



TERNOPIL, UKRAINE

1st Quarter 2012 Report

January 2012

Hello, dear friends!

In this letter, I want to talk about a mature act by the young people from the church.

In Ukraine, during the Christmas holidays, people go "caroling." It's going to friends, acquaintances and even strangers, and they sing "Christmas Carols." For most non-believers this is the chance to earn a little money. Many teenagers, children, and even alcoholics earn no small amount of money this way, because money is usually given to those who sing carols to you. The Christmas carols, too, are different. Among Russian Orthodox, the songs are more traditional. Among our believers the carols are more evangelistic.

Somewhere over the months before Christmas, I decided to rehearse with our young people some of the songs that they could take with the Gospel to relatives and friends. More than once I heard how they learned new songs. It was very difficult. In truth, I did not expect much to come of it. But Christmas was coming closer; I saw that they were determined, and more and more people come to rehearsals.

During the Christmas holidays, they did not waste time in vain, and for three days in a row from home to home, from one street to another, went with songs about the birth of Christ. Sometimes it was possible to witness. To some people they gave New Testaments. When they were offered money, they refused. But if the givers insisted that they take the money, then they accepted it. So even "not taking the money," they accumulated a decent sum (about 200 dollars).

I was wondering how they would spend it. Well, I thought, probably they will all go bowling with the youth. But what they did, it was for me very pleasant. Among young people there is a young guy named Nazar. He is 17 years old, but he is very small. His height is about the same as my 6-year-old son, David, and maybe less. Just a few weeks after Christmas he was supposed to go to Poland for surgery to correct curvature of the legs and arms. Our young people decided to donate most of the money for his treatment. It was great. I praised God for their mature conduct.

Pray for our youth and the leaders of this ministry,

February

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov.22: 6)

Peace be with you, dear children of God, and our brothers and sisters!

As you may have guessed, in this letter, I would like to share the blessings and prayer needs that relate to youth ministry.

The Lord so led us, that from the beginning we focused on children's and youth ministry. Modestly, as best we could and as best we knew how, we met with young people, children, and shared with them the Good News. Some believed. But in the last two years we have had difficulties with the youth ministry. There were no youth leaders. We prayed about it. I asked everyone to pray about it, and you were praying. And God did His work. We thought the Lord might give us a leader somewhere. I invited some men that I thought could come to serve, but nothing worked. At this time, something began to take over our brothers and sisters of the church. Until recently we did not have a main youth leader, but there were local leaders. Someone was in charge of singing in the youth meetings on Friday, and someone else would prepare a biblical theme, someone was in charge of the meeting on Saturday, someone was responsible for communicating on the Internet. Someone led a homegroup on Wednesdays. And something began to happen. Young people began to attend Sunday worship more.

A big push in the youth ministry came from the summer youth camps in 2011 (day camp in Ternopil and a stationary

camp in the Carpathians). We saw that we did not reach the youth of college age, due to the fact that our leaders were not ready, but around us appeared a lot of young people -- high school students. And we began to work with them. Some of them had come to us as children.

Now we start to organize youth ministry.

First, these "local leaders" joined the team leaders and team overseen by Andrei, and Sergey helps him. *Please pray about the leaders of youth ministry.*

The ministry includes several directions.

- Youth service on Fridays. This is a meeting of young people, usually attended by 15-20. Once a month, the youth decided to conduct evangelistic youth team and invite friends. At the last service, there were about 35 people. At this meeting, I spoke with young people about the biblical view of sex.

- Meetings on Saturdays. If Friday's are more thematic and biblical, the meeting on Saturday focused on the joint recreation and socializing. For these meetings, leaders also prepare some sort of lesson; it may be more informal and short.

- Internet evangelism. It seems that about a year ago, the guys have created a social network group "in contact" At this time there are 152 participants. I think that the majority of the people believe. On this page they lead discussions, post photos, interesting videos.

- Learning to play the guitar. One of our leaders, Sergei, is able to play a little guitar. Once a few young people asked him to teach them to play the guitar. So there was another meeting with the youth.

- One of the girls speaks English well. She was asked by some young people to help them practice in English, so now there was another small group.

Please pray for our youth.

Now several of the young people are preparing for baptism, attend group training.

March

The "Revival" Christian Rehab Center for men addicted to drugs and alcohol

“The Son of Man came to seek
and to save that which was lost.” (Luk.19: 10)

For slightly more than 3 years, our New Life Baptist Church in the city of Ternopil has been running a rehabilitation center. The church was established six years ago, and it now has 24 members. From the beginning, God sent to our meetings people who are addicted to alcohol or drugs. We have seen that we cannot help them in the worship services or home groups. They require more attention. We began to pray about this need, and the Lord blessed us with a small, old house near the forest in the village Zarubentsi (25 km from Ternopil). Together with the house we have 0.65 hectares of land. This farm is situated 450 m from the last home in the village, which is an ideal location for partial isolation of the rehabilitants from temptations during the beginning of their rehabilitation.

For 14 years no one lived in the house we bought, so it all started with a general cleaning and minimal furnishings. We finished one room and took on the rehabilitation of first rehabilitants. Further repair and furnishing, to a great extent, was done by the rehabilitants themselves. At the present time can take up to eight men at a time. The land and the house is owned by the church.

The path to freedom.

All rehabilitation consists of 3 stages, each of which lasts an average of three months. In the first two stages (six months) the rehabilitants live directly in the rehabilitation center, and the third phase (three months) is the period of adaptation to a new life in a familiar environment. During this period rehabilitants live in an apartment in the city center under the supervision of the ministers: They look for a job, go to work, pay the rent, get fed, vaccinated subjects practiced for six months of rehabilitation at the center.

The basic truth of the rehabilitation process was proclaimed by Christ: "As ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). In the daily routine rehabilitants engage in physical labor, plus time for morning and afternoon reading the Bible. Rehabilitants along with the ministers of the church attend worship, Bible study, and the course "Fundamentals of the faith."

Our blessings.

Since the founding of the center we have had in rehabilitation 27 men. With God's help, 13 of them returned to normal life, have created or renewed their families, and serve in the church. Some of them became addicted to serving others. These people come not only from our region, but also from different parts of Ukraine and some even now live and serve in Georgia.

Here are a few stories of rehabilitation.



Zurab and Alexander. Our first rehabilitants. Zurab was a drug addict from the Republic of Georgia. In Ukraine he lost his documents, putting his stay outside the law. After rehabilitation he returned to Georgia. He lives a new life and helps drug addicts return to Georgia to live in freedom. Alexander from Kiev was addicted alcohol. After rehabilitation, for about 3 years he's living in Kiev. He works installing water supply and heating. He serves in the church.



Anatoly. A native of Poltava. Addicted for 5 years. As a result he created a broken family; his son was brought up without a father. During rehabilitation he received Christ. He began life with the Lord. He returned home. God helped restore his family. A second child was born. Anatoly helps other addicts.



Gregori from Khmelnytsky was alcohol-dependent. With him it was not easy. Early in rehabilitation he disputed with ministers, trying to prove things from the Bible. God gave him a special grace to freedom. He returned to Khmelnytsky, works, serves in the church, and is trying to repair relations with his son.

Oleg. Addicted to alcohol. He has long believed in the Lord, was a member of a church, but walked away from God, which led to a deep dependency. During his rehabilitation he renewed his relationship with God and was released. He lives in Kiev, works, plays in a church music group.

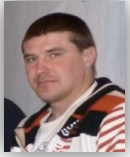
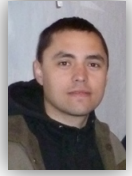


Philip. Addict from Yalta. Our brothers from the church worked in Yalta there met him. Philip's father became a believer when he was a drug addict. His mother was an alcoholic and died from that. Philip had lost the confidence of relatives, lost his friends. He had no hope for salvation. He was invited to the rehabilitation center. He had nothing to lose. During rehabilitation he believed in the Lord, was baptized in the faith, became active in service.



The ministers of the center.

Eugene Gulyev, 28 years old. A native of Lugansk. In the past, he was a drug addict for 7 years. He recovered at the rehabilitation center "New Life" in Rivne. He has lived with the Lord 5 years. In addition to serving in a rehabilitation center, preaching in the church, he leads a group home for dependent people. Graduated from the Kiev Theological Baptist Seminary.



Sergei Voznyuk, 27 years old. A native of Kherson. In the past was alcoholic for two years. Before getting saved, he could not remember three words; he now can quote long passages from the New Testament texts. It loves the Lord. When not serving in a rehabilitation center, he is engaged in street evangelism.

Victor Zozulya, 38 years old. A native of Khmelnytsky region. Married, father of 2 boys, 3 and 5 years. He has been walking with the Lord for 13 years. Before getting saved, he was had a criminal past, mixed dependence. He helps in the center at farming (keeping the rabbit hutch, vegetables ...), and he works toward future activities of the rehabilitation center so that it will not be dependent on donations.



Opportunities for cooperation.

How can you serve?

How can you serve? With prayers. The rehabilitation of the addict is, first and foremost, a spiritual process. Moreover, it is a serious spiritual struggle. Therefore, we are in need of prayer support. If you have a prayer in a church group or people who have a prayer service, add us to your list.

With donations. The rehabilitation of one person on average costs \$1200 U.S. per month. These costs include: accommodation, payment of utility bills, food, treatment, transport costs, minimal building maintainance, a small financial salary for the attendants (\$62/month). Usually we ask rehabilitants; families or the church, who are asking for help in rehabilitation, to take at least a portion of the costs (\$62-\$74/mo.). But this is only half. Sometimes we are asked to help people who do not have resources and have no one who would pay for them.

We also need funds for development of services as a whole. We have a barn in disrepair. We do not have a pen for raising pigs, not to mention more cattle. We need to pump the septic tank.

We will be glad of any help, temporary or permanent. For our part we promise to write to you about how we spend money that you send us.

With best wishes from the church "New Life"
Pastor Vitaly Bilak