



UKRAINE MISSIONS NEWS

John L. Kachelman, Jr.

December 2014

IN THIS ISSUE

- Brethren from Ukraine offers you "A review of 2014"

"Here comes the end to the year 2014. It was a year of testing, difficulties, turmoil and hope for us. It was quite a difficult year for the people of Ukraine."

Denis Sopelnik

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"GOD IS OUR SHELTER, OUR STRENGTH AND OUR LIFE. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR HELPING US TO SHOW THIS AWESOME GOD TO OTHERS! THANK YOU FOR BEING AN EXAMPLE TO US! THANK YOU FOR YOUR SELF-DENYING EFFORTS AND SACRIFICE OF YOUR TIME, HEALTH AND MONEY!"

This month's UKRAINE MISSIONS newsletter offers you thoughts from your brethren in Ukraine. I had asked several to give me their thoughts at the year's end. It has been a tumultuous year in Ukraine. We begin 2015 in a much different position than we began 2014.

In the turmoil and chaos that is found in this world, it is comforting to know that we have comfort, peace and security in the Lord. Because of this we are able to "rejoice always" and "in everything give thanks." Regardless of what happens in this world, one's choice to remain faithful to the Almighty offers a security that can be found nowhere else.

I hope as you read your brethren's reflections over the events of 2014 you will be encouraged by their faith and fidelity to the Lord God Almighty.

Thank you for your example of trusting faith that encourages brethren all over the world. As brothers and sisters in foreign lands learn of God's Truth, they are encouraged to know they are "family" with multitudes they will never meet this side of heaven.

Thank you for your support and encouragement throughout 2014!

—John L. Kachelman, Jr.

TANYA SHARES HER THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FALL MISSION TRIP!

Dearest brethren!

Greetings from Kyiv, Ukraine, where I am staying temporarily due to the war in Donbas where my hometown (Donetsk) is. God has blessed me beyond imagination in this difficult and heart breaking situation and has given me loving shelters in Ukraine and America since I left Donetsk in early July. For this I am praising Him and sending thanks to all of you who are praying for me and my country and to those who have kindly opened their

**THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST
IVANO-FRANKIVSK
DISTRIBUTING
FAMILY BUCKETS**

Here are pics of Hillsboro's buckets being distributed. On one of the buckets you see a sign and one of pics you see Ivan giving this sign to one receiving bucket. The sign goes as follows:

"Church of Christ prays for you. We ask God to save Ukraine and reconcile her citizens. We also beseech God to grant you all things necessary for this life and be your protector from all evil. May God bless you!"



sweet homes to me. May the Lord bless all of you hundredfold, surround you with as much love and kindness as you blessed me with (and many times more), protect you, guide you and give peace to your hearts.

Another blessing that resulted from my being displaced is the fact that I got to meet more brethren here in Kyiv. I presently attend Shevchenko church of Christ and the brethren there have been so nice to me. They make me feel welcome and show concern. They have treated me with warm friendliness and I miss them when I am out of town. Please, pray for this congregation as they have been through a lot of troubles and tribulations for several years now but have tried hard to hold onto Biblical principles and teaching. Andrew Zhuravliov from Gorlovka preaches there now while he and his family are in Skvyra Kyiv Region. It has been good to see Andrew, too, and hear him preach and teach as he is a very sound teacher.

Year 2014 is almost over and it is hard to believe as it has flown way too fast, to my mind. It is hard to believe that war in Eastern Ukraine has been going on for over eight months now. That prevented many missionaries from coming to that part of Ukraine and I missed their fellowship. But there still have been some brave souls that have traveled to Ukraine despite danger. Jerry Morgan, Buddy Baker, Gary Jerkins, Rick Montgomery, Mike Lawson and John Durham are among those as well as John Kachelman who have been to Ukraine twice this year. Thank you, dear brethren, for love and concern for my country.

I would like to talk a little more about John Kachelman's recent trip to Ukraine, which he took in October. As usual, his trip was crammed full of activities. Mike Lawson came with John this time. Mike usually goes to Eastern Ukraine to the town of Dzerzhinsk but due to the dangers of war he traveled with John to other parts of Ukraine. I had corresponded with Mike some before but it was for the first time that I met him personally and I must say I enjoyed getting to know him. He fit perfectly into our team as well as his interpreter Olga.

The different activities that John had in Ukraine were: mission work in Ivano-Frankivsk and visiting brethren in other parts of Ukraine; follow-up on humanitarian shipments sent to Ivano-Frankivsk, Zhytomyr, Cherkassy and Zaporozhye Regions. Those were the main focuses of the trip but besides that there were other exciting events that took place. I would like to thank all of you that support John's mission and benevolent work. Christians like him are a great blessing to us for we need their wisdom, knowledge, sincerity and a great Christian example to learn from and to mature in faith. Thank you a MILLION times!

Visiting with the Ivano-Frankivsk brethren was wonderful and uplifting as usual. John was asked to teach classes on Colossians to strengthen and encourage brethren that had been struggling through difficult and dangerous situations due to the war. True, there is no war in Ivano-Frankivsk but it is still taking its toll on every part of Ukraine. A gangrenous arm affects the whole body and it is the same situation with the war in Ukraine. However, our brethren throughout Ukraine try to stand strong and help in as many ways as they can. Ivano-Frankivsk church of Christ is one of those that work tirelessly to build up the community both in spiritual and physical sense.

The humanitarian aid that all of you help collect and ship is one of the important factors contributing to success in this work in Ivano-Frankivsk. I will never tire to state that Ivan and John had, and still have, the right vision

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as to how humanitarian aid should be used to the glory of our God and to both spiritual and physical benefits of the community. And *you are an inseparable part of this work as you collect and ship the aid and without that part of work we would not be able to do anything regardless of how good our visions are.*

So GREAT BIG thanks to you for your selfless and tireless work and support.

God, in His turn, works things out in amazing ways. For example, when John visited the District hospital in Yaremche the Chief Doctor there talked a lot about C-arm machine that they had that was broken. He said many a time how much they depend on that machine and how much they would like to have one. And then about a week ago I received a note from John that one of the pick-ups for donated medical items for shipments had a C-arm! And there have been many situations like that.

There are many distribution sites in Ivano-Frankivsk city and its Region and John and Mike visited some (there are too many of them to visit all). Facing war, destruction, death, fear and uncertainty people are especially sensitive to the help and to the fact that there are people that care for them and are willing to help.

The Lord's Church in Ivano-Frankivsk does not just give away aid they give out Bibles with other Christian literature and invite people to Church. Their main principle is to use every little opportunity to share good news with people and to bring glory to our loving God. That draws people to Church.

Thus, there is a young couple from Donetsk area, Stas and Anya that fled their hometown not knowing where to go and eventually they came to Ivano-Frankivsk where they received help and encouragement from Church. They arrived and went to city authority asking for help and City called Ivan and Andrew and asked if the Church could help. Of course Ivan responded. They have not been baptized yet but they attend all services and take an active part in the life of the congregation.

And, of course, any visit to Ivano-Frankivsk church of Christ offers fellowshiping with brethren and it was great as always!

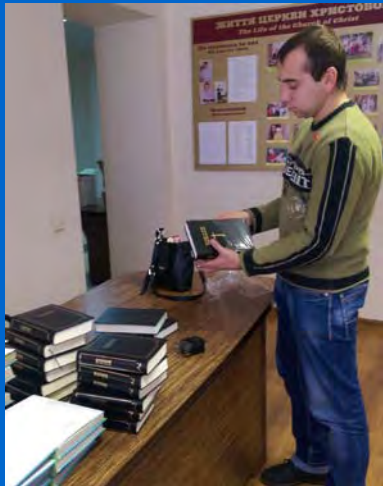
The first Sunday was a day of great joy as two souls were added to the Lord's Church – Vladimir and Galina who had been coming to Church for about one year. John performed the baptisms and everybody was filled with joy and thanks to God for these two children of God that were born into His family.

After the baptisms everybody joined in a fellowship meal and it was an enjoyable and uplifting time. How true are the words of David who said, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity”! (Psalm 133:1)

Besides distribution sites in Ivano-Frankivsk, it was good to visit Uman Cherkassy Oblast a city of 90,000 where four containers were distributed, Korostan Zhytomyr Oblast (population of +70,000) and Zaporizhzhya City (population of +800,000) where many more containers went. The population of these locations is no longer accurate because of those displaced in Ukraine—over 1.7 million have had to flee the war zones and find places to live.

Visiting Zaporizhzhya is always crammed full of different activities. John

THE CHURCH AT WORK



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participated in two conferences—one with a hospital and the other one with the Administration and benevolent organizations of the city that our consignee in Zaporizhzhya set up. John spoke both times and his words struck many deep in their hearts for they did not expect an American to be so concerned, so willing to help and so ready to fight for Ukraine!

As always our Zaporizhzhya friends treated us with warmth and prepared a lot of surprises such as Mike's initiation into Cossacks! Everybody received many souvenirs, brochures and booklets talking about Zaporizhzhya and its places of interest, which are many.

Getting to know our Zaporizhzhya brethren was very encouraging as well. We got to worship with them, talked about humanitarian shipments and they are willing to participate and bring glory to our Lord through humanitarian aid. They already help refugees and a few families started attending Church thanks to the help that we have already been able to distribute through the congregation.

There were many more organizations and individuals that had received humanitarian aid in Zaporizhzhya, Cherkassy, Zhytomyr and Ivano-Frankivsk Regions and there is no way to include and describe all of them.

One definite thing I can say that those receiving the aid are thankful beyond words to God and His Church for care and love shown through those deeds of faith. Many of them lost their homes and were left with nothing. Many of them had to leave their homes because of danger. Some of them lost their families or friends – they are people overwhelmed with grief, fear, helplessness and despair that need to know God. And this need to know God is an urgent need because He is the only One having answers to their situations. God is the only One to renew hope, to protect from evil, to give love and peace and to guide through all troubles and tribulations. God is our shelter, our strength and our life. Thank you so much for helping us to show this awesome God to others! Thank you for being an example to us! Thank you for your self-denying efforts and sacrifice of your time, health and money!

May our good and loving Lord shower you with His love and blessings, may His light continue shining in your lives and may His great love reflect through you onto others!

May every day of your lives be a blessing to you and to people around you!

With much love and appreciation, Tanya

IVAN'S REFLECTIONS ON 2014!

Greetings dear brothers and sisters and dear Church!

Last year was a year of great trial for Ukraine. Many people reconceptualized their values and changed their priorities. Our congregation helped displaced people that moved out of the warzone and those that had to stay on the occupied territory.

Thanks to your help we were able to give away 500 buckets with essentials; we gave away clothes, medical supplies; we put together presents with toys, sweets and school supplies to a group of displaced families with children; needy people received bed linens, towels, mattresses

**NEWS FROM
DENNIS SOPELNIK
BEAR VALLEY BIBLE
INSTITUTE
TERNOPIL, UKRAINE**



"You can imagine how difficult and scary it was sometimes to live, study and proclaim the Word of God in Eastern Ukraine in spring 2014. Some of our students were in real danger being residents of Western and Central Ukrainian towns and cities, and speaking Ukrainian language predominantly. Nevertheless, we have continued having classes, and on May 25, we celebrated graduation."

"Our graduates are actively preaching and teaching God's word, bringing people to God. There have been several joyful news of the baptisms at those congregations."

and food. The Hillsboro congregation joined us in this great effort and through their works many blessed God's Name!

A seven year old girl Nastya opened her box with presents and said that she had made a wish to get a Lego set and was sooo thankful to find that very toy in her box. Her mother Lena was very touched.

All children were thankful for presents.

Anya together with the youth group had made different handcrafts, bracelets and different souvenirs. After that I talked about the birth of Christ and the audience asked questions. When we were dismissed everybody thanked and said that they had been comforted, charged positively and felt the concern and consideration.

2014 was a special year. We rejoice in the many ways the Lord answered our prayers—we won trials, we had the congregation registered, we were given a plot of land to build a meeting place and we already have the blueprint and all necessary permits to build.

Our young brothers, Vladimir and Pavel, graduated from the Bear Valley Bible School and determined to preach the Gospel. Now we have two small groups of Christians in Krivoy Rog and Stary Lysets. Pavel and Vladimir do their best in these locations to preach the Gospel with their words and deeds. They understand the great responsibility that all Christians have to bring the light of the Lord to those places where Satan substituted human teaching and quasi godliness. These false religious tenets have no real power of the true Gospel. The Orthodox/Catholic Churches practically never teach the Bible because traditions and rituals are all they teach. That is why many feel that God is somewhere far away from humans and He does not care for them; their lives do not change; and sadly their families and society are the same.

In 2014 Lord blessed us with several immersions – our daughter Anya, sister Galina, brother Vladimir and sister Julia were added to the saved in 2014. God does everything He can for those who seek Him so that they would hear and believe. It is amazing how merciful God is to people who seek Him the Living God. He opens hearts of those faithful to Him and they go and preach the truth so that people could see the difference between the living teachings of God and mortal human teachings.

It is thanks to your help, dear brothers and sisters that we have what we have accomplished. Christ, unity and faith are our stronghold. We are so thankful that you come to visit us and encourage us through fellowship, Bible classes as well as through your own good Christian examples that strengthen our faith.

I would like to give special heartfelt thanks to those at Hillsboro and other congregations who put together family buckets for refugees. People were very thankful and asked us to thank all of you. Everything you sent was given to those people who are truly in need. We gave away aid together with the Social Service as the latter has all needy people registered. After that, we invited everybody to Church assembly. Fourteen people came and we prayed together about their problems and talked to them about Christ and Church of Christ created by God.

Our children put together thirty presents for children from displaced families. They made bracelets that Susan and Andrea from Hillsboro taught

*“However,
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lose heart.
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them to make.

Among displaced there was a young woman Oksana, 36 years old. Her husband was a Catholic priest who used to preach in the East. They had visited several Catholic churches but none would help refugees. She said she was ashamed of her church that did not want to help people from the East. Later on Oksana came to worship with us and started studying the Bible. She said she wanted to study the Scripture because there are different teachings. She was very surprised to find out that Jesus Christ had siblings, brothers and sisters. She reread those passages several times and could not believe it. She was also very surprised to learn that Jesus is the only mediator between God and people.

Some of our good works make people analyze their faith and attitude towards their neighbors.

Humanitarian aid is very important because it is when people are facing difficult times that God shows them the difference between true Christianity and false Christianity.

Thank you, dear brothers and sisters, for your true Christian faith.

Dear faithful brother in Christ John Kachelman and your family, I always thank God for you being a great Christian example and I am honored to be a part of God's family with you. Dear Sister Debbie Brunk and your family, thank you and sisters for having been so supportive at difficult times of trials – without you we would not have achieved all that has been done. Dear Kathy Cadden, thank you for your work and help to people, for your love to needy people. Your faith and trust in God is an example to us. Thanks to brother Larry Jackson and his wife Pattye for your hospitality and for serving our Father with your abilities and talents. When I visit with you I feel at home. You have a nice and hospitable home. Larry, thank you for your wise advice as it is always so helpful to me. Brother Gary Jerkins, thank you for your ministry and help to Lord's Church. Brother Ron Swang, thank you for your help and inspiration. Thank you, Tanya, for good translations and faithfulness to church of Christ, for being a good help in many things. Brother Rick Montgomery, your letters are always timely and encouraging. Thanks to you, brother Scott, sister Susan, sister Andrea, brother Mike and sister Teresa. Thanks to brother John Durham – your work for God is very important, you are a good teacher and we had great time studying the Bible and English together. Big thanks to the brethren from Dalraida for support and advice as overseeing congregation. We appreciate your help and prayers. Brother Johnny Kachelman, thank you for emails and encouragement. Thanks to all brothers and sisters who read these reports. Thanks for prayers and help to Ukrainian people and Lord's Church. We thank God for you!

We love all of you and thank God for our joint ministry in His name. May the Lord open new doors for Gospel in 2015 in the hearts of those that do not know Him yet; may He give us strength and wisdom to overcome all obstacles on our way to Him. He is our strength because He is victorious and His is glory forever and ever.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you!

In sincere Christian love, Ivan and Svetlana
С искренней любовью Во Христе Иван и Светлана

VLAD PAZIY REVIEWS THE YEAR FROM KRAMATORSK!

"Thanks to your help we were able to give away 500 buckets with clothes, medical supplies, toys, sweets and school supplies to a group of displaced families with children."



"A seven year old girl Nastya opened her box with presents and said that she had made a wish to get a Lego set and was sooo thankful to find that very toy in her box. Her mother Lena was very touched."

Dear brothers and sister, in this letter, I would like to first thank the Lord for the kindness that He shows us, citizens of Ukraine, through your hands, and then thank you for your zeal and love that you share with us.

My name is Vladimir and I have attended Church since 1992 and have preached in God's Church since 1999. We have been through many good and bad things within the last 22 years, but this year has been the most unforgettable in a sense and has left brightest imprints in our lives. I am talking about military confrontation in this country.

Today, the city of Kramatorsk where we live is outside the warzone but this area was one of the central points of military confrontation in spring and the beginning of summer. Many inhabitants of this area left their homes at that time, which affected members of our local Church family (about 50% of them are families with children and young people). We grew closer to each other at that time and sensed the spirit of Christian unity even more deeply. Some did not leave the city even at the most violent times; they lived with the hope that they would be with God even if something happened to them. Their faces reflected peace.

We conducted worship services and Bible classes behind the closed doors and we even took down all signs from the building where the Church meets out of caution. We knew that Gorlovka had lost their meeting place to the demands of gunmen and we were concerned. We went through difficult times but the Church met and conducted worship services glorifying our God. We allowed the community to use the basement of the Church building as bomb shelter when there was bombing and shelling.

Thank God it is over now and today we live in the area where there is no shooting but we are still in the area of the ATO (anti-terroristic operation).

This confrontation divided people even in the Church. Some left.

Despite all that, we (the Church) try to help people with their needs and especially those displaced. Very often they do not have either clothes, or lodging, or food. Some of our brethren live in Donetsk and its outskirts, where our government does not provide pensions and other payments. Thus, we help a young man who does not have any relatives and his scholarship is the only source of income to him and he does not get even that only because he lives in Makeyevka. Church gives him monthly aid. There are many stories like that. Our congregation is not large and we would not be able to help those who are in need. Thanks to our brothers and sisters from America, we have funds that we use to glorify God's Kingdom on earth.

As of today, we try to set up a Bible School and English School in

ENCOURAGING NEWS FROM BEAR VALLEY BIBLICAL INSTITUTE

"On the bright side, we had seven graduates: five men who started ministering at local churches, and two ladies who are faithful Christians...Right now we have nine students in the program: four in the first-year class and five in the second-year class; eight men and one young lady...In spite of the difficult situations and the forced move we managed to have two youth conferences: one in May and the other in November...As far as we know, due to this military conflict in Eastern Ukraine there were two new churches planted with the help of BVBIU: one in Ternopil (Western Ukraine) and one in Kryvyy Rig (Central Ukraine). One congregation was restored in Avdeyevka, Donetsk Region...Our graduates are actively preaching and teaching God's word, bringing people to God. There have been several joyful news of the baptisms at those congregation where they are ministering."

Konstantinovka where we have already met with and have given minor school supplies kits to 300 displaced children. We plan to do the same thing in Kramatorsk. Our purpose in helping people is one and the same – to reveal abilities of Christ, who has done and can do even more for all.

Thank you once again for your prayers, support, your example that you are for this world. As for me, I've learnt a great amount from your example of imitating Christ. I thank God for you. Be blessed and Happy New Year's season.

If there's anything I can help you with here is my email address: paziyv@gmail.com

Your brother because of Christ, Vladimir Paziy

DENNIS SOPELNIK REVIEWS THE PREACHER TRAINING EFFORTS IN TERNOPIL, UKRAINE!

Hello dear brothers,

I hope everything is well with you all. I wanted to make a summary of the events that happened with the Bear Valley Biblical Institute of Ukraine (BVBIU) during the year 2014.

Here comes the end to the year 2014. It was a year of testing, difficulties, turmoil and hope for us. It was quite a difficult year for the people of Ukraine in general and for our school as well.

This year started quite positively: Ukraine got rid of its former president Yanukovich. The whole country felt relieved, thinking we'll have a new life from now on. However, new problems in Ukraine started in March. The uprisings started in winter in Kyiv; however, it soon took over the territory of Eastern Ukraine. In March Crimea was annexed. Riots and unrest were started by troubled people. Pro-Russian terrorists started their attacks against governmental offices in mid-April, so at the beginning of May the government started a wide anti-terrorist operation (ATO).

In the first weeks of the new and temporary government Russia invaded Crimea and annexed it as a result. Then full-sized war in the Eastern Ukraine got started. The very same Russian troops and displeased Ukrainians who considered themselves to be Russians took arms and started proclaiming new republics.

The church in Ukraine was persecuted. When you look at the map of Ukraine, you can see that 65% of the church of Christ congregations are located in Donetsk Region. It seems to be a coincidence, but I think that Satan knows whom he should be fighting against. We found ourselves fleeing Gorlovka and living in Ternopil. With God's help we were able to plant a church of Christ here and continue the work of the Bible institute. Your prayers concerning our future were heard.

You can imagine how difficult and scary it was sometimes to live, study and proclaim the Word of God in Eastern Ukraine in spring 2014. Some of our students were in real danger being residents of Western and Central Ukrainian towns and cities, and speaking Ukrainian language predominantly. Nevertheless, we have continued having classes, and on May 25, we

DISTRIBUTION IN ZAPOROZHYE



celebrated graduation. *On the very next day, our Sunday service was disrupted by armed insurgents, and we were forced to leave the building.*

On the bright side, we had seven graduates: five men who started ministering at local churches, and two ladies who are faithful Christians. Alexey Mitskutis has been preaching in Russia during three months in summer, now he is back in Ukraine. Alexey is originally from Gorlovka and his wife Alina is from Kramatorsk. She is pregnant with a second child, so they were forced to move to the north of Ukraine, where it is more peaceful. They are both active members of local congregation. Pavel Glinsky returned to his hometown Krasnoarmeysk, where he is actively helping local preacher (BVBIU graduate) Alexander Rodnayev. Pavel Tuznichenko went to Western Ukraine and spent the summer there, helping the local congregation. Now he is back to his hometown Kryviy Rig, where he revived Church that had been abandoned. Volodymyr Didukh moved back home to Ivano-Frankivsk where he is actively ministering at the Church and helping the main preacher and has established congregation in Starry Lysets. Vlad Borisenko has been helping with the refugees, during the most difficult time in summer. Now he moved to Israel with his mother because of her health problems.

Right now we have nine students in the program: four in the first-year class and five in the second-year class; eight men and one young lady.

In spite of the difficult situations and the forced move we managed to have two youth conferences: one in May and the other in November.

As far as we know, due to this military conflict in Eastern Ukraine there were two new churches planted with the help of BVBIU: one in Ternopil (Western Ukraine) and one in Kryvyy Rig (Central Ukraine). One congregation was restored in Avdeyevka, Donetsk Region. Our graduate Viktor Nakalyuzhnyy preaches there. We helped them financially to replace the broken windows at the place where they meet. Our graduate Dima Kuropyatnikov continues preaching in Donetsk, restoring people to Christ and bringing hope to those who are losing hope because of this dark and dangerous time.

There were no baptisms at the newly planted church in Ternopil yet, just one restoration – a man from Ternopil, Andrey Nuzhnyy. However, our graduates are actively preaching and teaching God's word, bringing people to God. There have been several joyful news of the baptisms at those congregation where they are ministering: Ivano-Frankivsk (Volodymyr Didukh) – 2 baptisms, Odessa (Stas Kuropyatnikov) – 3 baptisms, Dnipropetrovsk (Sasha Rodichev) – 4 baptisms, Krasnoarmeysk (Alexander Rodnayev and Pavel Glinsky) – several baptisms.

Of course we face some difficulties. One of them is that we lost a part of our library and school furniture and belongings, when our building was seized, and we lost building as well. We moved to a safer region, but now we have to rent a place and it is a way more complicated and pricy process. Also it is far from Donetsk Region, which makes it difficult for our Ukrainian teachers to travel to teach here. It complicates the recruitment of new students as well, since there are fewer churches here, and some prospective students find it difficult to move that far away from their families.

However, we do not lose heart. We put our trust in the Lord and make plans to move forward.

DISTRIBUTION IN ZAPOROZHYE



In December, we have placed a banner above the entrance to the church building. Earlier, I was afraid that our activity in this rented place could cause aggressive actions from the side of Orthodox or Catholics. However, gradually we saw that people accept us, and they do not care much who will be in their area. Actually, we have received more visitors due to the banner. One young man, Maksim, noticed our new banner and attends our services often.

Also we were able to start another Bible class group. On Mondays, Sergey Chubenko family hosts all those who want to study God's Word. They intend to invite their neighbors, acquaintances and their landlords. This way we try to use every opportunity to proclaim the Good News of the gospel, and it is the second home group formed to study the Bible.

Mostly the students and staff at the Bible institute attend our services. We have had no baptisms yet. We try to work actively via Bible school for kids. Last time we organized movie event and presentation of the school. Usually kids would come with their parents, and they are interested in which church we represent.

At the end of December, we had festive events together, exchanged presents and congratulations and summed up the passing year. Most of the students went home for the Winter Break. We are expecting their arrival in January.

News of the Bear Valley Bible Institute

In December, the first-year students took such courses: How We Got the Bible and Matthew-Mark (Albert Bagdasaryan teaches those); the second-year students had 1-2 Corinthians (taught by Dennis Sopelnik) and Denominational teachings (taught by Andrew Zhuravlyov).

We have already made the schedule for the second semester, even though we have to correct it from time to time. I am grateful to many American brethren who are willing to come and teach. It seems that we went back to the 90ties when most of the teachers were American. Seeing that many people willing to help with teaching, I want to find a place and time for everyone to come to Ternopil.

Another young man from Kiev region contacted me recently. He attends Shevchekivska church of Christ in Kiev, and right now he thinks about moving to Ternopil and attending BVBIU. It is really a very difficult decision for him since he has a family and a small baby. We will pray that his decision would be according to God's will.

Also I am urging you to pray for Ukraine, especially for the military actions to stop. I am grateful for those brethren who help refugees and those who stayed on the occupied territories at this difficult time.

We send you our greetings. We are grateful for your help, support, encouragement and prayers. Thank you for spiritual and financial support of the Institute and the Church in Ternopil. We would not be able to train ministers and reach the lost with the gospel without your help.

Your brother and coworker,

Dennis Sopelnik, Director BVBIU

**GRAHAM &
FANNIE AMY BRING
CLOTHES AND OTHER
ITEMS FROM OUR
BRETHREN IN
CANADA!**



"I have made my choice to serve God and every day I realize more and more what a great responsibility I have. That is why I would like to ask you for prayers on my behalf so that the Lord would give me wisdom and strength to live a good Christian example and preach Christ the Savior."

PAVAL IN KRIVOY ROG, UKRAINE!

My dear Christian brothers and sisters!

I am very happy to greet you again, my dear brothers and sisters. I ask Lord in my prayers to always bless you for your love and help to all of us and all churches of Christ in Ukraine. Because it is thanks to your help that we can teach classes and help other people. Thank you for your support that is great blessing and I try to use it to bring glory to our Father in Heaven.

I would like to give you my report for the month passed.

We made different handcrafts with paper and plasticine in our children's classes and studied parables of Good Samaritan, about Solomon solving the dispute of two women, about David and Goliath. At the end of each class we had tea and cookies. Children liked it very much and they were willing to come back to classes. My older son Daniel gave some Bible coloring books with lessons to his classmates. They liked those very much and asked for more if we had other coloring books.

We continued studying Genesis in our adult classes. I pray to the Lord every time asking Him to give me wisdom so that I would be able to pass the Truth onto people without twisting it and to teach only those things that are found in Scriptures. I also pray to the Lord asking Him to open hearts of people and to purify their minds to understand His Word. At our worship to the Lord I preached saying that obedience to God is the key to our victory. I also talked about what our true ministry should be like. One Sunday we had a joint worship service with our brothers and sisters from Ivano-Frankivsk on Skype. It was interesting and beneficial to those who had not accepted, by obedience, the Lord in their hearts.

Dear brothers and sisters, I would also like to ask you for prayers on behalf of my mother and sister so that (as with Lydia in Acts 16) the Lord would open their hearts and they would let God into their hearts and gain salvation by obedience to His commands. Please, pray for my ministry in Krivoy Rog asking God to add new souls to His Church.

I wish you a Happy New Year, good health, perseverance in Christ and all manner of God's blessings.

With love your brother Pavel (Tuznichenko)
с любовью ваш брат Павел

VOLODYA SENDS NEWS OF HIS WORK FOR THE LORD!

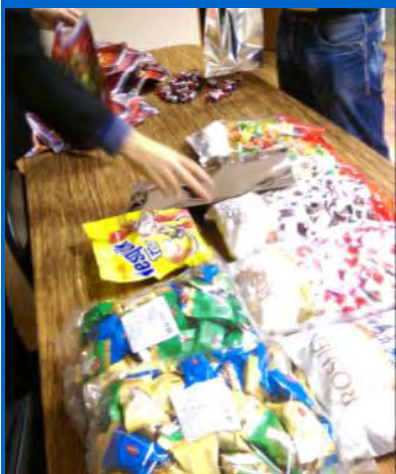
Greetings, dear brothers and sisters. First of all, I would like to give you greetings on behalf of church of Christ in Ukraine, and on behalf of our congregation in particular. My family is sending their greetings, too.

We lived through another year by God's grace. The year brought about a

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"Everything you sent was given to those people who are truly in need... After that, we invited everybody to Church assembly. Fourteen people came and we prayed together about their problems and talked to them about Christ and Church of Christ created by God... Our children put together thirty presents for children from displaced families."



lot of different events. All of you know what Ukraine faced as far as the revolution and war caused by Russia's invasion go. Such situation brings to attention again and again and is a vivid example of the Lord being our power and stronghold and of a great folly and foolishness of those who rely on something earthly or human. But anyway we are thankful to the Father because this year brought about a great many positive and joyful moments in our lives.

As for me personally, I was given an opportunity to graduate from the Bear Valley Bible School this year. Even though the situation in the East was very complicated the Lord kept us safe and gave us opportunity to complete our studies. It was a great blessing because many things opened to me after the School – things that I could not see before.

I have made my choice to serve God and every day I realize more and more what a great responsibility I have. That is why I would like to ask you for prayers on my behalf so that the Lord would give me wisdom and strength to live a good Christian example and preach Christ the Savior.

Another joyful event for the congregation in Ivano-Frankivsk was getting our State registration at last. That endeavor lasted for several years because of all manner of obstacles that Devil put in our way. The fact that the Lord opened those doors for us was a great inspiration to us. We understand, of course, that the Lord does not need any registration but we need it to strengthen our stand with the society and to be able to work even more. It also changed public opinion about us because people treat unregistered groups with apprehension especially here where the Catholicism grows stronger and stronger. That is why that event of registration made us very happy!

Lord also opens up new doors to preach the Gospel. I started working and preaching God's Word in Stary Lysets. It is a great blessing as well as a great responsibility. Now I need to be a good Christian example and beneficial to the village so that people would accept me. I thank God for the humanitarian aid that you collect for us as it helps us build up good relations with the local administration and the Mayor of the village. It is a great plus but we still need to develop more personal contacts and broaden the circle of friends. It is what I am doing now.

I wrote you before that the Mayor gave us a place for work and ministry. It requires repairs but I decided to get down to work and collect funds for repairs at the same time, that is why if you are willing you can help me with it. I was also concerned about heating there, and this week, I met with the Mayor of the village who told me that heating worked there partly – there is one heating line for the whole building of the Village Capitol, where we have our meeting place. We will have heating when the Capitol is heated. It is good but I also understand that we will not have it all the time so I plan to buy a heater after holidays. I am also working on the sign so that people would know where we are. I did not take any furniture there as the doors are broken and everybody can go in and steal it. We are repairing doors now and when it is done I will take a couple of desks, chairs and maybe even a bookcase there so I can work there. But for now I work in our warehouse in Stary Lysets now.

In Stary Lysets there used to be a collective farm there. Cattle barns are privatized now and everybody owning them has a small business and works in that area. I have some contacts there already and little by little I tell

“Among displaced there was a young woman Oksana, 36 years old. Her husband was a Catholic priest who used to preach in the East. They had visited several Catholic churches but none would help refugees. She said she was ashamed of her church that did not want to help people from the East...Oksana came to worship with us and started studying the Bible...She was very surprised to find out that Jesus Christ had siblings, brothers and sisters. She reread those passages several times...She was also very surprised to learn that Jesus is the only mediator between God and people...Some of our good works make people analyze their faith and attitude towards their neighbors.”

people about God. I try to do it tactfully when people are interested or have some questions as far as their lives go, as I do not want to create conflicts. I hope that the Lord will bless me in this work.

I would like to ask you for prayers to support my work in Stary Lysets because the situation there is rather complicated. There are two Orthodox churches in the village, and the Mayor is concerned that there might be religious conflicts with them. So I have to be very careful and tactful in order not to cause the local priests to think that we are trying to overrule them. That is why I would like to ask you for prayers on behalf of this work because God is the only One capable of opening people's hearts and His will is going to be done.

You also know that a young couple, Stas and Anya, live in Stary Lysets. They are refugees from Donetsk, and we try to take care of them. We have good news and it shows power of gospel preaching, that they have decided to make their relationship legal and get married. I think it will happen in the near future. They attend Sunday worship and Bible classes at Ivano-Frankivsk Church regularly. We need to pray for them and I would like to ask you to help us with prayers in order for these two souls to make the most important decision in their lives and be immersed.

This month was fruitful as far as meeting new people, especially displaced ones from the East. First of all, we gave away family buckets that you sent and while doing this we had many opportunities to talk with people and preach the Gospel to them. With God's grace, we were able to help several displaced families and put together New Year's presents for children from those displaced families this week. While doing all that we gave away Bibles and told people about God.

On Wednesday I taught a class on the Acts of Apostles and there was a visitor from that group that we had helped with family buckets and food. It is such a joy to see people's willingness to study the Holy Scripture. Those people suffered great shocks and losses; the majority of them lost their homes in the East, some lost family members—these are frazzled and scared souls. We realize that the Lord wants us to support and encourage those people and especially those that start asking questions about God. Maybe through those difficulties and our preaching they will understand what the Creator wants them to do.

Thus, I am trying to fit in with the Stary Lysets community. I talk about God with those that are open, help with work in Ivano-Frankivsk that is a source of experience and spiritual support to me.

Thank you for prayers and support of my work in God's vineyard. May the Lord bless you in everything you do.

In Christian love, Volodya (Didukh), your brother in Christ
з любов'ю ваш брат Володя.

PS—I am sending you several pictures of the warehouse in Stary Lysets and interaction with displaced people.

We love all of you and thank God for our joint ministry in His name. May the Lord open new doors for Gospel in 2015 in the hearts of those that do not know Him yet; may He give us strength and wisdom to overcome all obstacles on our way to Him.

ANDREW FROM SKVYRA SENDS NEWS OF HIS WORK FOR THE LORD!

Hello dear brothers, Last year was not easy for us. Many of the usual things that were dear to our hearts were destroyed because of the military actions in Eastern Ukraine. We hope that the year 2015 will bring peace, democracy and religious freedom on the occupied territories.

1. Gorlovka—Nothing changed much during the last month in Gorlovka. The Bear Valley Biblical Institute of Ukraine (BVBIU) and church building is still seized. Several DNR officers with their families live there. Upon my request, my father walked around the building again right before the New Year. It looks intact and undamaged externally.

They started giving humanitarian aid (i.e. groceries) to people who are older 65 years. Since there is only one place in town that does that, it led to the queues counting thousands of elderly people who have to stand there for weeks. Many Christian ladies who stayed in town were able to get this help.

Artillery shootings in town do not get stopped. Even on holidays, according to the witnesses who are still in Gorlovka (my parents and Christians from the Church), the explosions were so strong, that the buildings were shaking even in the downtown. Often times there are victims among civilians, who lose their homes and even lives.

Despite the current situation in the Eastern Ukraine and in Gorlovka in particular being tense and dangerous, there is hope that this conflict would be resolved peacefully, and so-called DNR will become a part of peaceful Ukraine. We pray to God every day for us to return to Gorlovka and continue ministering at our building as soon as possible.

2. Kiev, Skvyra—I continue helping Shevchenkivska church of Christ in Kiev. This congregation is need of a preacher. The most possible option for them is to train their own preacher. One of the brothers, Yuriy Romanov, is interested in studying at BVBIU and ministering as a preacher in future. He has a nice Christian family. I gave him Dennis Sopelnik's contacts. Studying at BVBIU would help him to become stronger in doctrine and develop practical skill of a good minister. On Sundays when I stay in Skvyra, I preach in local congregation. I also teach a Bible class on 2 Corinthians on Wednesdays. Together with my wife Veronika and my son Ilya, I visit Christians at their homes, talking to them on biblical topics and strengthening them spiritually.

3. Institute—In December 11-19, I taught a course on Denominational Teachings to the second-year students via Skype. Students made it well through the course successfully managing daily quizzes and final test. Their final grades will be known after the winter break, when they turn their sermon outlines in. I was greatly encouraged by this work, and I am always ready to help BVBIU in any way I can as usual.

Every day I keep in touch with Christians from Gorlovka, both the ones who stayed there and the ones who left the town. They all end their greetings to you and thank you for your financial support that you provided when they needed it the most. Thank you for supporting my work, my family and me. In Christ, Andrew Zhuravlyov—Андрей Журавлев

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