Afterwards we visit with the minister to hear the story of the church and take photos. We will also visit St. Michael’s Church where Francis David once preached, and the HQ of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church which houses the office of the Bishop and the Consistory Room where the governing body of the church meets and deliberates. Group lunch. Free evening to take in a movie or a concert, catch up on email, or just relax. Dinner on your own. Overnight – UCSP or Hotel Transylvania***. (BL)
- (Mon – May 16) Depart Kolozsvar for Deva after breakfast. En route to Deva we will stop at the “Church of the Edict” in Torda, and have lunch in Gyulaferhervar after visiting the 1000 year-old church where the Unitarian King Sigismund and his mother Isabella are entombed. We end the day with a brief vesper service in the citadel at Deva where Francis David was imprisoned and eventually martyred. Dinner will be a delicious sit-down meal hosted by the Reformed church of Deva. Overnight Deva – Melite Guest House or Sarmis Hotel*** (deluxe). (BLD)

- (Tues – May 17) Morning tour of the 13th century fairy-tale castle at Vadjahunyad. Afterward we depart Deva for the medieval walled-city of Sighisoara/Segesvar, purported birthplace of Vlad Tepes – aka Dracula. En route we stop to photograph the environmental disaster that is Copsa Mica and tour the Saxon fortress church at Biertan (a UNESCO World Heritage site) before arriving in Segesvar. Sandwich lunch en route. Dinner on your own. Overnight Sighisoara/Segesvar –Unitarian Guest House or Hotel Claudiu*** (deluxe). (BL)
- (Wed – May 18) Morning orientation in the citadel by UUPCC staff followed by free time to stroll the city, shop, climb the clock tower, and/or visit the museum of your choice. Lunch on your own. Free morning in Segesvar to continue your exploration of Segesvar. PM departure for a guided tour of frescoed Unitarian church at Szekelyderz (a UNESCO World Heritage site). Afterward we continue on to Homorodkaracsonfalva which will be our base for the next 2 days/nights. Dinner & evening program. Overnight Homorodkaracsonfalva – home stays or HK Panzio (deluxe). (BD)
- (Thurs – May 19) We take in some of the nearby Unitarian villages and discover why everyone loves the Homorod Valley. We hope to give you a sense of rural life in Transylvania as experienced by our co-religionists. Stops are planned in Homorodszentpaul for stork viewing and bird watching at the nearby lakes; and Homorodkaracsonfalva - where we will view the recently uncovered frescoes in the 13th century Unitarian church and visit a Unitarian youth camp, and Homorodalmas to see the tallest Unitarian church in Romania and take in the beautiful view from the hilltop before heading back down to Homorodkaracsonfalva – home stays or HK Panzio (deluxe). (BLD)
- (Fri – May 20) Morning visit to the Unitarian church of Homorodszentmarton followed by a tour of the David Ference Unitarian Youth Center and lunch before departing for your partner villages. Dinner & overnight with partner congregation – home stays. (BLD)
- (Sat – May 21) Village day. Relax and explore your partner village as an “honored guest”. Program details TBD by minister & pilgrims. Overnight in partner village – home stays. (BLD)
- (Sun – May 22) Morning worship services with your partner congregation. Afternoon/evening program TBD by minister & pilgrims. Overnight in partner village – home stays. (BLD)
- (Mon – May 23) Depart village after breakfast. (Monday’s itinerary is subject to change based on location of partner villages). Trout luncheon and shopping stop in the “pottery village” of Korond. Visit to Szelykefurdo site of the annual Unitarian “Gathering” en route to the city of Marosvasarhely. Evening discussion with other pilgrims to share village experience. Dinner & overnight Marosvasarhely – City Guest House or Hotel Atlantic**** (deluxe).(BLD)
- (Tues – May 24) Morning tour of Marosvasarhely/TG-Mures including the Art Nouveau Cultural Palace, Mirror Hall, and the Teleki Library which houses one of the 7 remaining original copies of the US Declaration of Independence. Group Lunch. Free evening to explore this picturesque city and citadel where the Edict of Religious Tolerance issued in Torda was reinstated in 1571. Dinner on your own. Overnight – City Guest House or Hotel Atlantic**** (deluxe). (BL)
- (Wed – May 25) Depart Marosvasarhely for Kolozsvar. En route we photograph fantastic “Gypsy Palaces” before stopping to visit the “Alabaster Village” of Meszko and picnic in the scenic Torda Gorge (weather permitting). Evening arrival in Kolozsvar. Farewell banquet with fellow pilgrims and UUPCC staff. Overnight Kolozsvar – UCSP or Hotel Transylvania*** (deluxe). (BLD)
- (Thurs – May 26) Depart Kolozsvar for the US or other destinations. UUPCC staff will help facilitate your travel plans & transfer logistics. (B)