

From The Trustees ,

As we draw to the end of another year we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for so faithfully supporting our work in Albania through your giving and prayers. A2B continues to be blessed, the number of people we are able to help continues to grow and we look forward to new projects starting in the coming year. We are completely dependent on the generosity of you, our supporters. Without you and our partner organisations none of what you read in these pages would be possible. We are so thankful to God for His provision weaving together all that we need. We wish you all a peaceful and blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

Andrew, David, John, Nicola, Paul, Sam and Tracy (Trustees, A2B UK)

Transformation Sam Whitmarsh, A2B Chairman

A 3 am start is never something to be enjoyed, but I always look forward to going to visit Albania. 8 hours later, I'm picked up By Ardjan, Keta and Elona. Home. Ever since my first trip 11 years ago, God has always shown me something new and this trip was characterised by the word 'Transformation'.

I was privileged to stay at the House of Opportunity and celebrate the project's first birthday. It was amazing to see a transformed house, renovated from its dilapidated state to provide a home for young people as they exit the care system. The project provides somewhere to live, counselling, training, and a stable social network. The project transforms lives by reducing the risk of falling into crime, prostitution or trafficking.



It was great to see the transformation in our staff. Teuta has finished her studies in social work and is using her skills to support elderly people in the Bread of Life Day Centre. In this project we feed and care for 70 people every day. God knows how special this age group are and that no one is too old to know the transformational love of Christ.



I saw how God's love, a bit of discipline and patience transforms the lives of children in great need. I've seen hardened children, mellow and accept the love of A2B staff. Across 3 kindergarten and homework clubs, A2B support 100+ mostly Roma children each week. This transformation starts in preschool but follows into later years as the children return to a safe place, have fun and hear how much God values them.

I visited two poor families from the family link program and delivered their food parcels. One family lives 3 generations in 2 rooms, they support each other very well, but it's difficult with mental health problems, no running water and lack of money. I always find it staggering, that people transformed by God's love, find joy even in difficult circumstances. 5 people from this project were recently baptised—lives transformed.

It's impossible to see all this transformation and not be changed yourself, God is doing something wonderful in Albania and I'm so grateful to be part of it. If you are reading this, it's likely that you are part of this transformation too. We are transforming the lives of around 500 of the poorest people in Albania every week. Let's continue to pray, to give and to celebrate God's transformation of Albania and let ourselves be transformed as we join together to do His will. God Bless you. Thanks.

"And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory are being transformed into his image with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the spirit." 2 Cor 3:18

"My Friend the Policeman"

Alketa Hasani, Director A2B Albania



A2B Albania has established a project called "My Friend the Policeman" funded by the SCPA Program, part of the work of the Swedish Government in Albania. It aims to establish a deeper partnership between the local Police, Elbasan municipality and community focusing on youth. It aims to enable young people to be "Change Agents" in their community, influencing peers, parents, and the wider public on issues of violence, bullying and human trafficking.

Meetings have been organised with parents, children and the youth with a focus on the role of community policing. Shkelqim Luli, a specialist community police officer, gave a free seminar at the Hope for the Future day centre explaining his

role, the role of young people, children and parents and the ways in which people who witness crime can report cases of concern to the police.

These awareness sessions will continue regularly until December 2018 and will include amongst other things, visits to the Elbasan district police station and a friendly football match between the police and the youth. A2B are in the privileged position of being trusted by both the community and the authorities. This provides an excellent opportunity for us to empower local people as they learn to trust the police and understand how to report crime; and for the police as they realise how vulnerable some of the community are.



KidzPlanet

Sam Whitmarsh, A2B Chairman

October saw the exciting launch of a new program for A2B. God has been working through a collaboration with the Maltese charity Passi and Beyond over the past 3 months. Melanie, a teacher in Malta, specialises in working with young people with special needs and has been sharing her expertise, training A2B staff to support children with learning difficulties. Some of the children in contact with A2B are bullied in school and A2B want to provide a safe space where they feel valued. The aim is for this program to mix with able children and break down the labels that can be created when separate activities are held. A2B are planning to set up 2 new classes and recruit a part time teacher to support this. In a time of real budget challenges this is a big step of faith, but something we feel God is calling us to. Please pray that we would hear God clearly call the right teacher, that finance would be provided, and this new program would bring a real improvement to the lives of special needs children in Albania. We aim to lift dignity and restore hope. Give thanks to our Father who loves us all, regardless of ability.



Giveasyoulive

David Ayrton, A2B Treasurer

Treat us when you treat your loved ones this Christmas with the GiveasyouLive gift card. It can be spent in-store and online at over 100 high-street stores and you'll raise ££ for us when you buy! Get more information from: <https://instore.giveasyoulive.com/buy-gift-cards/give-as-you-live-card>

B&Q mothercare Currys PCWorld Argos



Two Years Serving in Albania Kim Marshall, A2B Volunteer

In March 2015 I visited Elbasan to see the work of A2B and immediately fell in love. In April 2016 I moved to work as a missionary and Albania has since become a very special place for me. My main role was as a kindergarten teacher using my UK experience to develop a program of 'learning through play' alongside the local curriculum and to support the children in preparation for school. I was also involved in training parents in basic parenting, hygiene and skills. No two days of work were the same!

I found building relationships to be crucial. Strong relationships mean you can walk alongside others through all that life brings, the difficult times of need and the joy in times of celebration. It provides opportunities to share the love of Jesus. It's taught me that each of our acts is significant when we do it in love, even just going out for coffee. Relationship with God is the most important of all, and this is something which shines through the directors of A2B Albania as they serve in a Muslim town, facing corruption and criticism.



God answered my prayers even when I couldn't see how he had. Through the two years in Albania, I've been able to witness how the love of God has changed others. Families who are traditionally Muslim have come to know Jesus; children who have struggled with illness have been healed; broken families have become whole and children rejected from school have been able to learn and grow.

A2B Albania is formed of loving people who are responding to the needs of a disadvantaged community. They help elderly, children, families, widows and outcasts - showing love to the unlovable and reaching out to the unreachable. The staff of A2B taught me what compassion is: Serving with all our hearts, to love people with all we have. It impacts people more than we can see, and the light of Christ in them is then able to spread into areas we can't reach. No one is too far from the love of Jesus.

As a missionary I wanted to go to Albania to make a difference, but much of the time it was me who was changed by God's love shown through amazing people who serve every day and don't label it 'mission' but 'life'. We often have no idea of the potential we have in God. I'm just someone living my everyday life and since returning from Albania every day I yearn for more of God and call out to Him for the people that A2B serve, for new hope, for restored life through the power of Jesus living in them. I encourage you to pray for A2B, I know your prayers change things, I've seen it. Pray for the amazing team in Albania and the people they serve. Pray that the kingdom of heaven would be seen on earth.

As I close, I wanted to say thanks for all you do to support A2B, through your prayers, time and money. I've seen it first hand, I've seen the impact the church can have when we act as His hands and feet. I also want to encourage you to keep praying, keep working and keep giving. God is doing amazing things in Albania and it's been a huge privilege for me to be even a small part of it.

I pray God blesses you in your interactions with A2B as much as He has blessed me.

Turning Donations to Joy! Alketa Hasani, Director A2B Albania

Most of the children that were attending a two week camp in Peqin celebrated the end of camp with a day at the beach in Divjaka. For most of the children this was their first time seeing the sea and the beach. It was a good day for making memories. A coach was hired to pick up forty children and some of their parents and the one hour journey started! With another coach filled with volunteers and snacks and drinks to last all day.

Saying goodbye over an ice cream and taking a photo of the team was not easy! Maybe we will go again next year...



Christmas Cards 2018

Paul Heffer, A2B Trustee

We will again benefit from the sale of Christmas cards and other gifts available from Gospel Cards this year. 20% from the sale of cards and 5% from other items will be given to 22 Christian missions including A2B. Why not consider buying your Christmas cards from Gospel Cards and support A2B at the same time?

Please see the enclosed catalogue for details and please remember to mention our name if you place an order - thank you. Full details on their website <https://gospelcardsetc.com>.

Tel. 01656 647551, or write to Gospel Cards, 15 Brackla Street Centre, Bridgend, CF31 1DD.



A Concert for Christmas

A Concert for Christmas

Paul Heffer, A2B Trustee

featuring
The Harvesters Folk Group
and special guest
David Fitzgerald,
professional sax,
flute and whistle player

Saturday 1 December
7.30pm
St Peter's Church
Thurston

Seasonal refreshments will
be served during the interval

Tickets £7.50 Children under 12 years free
Telephone 07814 946841 or email benificepr@gmail.com
Proceeds to St Peter's Church and A2B Albania

Once again our friends from folk group "The Harvesters" will be performing a Christmas concert in the beautiful parish church of St Peter's in Thurston, Suffolk on the 1st December 2018. They will be joined by their good friend David Fitzgerald. He is a professional Saxophone and Flute player who has made numerous T.V. Appearances and has toured with many artists including Graham Kendrick and Adrian Snell.

This will be a wonderful festive evening for all the family and the proceeds will be divided between the church and A2B. As this will prove to be popular we advise that you purchase tickets in advance but some should be available on the night. The concert starts at 7:30pm and finishes around 9:45pm.

Tickets are £7.50 for Adults and children under 12 are free.

Please call 07814 946841 or e mail benificepr@gmail.com

Winter is Coming...

David Ayrton, A2B Treasurer

...and the hot weather did not last for ever! Rest assured that someone, somewhere in a government department is already planning how to distribute Winter Fuel Payments to everyone in the UK who was born on or before 5 November 1953. You could get between £100 and £300 depending on your age and who you live with.

Although it is called the Winter Fuel Payment, there are no conditions attached to what you can spend it on. If you should decide that you already have your fuel bills budgeted for, then the money you receive will release an equivalent amount of your own money which you are free to give to any cause, and even to claim Gift Aid on your giving.

A number of our supporters last year decided to give the equivalent of their Fuel Payment to A2B, which enabled us to help people in Albania with their fuel costs. This is a wonderful way of using the money in the way it was intended, but at the same time blessing and helping others much less fortunate than yourself.

If you want to put your Winter Fuel Payment to good use and you don't really need it yourself, why not send it to us and we will make sure it goes to help those who can't afford to keep warm? Any money not used for fuel will be used for other essential costs such as food, medicines or clothing.

You can make a transfer direct to our bank account or send a cheque to the Treasurer, who can also supply Gift Aid Forms. Please contact me at the number below if you need any other help.

Thank you very much. david.ayrton@a2balbania.org, 01359 231586.

A2B Lifting Dignity,
Restoring Hope

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A2B is a registered charity in the UK (1168468) and registered as a Foundation in Albania