

## UU Transylvanian Thanksgiving Pilgrimage (On a budget)

(Sept. 16 - 28, 2017)

Two life-changing weeks in Transylvania for under \$1,150! This is the same quality Unitarian pilgrimage that the UUPCC has been facilitating for two decades – but at 60% of the price. We replace hotels with dorms & guest-houses, substitute village meals for restaurants, eliminate the long van ride from Budapest, and take advantage of “shoulder-season” rates.



Beginning and ending in Kolozsvár/Cluj, this tour will visit the most significant of the Unitarian holy places including Torda, Mező, Gyulafehérvár & Deva. You will also visit the frescoed Unitarian churches of Székelyderz (a UNESCO World Heritage site) and Homorodkaracsonyfalva, the spectacular 13<sup>th</sup> century castle at Vadjuházyad, the Saxon capital of Transylvania, Sibiu, the medieval walled city of Sighisoara/Segesvár, and the Saxon fortress church at Biertan (Segesvár & Biertan are both UNESCO World Heritage sites). You will spend the special Transylvanian Thanksgiving weekend with your partner congregation, making new friends and revitalizing 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.

In addition to the Transylvania Pilgrimage there are also on offer an optional 4 day/3 night pre-trip Budapest extension, and a 6 day/5 night post trip extension to Maramures & the Painted Monasteries of Bucovina.

### **Planned Itinerary for optional Budapest pre-trip extension:**

Note: B, L, and/or D indicates meals included in the trip package for the day (breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner). Asterisks indicate the ranking of the hotel.

- (Wed, September 13). Arrive/gather in Budapest. Transfer to your hotel. Group dinner. Overnight Budapest – Hotel Belvedere\*\*\*\*. (BD)
- (Thurs, September 14). Morning orientation on Budapest Metro system and suggested itineraries followed by bus/walking tour of Budapest including Castle Hill, Hero's Square, the Jewish Quarter, and the Bela Bartok Unitarian Church. Free afternoon/evening to take in the museum of your choice and indulge yourself at one of the city's famous thermal spas. Lunch & dinner on your own. Overnight Budapest – Hotel Belvedere\*\*\*\*. (B)
- (Fri, September 15). Morning check-in with UUPCC staff for advice on attractions and logistics. Optional morning visit to the grounds outside Parliament, and a stroll along the

Danube to the new "Shoe Memorial". Otherwise free day in Budapest to shop, stroll the city, and take in a night cruise on the Danube. Lunch & dinner on your own. Overnight Budapest – Belvedere Hotel\*\*\*\*. (B)

- (Sat, September 16). Travel Day. Departure after breakfast for Romania by train or van TBD by group size. If by van, then traditional gulyas lunch en route. If train, lunch on your own. Evening arrival in Kolozsvár/Cluj, the Unitarian “Rome”. Join base itinerary. (B)

4 days/3 nights land package \$585 (double occupancy). Add \$135 single supplement. Includes 3 night accommodation in 4\*\*\*\* hotel with breakfast, arrival dinner, English speaking tour director, half-day guided tour of Budapest highlights, transfers from airport, 2<sup>nd</sup> class train tickets or van ride (TBD by group size) from Budapest to Kolozsvár/Cluj.

**Planned Itinerary for Transylvania Pilgrimage:** (hotels September change due to availability at time of booking)

Note: B, L, and/or D indicates meals included in the trip package for the day (breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner). Asterisks indicate the ranking of the hotel.

- (Sat – September 16) Gather in Kolozsvár/Cluj Romania. Kolozsvár is roughly equidistant from both Bucharest and Budapest. There are multiple inexpensive train and bus options daily to Kolozsvár from both cities. Kolozsvár/Cluj airport (airport code CLJ) is 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. Group dinner & orientation. Overnight Kolozsvár - Hotel Transylvania\*\*\*.(D)
- (Sun - September 17) Sleep in. 11AM services at 1<sup>st</sup> 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. Group lunch followed by a walking tour of Unitarian Kolozsvár. We will visit St. Michael’s Church where Francis David once preached, and the school where he once taught. Free evening to take in a movie or a concert, catch up on email, or just relax. Dinner on your own. Overnight Kolozsvár Hotel Transylvania\*\*\*. (BL)
- (Mon – September 18) Morning visit to 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 before departing for Deva (3 ½ hours driving time). En route to Deva we will stop at the “Church of the Edict” in Torda, and have lunch in Gyulaferhervár 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. Group dinner. Overnight Deva – Sarmis Hotel\*\*\*. (BLD)
- (Tues – September 19) Morning tour of the 13<sup>th</sup> century fairy-tale castle at Vadjahunyad. Afterward we depart Deva for the Saxon city of Sibiu (2+ hours driving time) Sandwiches/snacks en route on your own. Hotel check-in & orientation in the old city center. Free afternoon/evening to stroll and explore the city. Dinner on your own. Overnight Sibiu – Hotel Imparatul Romanilor\*\*\*\*. (BL)
- (Wed – September 20) Free morning in Sibiu to shop and visit the museum(s) of your choice. Lunch on your own. PM departure for medieval walled city of Sighisoara/Segesvar (2 hours driving time). Time permitting we will make a short detour to visit the Saxon fortress church

at Biertan (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Dinner & overnight Szekelykeresztur - Unitarian Guest House (BD)

- (Thurs – September 21) 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. PM departure for a guided tour of frescoed Unitarian church at Szekelyderz (a UNESCO World Heritage site). Dinner & evening program. Overnight Homorodkaracsonfalva – HK Panzio. (BD)
- (Fri – September 22) We take in some of the nearby Unitarian villages and discover why everyone loves the Homorod Valley. Morning tour of the Unitarian church in Homorodkaracsonfalva where we will view the recently uncovered 15<sup>th</sup> century frescoes. Group lunch before departing for your partner villages. Dinner & overnight with partner congregation – home stays. (BLD)
- (Sat – Mon September 23 - 25 ) Village days. Relax and explore your partner village as an “honored guest.” Sunday morning Thanksgiving worship services with your partner congregation. Program details TBD by minister & pilgrims. Overnights in partner village – home stays. (BLD)
- (Tues – September 26) Depart villages for TG-Mures/Marosvasarhely. Departure times and lunch sites will vary based on your distance from TG-Mures/Marosvasarhely. Mealtime conversation with other pilgrims to share village experience. Dinner & overnight Marosvasarhely – Unitarian Guest House. (Please note - there are a limited number of rooms in this facility. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed). (BLD)
- (Wed – September 27) Morning tour of Marosvasarhely/TG-Mures including the Art Nouveau Cultural Palace, Mirror Hall, and the Teleki Library which houses one of the original copies of the US Declaration of Independence. Group lunch before departing for Kolozsvar. Late afternoon arrival in Kolozsvar. Farewell banquet with fellow pilgrims and UUPCC staff. Overnight Kolozsvar Hotel Transylvania\*\*\*. (BLD)
- (Thurs – September 28) Depart Kolozsvar for the US or continue on with us to Maramures & the Painted Monasteries of Bucovina (B)

***13 days/12 nights \$1095 per person (double occupancy - standard accommodations) + \$150 registration fee (see note 1). Single supplement \$125. Accommodations are a combination of hotels, guest-houses & dormitory style facilities. Almost all require climbing some stairs. You should be able to climb two flights of stairs and handle your own luggage. Travelers with mobility issues should stay home, or select a different trip. Land package includes ground transportation, meals (as detailed on itinerary above), lodging, guides, interpreters, and fees. Cost does not include international airfare, expenses incurred during free periods, departure***



***hotel to airport transfer, and other travel to/from Cluj/Kolozsvar, Romania.***

(note 1) The registration fee is non-refundable. It pays for a one-year UUPCC membership (or extension if you are already a member, the costs associated with processing your application, printing and mailing the materials in your travel packet, and an “impact fee” which is paid to the Transylvanian Unitarian Church.