“Mission happens when we share life with each other,” explains Craig Waddell, Partnership Coordinator for the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV). The concept of mutuality in partnership is what sets apart Virginia Baptist partnerships from many other U.S.-based missions and ministry efforts. Since late 2013, BGAV has been in a partnership with Romania Baptists called “Together for Others,” a theme that incorporates the two-sided nature of the relationship—where both partners give and receive.

In April, Waddell traveled with a small team to Romania to check on existing work, to explore opportunities for new involvement, and to cultivate the relationships that have been built over the last few years.

One of the team members included Joey McNeill, pastor of Fort Trial Baptist Church. He went to look specifically for a place where Fort Trial and other members of the Henry County Association might plug in for a long-term relationship. He met Pavel, a minister who feels called to serve in the region of Turnu-Severin, where there are nine mission points (very small churches) and he is the only pastor. McNeill and Pavel found many ways in which they believe they can work together, and future plans are underway.

Waddell challenges Baptists all across Virginia to consider ways they might become involved in the Romania partnership. “Because we have a number of ministries already in place, volunteers can
make a real contribution even if they can only make one trip and participate in the short term,” he explains. “Whether someone wants to work in a sports camp or an English camp, to exchange skills and experiences, to have education dialogues, or to do anything that enhances the standing of these churches in their communities, they can help us use culture to build bridges rather than separating people.”

Waddell also greatly encourages long-term relationships, and as Partnership Coordinator, one of his roles is to help churches, associations, and individuals identify ways in which they can work together with Romanians for many years to come. “We are linking churches and associations with church planting teams in southern and eastern Romania—starting relationships between them,” he says.

Are you intrigued by this partnership?
As a Virginia Baptist, you have the opportunity to share your gifts and learn from others in a relationship of shared ministry. If you, your church, and/or your association wants to learn more about how to get involved with the Romania partnership, contact Craig Waddell at 800.255.2428, ext. 7263, or craig.waddell@bgav.org.