



A Brief Chronicle of the Fortified Church and Village of Cristian

c) A column capital inside the church.

1493 – Christian is burned by the Turks.

1472 – 1498 – transformation of the Romanesque basilica into a late gothic long church with choirs for each nave. The architect is Andreas Lopicida of Sibiu / Hermannstadt. The main nave is 18.3 meters long and 17,5 meters wide, the main choir 15,5 meters long and 8,4 meters wide and the rooftops 28,4 and 26,3 meters high.

Around 1500 – Double walls – in a form of an irregular pentagon and with a square defense tower at each corner – are built for the protection of the church.

1529 – A Muntenic army under Boyar Dragan, who sieges Sibiu / Hermannstadt in September, burns Cristian.

Around 1550 – To the north of the fortified church two closes are added, the first of which houses the personages. One of the few remaining “plague pulpits” is found there.

1553 – Devastation of the community by cholera and the plague (four further epidemics between 1706 and 1755).

Around 1570 – The inferior choir in the north is separated from the church and converted into a sacristy, above which the “angels’ gallery” is built.

Around 1580 – The large, octagonal tower is built on earlier foundations in the south of the fortress. The tower probably served as a chapel for a time.

1599 – The fortified church is taken by the Walachian Voyvode (Prince) Michael (the Brave) – Heintzius the person is brutally murdered in the sacristy.

1658 – The fortress is attacked by nomadic Tartars after besieging Sibiu / Hermannstadt – the village is once again burned.

1223 – First documentary attestation of Cristian (“Insula Christian” – Christian meadows). The town is probably settled after the first wave of settlement between 1141 and 1161 under the Hungarian King Geisa II. The founder may also have been a leading settler named Christian (“Insula Christian”), whose sons Salomo and Herbord are mentioned in sources.

13th Cent. – Construction of Romanesque basilica consisting of three naves and dedicated to St. Servatius. The remains of this church include:

- a) The lower part of the bell tower.
- b) Remains of the two inferior naves beside the tower.

1690 – A provincial diet is held in the church during which the Hungarian Emerich Tokoly is proclaimed Prince of Transylvania.

1719 – The church is provided with a new altar, a sign of local baroque art.

1721 –1736 After epidemics and wars only 63 farms in Cristian are inhabited (against 176 in 1508), 32 farms lay waste. A keystone (Christ’s head) built into the southern wall attests today to the reconstructions of the surrounding walls at this time. The razed church is able to be rebuilt with aid from Sibiu / Hermannstadt (Inspector Clockner).

1735 – 1738: 160 emigrants who had to leave Austria in the course of the Counter – Reformation settle in Cristian. Other settle in Neppendorf / Turnisor, Heltau / Cisnatie and Grosspold / Apoldul de Sus. The arrivals are originally from the towns of Hallstatt, Ischl, Gosau, Lauben and Goisern.

Around 1750 – The gate and entry tower in the west part of the fortress is destroyed by the flooding of the Cibin River. A new entryway is built in the south and beside it watchman’s quarters. Large portions of the inner surrounding wall are torn down.

1775 – The church is equipped with an organ built by Johannes Hahn.

1794 – Galleries with wooden panels depicting folk art motifs are added to the choir.

Around 1800 – What today is the main structure of the personage, situated near the church, is added to the medieval wing.

1805 – After being damaged by earthquakes, the church steeple is elevated and surrounded by four spires.

1891 - Cristian is devastated by a great fire.

January 1945 – A portion of the German population is deported to

Russia: 348 parishioners are rounded up from Cristian on January 13, 1945, of whom 51 die, either in Russia or on the way there. Not until 1952 do certain individuals return.

March / June 1945 – As a result of the agricultural reform land is dispossessed and inhabitants are driven from their farms. The Saxons loose their citizenship and right to vote (ex lex status) – 98% of rural property ends up in Romanian hands.

1972 - 1975 – Extensive repairs, including the elimination of damage from earthquakes, are carried out the fortified church.

Up to 1974 – Under Ceausescu the German population begins to emigrate from Transylvania. Of originally 2,640 Transylvanian Saxons (1974) in Cristian, only 1,871 remain by 1989 and then merely 70 by 1996. In 1990 alone, after the so-called revolution, 1,217 leave Cristian for Germany or Austria.

Cisnatie / Heltau – Panalim 2001

