Russian/Ukrainian Ministry

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, dear family and friends,

This is the time of year to express how grateful we are to each other and to God for His bountiful blessings!

Thank you for supporting our mission in Ukraine and Russia. This mission has been possible because many of you contribute to it. Over two hundred people have joined us on mission trips. With your collaboration we started the Church in Sochi (Russia) and in the Donetsk region of Ukraine, the Church in Toretsk, (formerly Dzerzhinsk) and helped support their sister Church in the neighboring city of Bahmut (formerly Artyomovsk).

The last two years have been the most difficult because of the war in eastern Ukraine which is continuing, even though it is rarely mentioned on the news in USA. The city of Donetsk had among the very first Churches of Christ in the former Soviet Union. This city with a population close to one million people had as many as twenty five Churches of Christ and was the most welcoming to our missionaries. But thousands of people have left the Donetsk region in search of peace, safety and jobs. The Church in Ivano-Frankivsk (in western Ukraine) welcomed many refugees and now with the support of many American Christians, including the Campus Church of Christ, is in the process of constructing a church building of their own.

We have just received and translated very touching letters from children and their parents at school 13 (Toretsk). We are very happy to share these words of gratitude with you. We also include letters from the children in Ivano-Frankivsk, where we had Bible Camps during the last two years.

We have begun recruiting team members to staff the camps we will be conducting next summer in Ukraine. The first camp will begin with orientation on May 31 in Ivano-Frankivsk. The second camp will be in a campground in the Poltava region, June 14-18. Although we are happy to have mature Christians of any age on our teaching staff, we are especially hoping to attract some college students this year. If you wish to volunteer to work im either camp (or both) please contact Mike Lawson, Director of Camps, 412 E 2nd Avenue, Lenoir City, TN 37771-2512. Or feel free to contact us directly at 9044 SW 79th Avenue, Gainesville FL 32608.

Our work is made possible by gifts from churches and individuals whose goals are the same as ours: fulfillment of the Great Commission and sharing of our relative riches with the very poor and disabled, both children and adults. Contributions to the Russian/Ukrainian Ministry may be sent to the Meridian Woods Church of Christ, 2870 N Meridian Road, Tallahassee FL 32301.

Again, thank you very much for your support and generosity. May God bless you.

William and Lyuba Wharton

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Information from Toretsk (Dzerzhinsk) School 10 and 13 Children that receive meals from Christians in USA.

The lunch meal we provide is very modest, served on small, dessert size plates. The lunch usually consists of a small piece of fish or sausage, about half a cup of mashed potatoes or rice, a small slice of bread, a roll and slightly sweetened tea. During a short period in spring and in fall a piece of fresh cucumber or tomato is added. The children are always very happy with their meals, no crumbs are left on the plates. Thank you to everybody who is helping to provide these lunches! For many children this is the best meal of the day!







During the 2015-2016 school years we have been feeding 180 children (school 10 and 13) every school day. Meal cost – 14.70 grivnas ≈ 60 cents. We also provided a lighter meal (30 cents) for 173 elementary school children almost all last school year. This year the city started providing 20 cent snacks (a piece of bread and hot tea) for the 1-4th graders.

We get a detailed report every month regarding the meals per day we have paid. The list of children is made by a committee of teachers and parents. Those who are especially needy get the meal. If a child from the list is not able to come to school on a given day, an alternate child from the additional list is selected for that day. In the columns of the following table you can see the names and grades of the children from school 10. These children are getting meals paid by the people from USA. You also can see some information about their family situation and family's income per month.

Name and grade of the child	Family situation	Income in dollars
Nikita Malyavin, 5 A	Lives with mom and sister. Father died.	\$52
Sofia Rozumnyak, 5 A	Lives with mother and 2 siblings. Mother is a nurse. Father died	\$60
Daria Bayeva, 5B	Lives with mother	\$31
Dmitriy Antoshin	Father was killed at the mine. Lives with mom and a brother	\$120
Sofia Klevana, 6B	Lives with mother, she is disabled, works as a nurse	\$42
Vlad Veryovkin 6B	Lives with father, mother died	\$40
Lisa Soloduhina 6B	Lives with single mother. Mother works at the store	\$55
Julia Baraban 7 B	Lives with single mother and sibling	\$31
Evgeny Barabash, 7 B	Lives with disabled father and mother	\$112
Alexander Iskanderov, 7 B	Lives with mom and sibling. Mother works at the market	\$56
Tatiana Danilova, 6A	Lives with mother and 3 siblings, father is in prison	\$120
Vacheslav Zozulya, 6A	Lives with disabled mother	\$52
Alina Kravchenko, 6A	Lives with mother, she is a nurse. Father died	\$80
Anastasia Marchenko, 6 A	Mother works at the bakery. Father died	\$80

The students and teachers at School 10 ask for prayers for peace in the region. They certainly miss summer Bible camps with American teachers and all hope we will resume our Bible camps. We miss our Dzerzhinsk Bible camps too. And we miss our

worship with Christians under the grape vine.







Sunday Worship.



The children at our school know how much you do for our school and for many families. I am an 11th grader and I know how much it costs to pay for the food. My mother works as a secretary and takes care of us, her two children. Her salary is very low and every month we try very hard to stretch it for 30 days, we buy very little, some food, some clothing and necessities. We are so blessed to have you as our good friends. I am very concerned about other children in our city. Nobody feeds them in their schools. On behalf of all the children of our school and all our parents I thank you and other people who are so sharing and generous toward us. When I start working and earning money I will help those who are hungry and in need. May God keep you safe. Masha Tarasova

Dear Christian friends,

With all my heart I thank you for helping the students at school 13. I am the grandmother of Darina Vlasenko, 11th grade student. It happened so that Darina lives with me. Her mother left her and we do not know where she is. Her father, my son, has another family. I am happy that I have a place to live and Darina can live with me, but my modest pension is way too little for the two of us. Thank you for providing lunches for children at school. Every day Darina comes home and tells me what a nice lunch she had. According to her the food is always delicious and hot! I thank you and admire you for your care, your kindness and your generosity. I wish you to be in good health and never experience war and poverty.

Parents of the 5th graders:

Our dear Bill, Countless times we say "Thank you" for all your kindest deeds. There is no way for us to return the favors we get, so please accept our sincere words of gratitude. May all the people you meet in your life be as nice to you as you are nice to our children. We wish you to have great health and life full of joy and laughter!

On behalf of all the children of the 5th grade, school 13 we thank you for your care for our children. We had never thought we would live in war time. We are very sorry our children have been in the war zone for two years. You have not forgotten our children, you and your Christian friends have been feeding most of the kids at school 13. And the food is delicious and fresh and such a variety! This is the best meal of the day for so many children. If it is possible please do not stop providing money for school lunches. We have never been in a worse situation. We are bowing humbly in gratitude and respect for your kindness.

Hello kind people in America,

We are 6th graders, and writing to you to say "Thank you" to everybody who is helping to pay for our meals at school 13. Our class got much smaller, only seven of us left and all our families are struggling. None of us would be able to pay for lunches but we are getting them every school day. The food is always very good and we love everything! Thank you for your warm-heartedness and understanding.

Moseiko Julia, would like to express my thankfulness to you, kind people, for feeding my three children at school 13: Lyuba, 2nd grade; Andrey, 3rd grade, Nikita 4th grade. I have difficult time providing for the four of us. From time to time I find some very little pay jobs. I can work just a few hours while the children are at school. I have not been able to get any help from the government so far, you help me most of all, my children get good meals at school. My mother-in-law shares her pension with us, helping us to survive. Many thanks to you. May the people of your country live in peace and well-being.

Like many families who stay here in the war zone, my three small children live in fear and need. Two of my girls are in 3rd grade, and the youngest one in the 2nd. We live on alimonies. It is impossible to find a job, with stopped coal mines we all turned into unemployed. I also try to help my elderly mom, and she tries to share her little pension with all of us. At the market we have difficult

time finding groceries we can afford. You are feeding all my girls at school, and I am immeasurably thankful to you. I wish you to be happy and healthy and most of all never see the war.

My name is Oleg Genadievich Nevedrov. I am writing to say "thank you" to many people in USA who have been providing hot meals for our children at school 13, in the city of Toretsk. We have four sons in our family, three of them are at school 13. I am happy I still have my job at the mine, my wife takes care of our home. My salary of 3000 hryvnas (\$120) a month can hardly pay for bread and water. There is no way I would pay even for one school lunch. Thank you, kind people for buying lunches for three of my sons at school. Thank you for your generosity, your empathy and compassion. May God keep you safe.

Letter was written by Nevedrov, 9th grade.

am the mother of Nikita Itsenko, a student of 9th grade, my name is Olga Itsenko. I am a single mother. I do have a job, work at the mine, the salary is minimal. It is tough to live on my income. I am very thankful to you for feeding Nikita. It is very comforting to know he is not hungry at school. He is very thankful certainly too, he says the food is always delicious and hot. Please say thank you on behalf of all the mothers of children from school 13 to everybody who contributes for the hot meals for our children. May your families live in happiness.

Dear Bill Wharton.

All the Nikolayevs family is writing this letter to you and your American friends. Three of us, Nikolayevs' children are at school 13. Our mom is taking care of our little siblings at home and our dad is working hard at several jobs. We know our parents are doing everything they can but our dad's money cannot pay for our family needs. You pay for our three meals at school and this is a great support to us and comfort to our parents. We thank you very sincerely for your kindness and unselfishness.

Our dear friends in USA,

My name is Yanina Lubashenko, I am the mother of Diana, 7th grade student. Twice in these two years of war our house suffered destruction from explosions. The weather is already very cold, but we still are trying to make some walls and roof repairs. Of course materials we need for the house are way too expensive for us. You are feeding our daughter at school, this is a very big help. Thank you for your care and attention to our family.

Dear Christians of Church of Christ,

I am expressing my sincere gratitude for providing meals to my daughter Anastasia Danilova, 4th grade. Our city is in a very difficult situation. Most of the people lost their jobs. I live with my two children, get a little subsidy from the government. If it were not for my mom's help we would not be able to survive. Mom gets pension and shares with us. We buy only the cheapest food and clothes but there are other necessities too. I am very thankful to you for supporting your families and thinking about us, people you do not even know. May God be with you. May your country live in peace.

Dear Christians,

My name is Olga Neskorodova. From all my heart I thank you for your help, for providing free meals for my children. I have seven children. Three of them, Vladimir, Diana and Nastya are at school 13 and they get their best meals at school. The last 2 years we have lived in fear for our lives. We are tired of this terrible war. Some of our neighbors lost their homes. Majority of us living in this city lost our income. I would be very happy to do any job but cannot find any. Thank you for sharing your families' resources with us, thank you for feeding my children. Live in peace and wellbeing.

May-June 2016. Ivano-Frankivsk, western Ukraine. School 1.

Week 1, Bible Camp for 9-Graders







Nine-graders sharing their experiences at the Bible camp 2016



I just want to tell you that I liked you, our teachers, very much. I think all our classmates would say this too. I loved to sing with you, Dr. William and I liked Lyuba. Miss Lyuba was joyful and kept us busy all the time. Communication with you two was very pleasant. If you read it please know I also liked Lyuba's smile and William's beard. Kisses, Eduard





Dear William and Lyuba, Thank you very much for so many wonderful moments. We learned a lot of new and useful for life things every day. You have made this one week unforgettable for us. We will remember and sing the songs we learned with you. And we will dance for exercise! Please come back! Natalia



I loved the stories you told us, especially I liked the story about the tiger, the story about the football player helping the player from the opposing team and I liked our Zumba exercises! Nazar





As for me I loved singing most of all at our camp. I loved our Lyuba, Dr. William and others teachers' singing. It was just breath-taking! I will always remember you with smiles. I hope we will see you again next year. And I will be happy to sing for you next year too! Zoryana







The youngest student in class Volodya (11 y o) asked to join the group of 9-graders and

did very well!

This story happened at the supermarket. I was buying fruit and vegetables. It took me long to choose everything I needed. I finally came to the cashier. I put my hand into my shorts pocket but there was no money. Nothing! I felt very bad and had to go home. Suddenly one lady came to me, put her hand on my shoulder. And said: Do not be scared. I will pay for your produce." I could not believe her, thought she was just making a joke. You are smiling, you are joking, right? It cannot be truth". "I am not lying, and I am not joking either. Please believe me." OK, I said. She paid for me, I thanked her and hurried home to tell this story to my mom. Volodya, 11.

You taught us to pronounce correctly all the words in English. And you always talked about doing good for people and about peace. And you taught us about true love and how to be better people. We also had much fun too. We spent all our time usefully. I liked to play the "Jeopardy" game. You helped me a lot with my English. And you were very kind and just.

With love and respect, Volodya, 11.







Hello, Ms Lyuba and Mr. William! If you read this letter you will know I am very thankful to you. I had the most wonderful time during this past week. I learned a lot of new things! I am feeling more comfortable with my English, I learned a lot of stories from the Bible, learned many songs and enjoyed exercising and dancing Zumba! You made me very happy for five days! Thank you for all. I send many kisses to you. Max

I liked every moment of our time together. I especially loved the story about Ruth. I also loved the story about the officer who saved the USSR and USA and all the world from the war. It was very interesting to work on our posters about the fruit of the Spirit. We had so much fun dancing Zumba together! We also learned new songs and sang them so well! Thank you very much for the time you spent with us. (Anonymous)



Mark (Svyatoslav): I liked this camp very much. We talked about love. Love also brings joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and self-control. I loved all our new songs! I keep singing "This is the day that the Lord has made! And I loved "Let My People Go" song very much! And dancing Zumba together was great! I loved our camp!



It was such wonderful time! I liked to sing, liked our discussions, and loved Jeopardy game. I loved all the stories you told us and the stories our students shared. I loved to be in all our classes! (Anonymous)

I had a lot of fun at the camp. I loved to listen to William and Lyuba's stories and play games with our classmates. I will miss you a lot. (Anonymous)



This week was very busy, it was filled with a lot of good activities. I loved to be in this camp. We had very little time with you, Ms. Lyuba and Dr. William, and Olga. Mr. Mike, Mike Jr, Rebecca, Patrice and Bill but I definitely improved my communication in English. I enjoyed dancing Zumba, playing Jeopardy, loved lots of stories about Jesus we discussed during our classes. I am very grateful to you for this week. I want to wish you happiness, good health and good life. I will be waiting to see you again in the future. Best wishes, Vlad



I loved this camp! I learned to dance Zumba! I loved Dr. William and Lyuba and all our lessons! So much we learned in such a short time! Please come next year. With Love, Alena

I received a lot of knowledge and lots of fun at this camp. I loved to speak English all the time, loved to listen and tell the stories. I loved our songs and loved to play Jeopardy game, volleyball, dance Zumba and work on our posters. I am very thankful to Dr. William and Miss Lyuba and to two mikes who organized Jeopardy. (Anonymous)

I loved to be in this camp. I learned a lot! Most of all I love the stories we listened, read and discussed. I loved our short Zumba breaks and singing a lot of songs. I think I have improved my English speaking with my new American teachers. I will remember this camp always. Oh, the Jeopardy game was very intellectual! (Anonymous)





What can I say about this summer camp? I can say it was very joyful and interesting. I discovered many new things about USA and American people. My English became better and I started understanding you so much better than on the first day. It was hard on the first day, you spoke so fast! I really liked the stories from the Bible.

The Bible has many pieces of advice for us and it teaches us to be good people, for example, it teaches us to love, to live in peace, to use self-control... I enjoyed our Zumba break. You are wonderful people. You taught me personally not to give up no matter what difficulties happen in my life. Thank you for the time you devoted to us. Oksana





I like this camp. I loved our talking about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control. I loved to sing songs with you! I now know more than ten beautiful songs. My favorites are "This is the Day" and "Let my people go". I will also remember never to say "sink" instead of "think". I liked our Jeopardy game and Zumba too

Thank you so much for spending your time with us. We will never forget you, Ms. Lyuba and Dr. William. P.S. Thank for singing with us, Mr. Bill. Thank you, Mike and Mike for Jeopardy! And Thanks to Susan and Patrice and Olga! Mike (Misha). I love you, Ms. Lyuba and Dr. William.





Dear teachers, I am very sad you are not going to be with us next week. However in my heart I will remember a lot of wonderful moments. Zumba made us all so joyful! I loved our songs, our game, I loved William's stories to us. Those stories were very educational for our lives. You helped us to pronounce English words correctly; I loved our rehearsal for the Friday concert. I am sure I will remember these days all my life. Love, Vika

This week was great. I am very thankful to Dr. William and Ms. Lyuba for explaining everything very clearly, and corrected us very politely. Thank you for teaching us to avoid making mistakes in the future. Sincerely this week was full of good lessons for the whole life. I heard a lot of new stories from the Holy Bible. I realized that the Bible has very interesting stories, especially the way Dr. William and Lyuba told them. The stories we heard really made us think about the way we should live our lives, think and re-evaluate our behavior, try to think how to help other people.



I was very pleasantly impressed by good manners of our American teachers. I am so inspired to be more like you, our teachers. I loved the songs we sang together, I loved singing meaningful songs and learn English this way too! I understand now that love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control are from God and we should share about what we learn with others too. It was fun to play Jeopardy every day. This game also taught us not to lose a good chance. And I love every minute of communication with our Americans, they are the most sincere, they are the friendliest people I have ever met! I apologize for us being not perfect students sometimes but I am personally grateful to you for teaching us. And I also thank you for the ice-cream! And I want to say that I love you. And I will miss you, let's do this camp again! You are the best really! Desk 2, on the middle column, Natalia D.







I have learned a lot this week with Dr. William and Ms. Lyuba. We read a lot of stories from the Bible, the stories that taught us some good life rules. We learned and sang some songs. Some songs are so beautiful and I want to sing them on and on. We played the game called Jeopardy; I learned a lot from the game too! The whole week was interesting and fun. I can understand, and speak, and write better in English because all this week we communicated in English! I know now about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control, I know what these important words really mean.

I want to thank Ms. Lyuba and Dr. William that they spent this time teaching us about this all. Our lessons were really interesting, amazing and awesome! If I had a chance I would attend these exactly lessons one more time and if it happens I want to see you as our teachers again. I really will miss you and your lessons. See you later (I hope). Please come to Ukraine again and we will see each other one more time. And also thank you for the ice-cream. Angelika

It was great to work on our poster together! I loved all the time we spent together! It was interesting and useful, and joyful. I loved to sing and do the skits. I will miss you very much and I am asking you, "Please come back next year!





Bible lessons activities





Acapella Singing

Mid-day exercises - "Zumba" in a very hot classroom without air conditioning. And No complaints!

Chorus rehearsal





Talent show

Ninth-graders final Jepardy and performance

Second week. Bible Camp with seniors. Theme: Fruit of the spirit





Bible lessons





Skits on Fruit of the Spirit







Poster presentations "Fruit of the Spirit in our lives





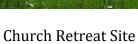




Worship with Ivano -Frankivsk Church of Christ

Greeting just baptized Yaroslav and Lyubov







Ladies Class at Church Retreat