



**The Petrenkos**

**January 2018**

We send greetings to you, dear brothers and sisters!

We'd like to share with you some of our blessings from this past month. First of all, let us tell you about a special opportunity that the Lord gave us. This is a testimony to Him.

During the Christmas holidays, we had a number of evangelistic outreaches. This is an excellent time to share with people the tidings about the birth of Jesus Christ! We had planned to learn by heart a song about the birth of Jesus Christ and to walk to various apartments and to sing about Jesus. Also, afterward we greeted people in commemoration of Christ's birth and gave New Testaments and flyers about our church, on which was information about our worship services.

As we visited various apartments, people had different reactions to our arrival. Some gladly opened their doors and listened to our singing. One woman declared, "I heard about you last year, and here you are!" She said this with such joy, that she gave the impression she'd been waiting for us all this time since last year. With others, the moment they heard the singing about Christ, they closed their doors right in our faces. True, there weren't many of those, just two apartments. But overall we enjoyed wonderful feelings.

In Ukraine there is a tradition during Christmas time to visit apartments and sing Christmas carols about the birth of Jesus Christ. And usually, when children or adults come to carol, then people give in return sweets or money. But we did the opposite; we came in order to give things away. Some people thought up some interesting excuses for us to accept something from them anyway. For instance, some said that they wanted to give a tithe to the church. 😊

Also, we didn't limit ourselves only to civilians. We planned an excursion to the military area for the soldiers and officers, also to sing and tell about Christ and invite them to services. When we arrived, there was an interesting reaction among the soldiers. They couldn't understand why we had come, what our goal could be for visiting a military base. Usually at Christmas nobody goes there, but not all of them are able to get off and go home for Christmas. So we disrupted tradition 😊 and sang to them about Christ. There, too, we distributed New Testaments, invitations, and sweets. This was a good time, when we could serve the Lord, for which we praise Him!

Please pray with us concerning the following needs:

1. That God will work in the people who heard about Christ.
2. For the Sunday school ministry.
3. Concerning the floor hockey, that the team will have all that it needs.
4. For the growth of the church.
5. For the teen ministry to girls, that God will work in their hearts.

That's all we wanted to share for this time, dear brothers and sisters!

## February 2018

Greetings to you, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord!

We would like to share with you some of the blessed moments that God permitted us to enjoy this month.

First of all, thanks to the BIEM mission, we were able to make happy the children from the Sunday school, who received Christmas gifts. The kids were very glad to receive gifts, and they felt the holiday of Christmas. There was also an opportunity to give gifts of groceries to families with many children, or to underprivileged families, and to a small number of elderly people. The goal wasn't simply to distribute gifts, but to give out New Testaments and in the future to continue to fellowship and study the Bible with them.

One elderly grandfather was glad that we had come to him, and he was glad to receive the gift of groceries. He doesn't go outdoors due to a trauma and so lives with his son. The son drinks and doesn't take very good care of his father. Therefore, this older man was glad for some company and we suggested that we visit him, help him around the house, and read the Bible with him. He replied that he wouldn't be against it, but that he saw things the old way, in the communist way. But God gives such an opportunity to share with him about Christ. Please pray for him, that God will work in him and give us a chance to explain the Gospel to him through His Word.

Also, one widow opened her door, and when she heard that believers had come to visit her, wouldn't allow us into her apartment. She muttered some choice words and called us cultists. Such things happen in ministry. You go out with good intentions, but people are so blinded that they don't want to listen or to receive anything. But as for people with radical views, there are now not so many.

So that was our month, in which God worked through us. Please pray with us for those who received gifts and Bibles. And that we would have opportunities to talk further with those to whom we had visited, and be able to share Christ with them.

Sasha Petrenko

## March

Hello, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ! We want to share with you some of the blessed moments, which God has allowed us to experience in this past month.

First of all, our team had a need for uniforms and hockey sticks. We prayed with the guys, and we asked that you join in praying about this need. Because you were likewise concerned and prayed about this, I want to let you know that God answered our combined prayers. In an amazing way, God blessed our team with new uniforms, and now our need has decreased by one.

You're probably wondering whom God used in such a way to provide us with uniforms, right? I went to the mayor's office. We chatted about the development of floor hockey in our district, and told him how it was a little uncomfortable for our team to be out there playing without uniforms. Vitaly Nikolaevich (our mayor) said, "Sasha, we will try to help you." I took hope that perhaps God would use even an unbeliever to give us aid. This process wasn't fast, since there were special procedures for purchasing through the department of youth and sports. We also ended up driving to the administration and talking with the man responsible for sports in our region. I saw how God was leading us and how He placed on the heart of an unbelieving man to assist us. For us, this was great joy, and for the

team it was a testimony of God's responding to our prayers. Now the team and I are praying for the Lord to provide our team with hockey sticks and for our number to increase.

In addition, this month I decided to hold a school competition in floor hockey. I approached Vitaly Nikolaevich and told him about this plan. He approved them and said that he would inform the school administration that he had no objection and that they should help in organizing a tournament. I visited the school principal and talked with her, and she sent me to the physical education teachers. I chatted with them about a tournament, and they agreed to assist in holding one.

When the day of the tournament came, I was introduced to the children as the organizer and coach of the "Legend" team. There were only four teams from different classes. This was a good time, when the students were striving for victory. In all, there were only three prizes. Our team took first place. They received a cup and medals. In the words of the guys, they really liked the tournament and would be interested in having them continue in the future. Furthermore, an article about the tournament was written up and posted on the website for the Goncharovsk administration.

That's how joyful our month has been. Thank you for your participation in the ministry in Goncharovsk. Please continue to pray with us concerning the following:

1. That God will nourish our house church.
2. Concerning preparations for summer camp.
3. For our floor hockey team, and for the Lord to send finances for hockey sticks.
4. That the Lord will touch the hearts of the guys through His Word.

Sasha Petrenko

