

Would you like to know more about our Partner Church Program and our Partners?

More information and trip photographs are on our church website:

www.uuaa.org/partnerchurch.

In the church library there is a special section devoted to the Partner Church. You can find books about the history of Unitarianism, personal experiences, sermons preached by our ministers and others, travel books that describe the geography and maps of Transylvania, and even a Transylvania Unitarian hymnal. See especially:

- *Prisoner of Liberty, the Story of a Transylvanian Martyr;* by Judit Gellerd.
- *Transylvanian Unitarian Church,* by John Erdo.
- *Alabaster Village: Our years in Transylvania,* by Christine Morgan.



Our Partner Church congregation

For further information or to become involved in this program, contact:

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or
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“When I close my eyes I see the faces of my partners and remember the things I have learned from them. They taught me about trust. They taught me about perseverance in spite of repeated hardships. They demonstrated the value of community. And they showed me again how to experience joy in the simple ways of life.”

- Leta Thornton



Rev. Maria Pap at UUA

**First Unitarian
Universalist Congregation
Of Ann Arbor**

in partnership with

**The Unitarian Church
of Kézdivásárhely,
Romania (Transylvania)**



Our History in the Partner Church Program

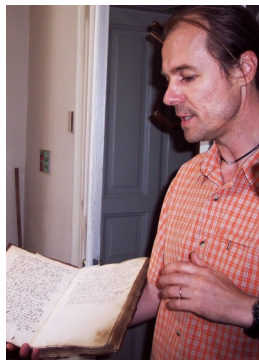
In May of 1997, our church voted at the Annual Meeting to establish a partnership with a Unitarian Church in Transylvania and was paired with the Unitarian Church of Kézdivásárhely. (Transylvania, now part of Romania, was the birthplace of the Unitarian movement in the sixteenth century, during the Protestant Reformation.)

Purpose of the Partner Church Program

These partner relationships weave together the lives and stories of people who share fundamental affirmations of:

- freedom of conscience in matters of religion
- tolerance for those with different beliefs
- a reasoned approach to religious ideas, and
- a willingness to grow and change in our religious understandings.

Partnerships provide individuals, small groups, and congregations a way to connect with the larger fellowship of our faith. We value building relationships between Unitarians that benefit all in both small and large ways—improving cultural understanding, supporting communities and helping to develop individual, religious, educational and economic opportunities.



Unitarian Church Archivist

Our Partner Church Congregation

The Kézdivásárhely congregation is small and shares a church building with a Lutheran congregation. The members are professionals—most are either teachers or work in the local clothing factory. In this sense they are much like UUA members. They are ethnic minorities as Hungarians and a religious minority as Unitarians in Romania. The adults struggled through 50 years of Communism and the Romanian government continues to discriminate against them.

Our Work Together

Our most important work has been the “people to people” contact that enables us to develop personal relationships with our partners. Rev. Maria Pap was our Partner Church Minister for the first 15 years. In 2012, she was appointed



secretary of the Unitarian Bishop’s Office in Kolozsvár where she is now working with congregations and coordinating the Bishop’s international relations.

We were delighted when Rev. István Buzogány-Csoma was appointed to serve as the new Minister of our Partner Church. His wife, Csilla, is also a Unitarian minister and is now serving as the hospital chaplain in a nearby city. They have two young daughters. Rev. István made his first visit to Ann Arbor fall of 2013. He had an opportunity to meet many members of our Congregation, visit various sites in and around our city, and get to know the First UUA staff.

Since 1997, we have accomplished a lot.

- Communications with our partners are good and becoming stronger;
- The relationship between our UUA ministers and our Partner Church ministers is vital and healthy; and
- We have provided financial support for the Kézdi congregation when asked.

What First UUA members have said about their travel to Transylvania:

- “It was fascinating and moving to see the connection between our common religious heritage and the people there, to see centuries of *Rev. István, 2013* history in the buildings and customs.”
- “I loved the visit to the Unitarian Archives in Kolozsvár and seeing the historic documents signed by Francis David.”
- “I enjoyed meeting my host family in Kézdi, appreciated their hospitality and treasured our conversations as we got to know each other.”



2011 UUA Travel Group

