

## Special Collection 2015 – comments and insert

Today we are conducting a Special Collection to benefit our Partner Church in Sinfalva, Romania. This village is in a region called “Transylvania”, which means “the land beyond the forest”, and is the birthplace of Unitarianism. The original form of Unitarianism is still practiced by about a hundred thousand people there, who are almost all ethnic Hungarians. We hope that you had a chance to sample the Hungarian crepes (palacsinta) and paprika cheese dip (körözöt) at the coffee hour hosted by the Partner Church Committee a few weeks ago.

The survival of Unitarianism in Transylvania is still threatened by economics and by oppression of the Hungarian minority. Most of the Unitarian churches, including our Partner, are small village churches that struggle to survive.

The Partner Church movement is an effort on the part of American Unitarians to help ensure the survival of the original Transylvanian Unitarians. Although we differ in some aspects of our beliefs, we share a common heritage and a liberal religious impulse. As American Unitarians we should be proud of our heritage of tolerance and religious freedom, starting with the pioneering, unique, and unfortunately, short-lived Edict of Toleration of 1568, in the city of Torda, only 20 miles from our partner village (see map below [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edict\\_of\\_Torda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edict_of_Torda) ).

The money we send in our yearly Christmas gift has been used to support the education of village children, repairs to the 250 year-old church, assistance for elderly and infirm villagers, and once, emergency dentistry for the Minister. We have also supported the Minister’s wife’s training in project management for ICUUW (International Convocation of UU Women) projects in Transylvania. We stay in touch through personal visits every 3-4 years (four visits so far, including once with Tom and Amor McGuiness) and via letters and emails.

I invite you to learn about the village of Sinfalva, and Rev. Dénes Pálfi and his family, through the materials available on display in the Partner Church corner in the Library, by looking at our webpage on muuf.org <http://www.muuf.org/partnerchurch.html> or by speaking with any of the members of the committee. I invite you also to help in the easiest and most immediately useful way possible, which is financially. Please be generous.

See Map on Back ➔ ➔

