



## *GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH*

### **Church Planting in Chervona Sloboda**

*1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2016*

#### **January**



The previous year has ended, and now we have finished the first month of the year 2016. This tells us that we have drawn one year nearer to eternity. We need to resolve to be busy doing our Lord's will, to do everything possible to expand and grow the Kingdom of God, since we are His workers in this world. God has given us various gifts for ministry, and these ministries are diverse. One of the ministries of our church is a children's puppet theater. Since the beginning of this year, our puppet theater has put on about 15 presentations. We have visited churches, orphanages, kindergartens, public schools, and a juvenile detention center.

This detention center is where teens and young people serve a term of punishment for committing crimes at a young age. When our friends went there, it was a little scary for them, but when they got acquainted with the young men there, they understood that they are normal kids, many of whom landed there accidentally for stupid causes. Some young people are held here for petty theft. For instance, one boy is incarcerated for stealing a can of jam from a store. We went there to share the Good News and the love of God with these young people. The boys watched the presentation of the puppet theater, and they listened to the preaching of the Gospel, and you could see that some of them were drawing closer to the light. They listened to the preaching of the Gospel and it was evident that many of them are drawn to the light, that darkness and sin is not their environment, that they are here in error. Pray for the salvation of these children, that the Lord will bless them to receive the Word of God and change their lives.

The president of the BIEM mission, Samuel Slobodian, visited our church. And he did not come with empty hands. Samuel donated puppets for our theater. This was remarkable. The children jumped for joy when they saw that new puppets had arrived. We watched a film about the BIEM mission and learned much about its ministry. Samuel gave us one additional gift—a speaker to improve the quality

of the sound of the puppet theater for churches. We really needed this for ministry. A huge thanks to you from our church for your prayers and support. This is a huge blessing for us. Thanks to you, ministry is taking place here in Ukraine. May the Lord bless you!

Pray for the ministry of the puppet theater, for the children who serve in this theater. For them this is a big blessing.

## February



Our puppet theater was created with the goal of ministering to children and involving children in ministry. It's pleasing observe children who are involved in this theater. They really enjoy this ministry, and they impatiently wait for new activities that involve the theater.

The team is very friendly. Among them reigns an atmosphere of love and mutual understanding. The boys are from disadvantaged homes. They had learned many bad things. Rudeness and swear words were normal for them. But how joyful to see how their lives are changing, how they are learning to submit and to respect each other. We are very glad that the Lord blessed us with the formation of such a theater group.

Recently, our theater troupe visited an orphanage-boarding school in the city of Berdichev, which is 180 kilometers from Kiev. This is a facility for children whose parents who have had their parental rights legally removed, and it's also a place for mentally retarded children. We put on two shows for the children and rehearsed songs with them and distributed gifts.

There were two groups of children, a younger group and an older group. I preached the Word of God to the older ones, and they listened attentively. Some of the older ones live in sin there. While the children listened to preaching





Lord bless you!

## March

### *Prison Ministry*

Typically, small churches face a number of questions, such as: “What can we do to help our church grow? In which ways and with what means can we minister? Where can we get experienced ministered? Who will be here to develop ministry? Where can we find finances for ministry?” There are many such questions, and others. We always pray and ask the Lord where we can be useful and how we can serve Him. There are many ways in which a small church can serve, if there is a desire to serve. We cannot boast that we are something special, for instance, that we are big, important workers in God's harvest fields, but in the years of our church's existence, we have accomplished something useful. Here are several of these ministries: evangelism in this ministry and in neighboring villages, children's camps, ministry in children's kindergartens, social



ministry, ministry to widows and lonely people, and helping in the ministry of rehabilitation centers. Recently the Lord gave us the ministry of a puppet theater, which targeted ministry to children. This outreach has been a special blessing to us. Through it, we can bring the Truth to kids, and we can't help but rejoice over this. Yet, we didn't expect the Lord to lead us further. Beginning this year, yet another ministry opportunity opened for us. That is, ministry in prisons, and you won't believe it, but we minister in prisons with our puppet theater! We never thought that adults would watch a puppet show with great pleasure and with tears in their eyes. This was something unbelievable. For us, this was an unexpected turn of events. Who would have thought that it would be so simple for us, as if to a child, to explain Gospel Truth to adults? God is

great! Prisoners not only watch the spectacle with pleasure, but they ask us to come again. Of course, we also sing for them and preach the Word of God. But a simple, children's show is able to penetrate hard hearts and incline people to receive God's truths. In the first two months of this year, our puppet theater has visited about 10 prisons and detention centers—for juveniles and for men and for women. This greatly encourages our little church. We rejoice that we can serve the Lord in such a way.

about the consequences of sin, it was obvious that many were embarrassed. Some blushed, and they were ashamed at how they were living. One girl cried. I recounted the testimony of my own life for the children, about how the Lord changed my life. We invited the kids to pray. They repeated a prayer of repentance. It was clear that some children did this sincerely. The caregivers of that facility were very favorably inclined toward us and thanked us for the visit. They admitted to how hard it was for them to work with such children and expressed appreciation for the Word of God that had been preached to them.

Please pray for this orphanage-boarding school, for the children and for the caregivers. Pray for our theater troupe.

We are extremely thankful to you, dear brothers and sisters, for your prayers and your support, that in this you demonstrate your love and participation. May the

Pray for our church, that the Lord will open new ways to minister for Him, and for the puppet theater group, and for the prison ministry.

We want to thank you, dear brothers and sisters, for your prayers, and for the fact that you love us and support us in this labor. Thanks to you, God's work is going forth here in our country of Ukraine. May the Lord bless you!

Yours truly,  
Vitaly Yurchenko