



## Buyko

### January 2019, Part 1

Like always, when we gathered for our Tuesday Bible study, we were prepared for our usual peaceful time of fellowship and study of the Word of God. This time, the study was different because our brother Lyosha Savchuk visited us, and another thing that was different was that Eugene brought a tasty pizza. Before the Bible study we have a cup of tea (since many come straight from work), and people share blessings or short testimonies or prayer needs.

After everyone had shared whatever was on their hearts, our Paulina stood and up and asked, “Can I say something?” Everyone nodded. She said, “You all know that I recently had a stroke and was unconscious for half a day. I saw how beautiful Heaven is, how there are wonderful trees there and different sweet-smelling flowers. And when I returned to consciousness, I understood that God was giving me a second chance and that only He could show me this marvelous place and make me understand that I needed to reconcile with Him if I want to go there. And even afterward, when the doctor came to me, he said that God must love me, since I was able to regain consciousness and not lose my ability to speak and other important abilities, because shortly before that I’d had another heart surgery (she is 83 years old). I want to request God’s forgiveness, and yours if I’ve offended anyone. All of you are like family to me. I don’t know for sure how exactly it’s done, but I want to pray and ask God to be with me always.”



Tears appeared in the eyes of everyone there. Eugene joyfully prayed with her. After the prayer, everyone began to hug and rejoice and to cry for gladness. At the end of the Bible study we sang her favorite hymn and took a photograph together. Afterward, Eugene said that he’d had some sort of feeling that today he needed to plan for some sort of a holiday and do something special.

Praise God for such an encouragement, and for the fact that God is adding newly saved souls to the church. Huge thanks to you for your prayers. We ask that you continue to pray for her, that God will strengthen her further and uphold her in life.



## January, Part 2

Back before New Year, after the end of a session in the music education institution, the idea came into my head of holding our very own first concert. For me, this concert was not only my own first big project to organize, but also the first concert for our group from the music college where I study.

All of us are in our third course in choir directing and, accordingly, one of our main subjects is choir, which is three times per week. Moreover, each of us chooses a musical piece and teaches it to the group, and we do the conducting.

When I suggested such a concert to my group, everyone immediately liked this idea, because it is not only good for making memories, but also great experience that everyone needs. I suggested we do a concert with a Christmas theme, since we had Christmas carols and spiritual songs ready.

When we got the idea to hold this concert as an event for charity, we got even more excited, because this way it would be a plus not only for the musicians, and not only good memories, but also would serve a useful purpose. After all, everyone understands that the Lord rewards good deeds. It so happened that most of the people in my group are Orthodox, but this never prevented us from fellowshipping. It even surprised me that everyone agreed to participate in a concert in a Baptist church. One Orthodox girl said that she really liked how comfortable it is in the church and how everyone knows each other and enjoys a warm relationship. She also said that she would like to come again.

The concert itself went well. Everyone enjoyed it. Moreover, we collected 4,000 UAH [\$147] for the charity fund of the village of Bilogorodka for children with cerebral palsy. When we returned to school from winter break, everyone who participated told the teachers about it. They said that it was useful for us and good for others.

One of the girls in our group doesn't have any relationship with religion. She says she sometimes believes in God, sometimes not really. Her mother came to the concert (given that it wasn't held in Kiev and that it was snowing, this was unexpected). It was the first time either of them had been in a Baptist church. It was funny when, before the concert, my father prayed, and this girl said, "Oh my, did even my mother even stand up? It would be so embarrassing if everyone stood, and she didn't. We just never did that." This girl



also said that she liked it in our church, that it's cozy here.

Also present was a representative of the town council with his wife. This was also her first time in our church. She really liked it, and her husband was delighted with such projects and very much supported us in this idea. Afterward, they asked about Sunday school and said that they would like to send their younger children to it. Please pray that God will incline their hearts to let the children come to Sunday school.

It was also interesting that, a couple of days before the concert, sister Paulina came with her grandson, and he met Papa. When Papa invited him to the concert, he said he would come. What a surprise when he actually came. He is 19 years old, and this was his first trip to our church. And he didn't come alone; he brought his girlfriend. He made videos of some songs and apparently, they were very pleased. His girlfriend said they needed to come to a *sluzhba* ["ministry"] (as the Orthodox call services).

Thank God for the opportunity to do charity projects that lead people to church for the first time!

*-Angelica Buyko*

## February, Part 1

A very special joy for all of us is the joint time of studying God's Word. In our church, our Bible study time takes place on Tuesdays. One family joined us for Bible studies. Their middle son had attended our summer camp. The father of this family, Vladimir, works in the town administration. When we had our building's dedication service, he attended on behalf of the administration and expressed good wishes for us. In addition, he attended the final day of our camp. His wife was in the church for the first time when our church offered a free concert by music students. We spent a long while talking with them and invited them to visit a Sunday service. The family began coming to our Bible study, and also sometimes to services. We request that you pray for this family.

Also, at our Bible study a funny thing happened. Sister Paulina (who recently came to the Lord) requested that we conduct her funeral and chanting (in Orthodoxy that is how they call the service of mourning), because the Orthodox priest had not come to her house for the second year in a row for the Baptism holiday (among the Orthodox, there is a tradition that during this holiday the priest should visit each parish home and bless them). Her daughter had said, "Just in case, I'm setting money aside, even though it's unlikely he will come. And I'm thinking he might even refuse to hold your funeral. Who will chant over you?"

Paulina said, "I told my daughter that Zhenya will have no problem burying me, and what's more, he'll do it for free." Afterward we joked a little about this, but also spoke to her about this serious subject, which was a relief to her.

So we request that you pray for the large family of Paulina, because they see our church in a favorable light; yet something holds them back from coming themselves even though the daughter always reminds Paulina which day it is and when it's time to go to church. Right now Paulina suffers from a lack of self-confidence after her stroke, and she leaves the house only for church.



## February, Part 2

One of those who visits Sunday school all the time and had missed only a few Sundays due to sickness is a girl named Natasha. She was in our older group in summer camp, and recently she brought her best friend, a girl named Zhenya, with whom she has attended school for a long time. Zhenya lives at the other end of Bilogorodka, but she

comes despite that. Her parents know she has begun to attend a Baptist church, and they aren't opposed. When Zhenya first came and we began to get acquainted, she already knew quite a bit about us (after all, her best friend is Natasha!). She comes and listens attentively and loves to sing. This girl Zhenya doesn't know even the most basic Bible stories; therefore she always listens to them with interest. She has a twin brother, but he has never been to the church. We ask that you pray that he would feel a desire to attend church with her.

There is another boy who has begun to come to Sunday school. His name is Oles, and he is 10 years old. He was here two times in camp, but now his family has begun to visit our church. The boy knows a little bit about the Scriptures, because his family used to attend a Catholic church. He is a very sociable, cheerful, and positive boy. All of their family loves to sing.

We request prayer for each person who attends the Sunday school and for their families, that they would have a desire to come to church and to learn about Jesus. Praise God!



## March

When you humbly labor for God's glory, your heart doesn't wait for praise or recognition. Yet, what joy there is when you see fruit from your labor.

In our church we have two groups in our Sunday school: the younger and the older ones. In the younger one the ages of the children range from 3 to 7 years. Ten children regularly attend these classes. Since September we've been giving lessons that have acquainted the children with the Word of God. Also, they have learned songs and special memory verses, created crafts and played games.

However, at the beginning of March we wished to systematize the lessons into a specific program so that all of the children would have the same knowledge.

It has turned out that most of the children in the younger group are from Christian families, but the older ones started coming after camp and know practically nothing about the Creator. Therefore it was equally interesting for all of them to learn new information.

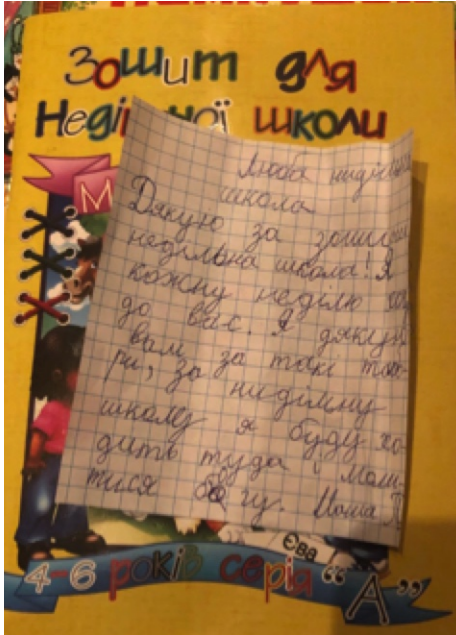
Praise God, there arose an opportunity to acquire interesting and educational workbooks for children and guides for the teacher.

The main idea consists of uniting the efforts of the parents and teacher: after a lesson it's essential to fulfill assignments at home, for which they collect points. To be quite honest, I was quite concerned about how the first lesson would go. After all, the majority of my young pupils do not attend school and have no understanding of how to work with notebooks.

According to the method, while you're telling the story, the children draw a picture, which thankfully creates silence in the classroom, and everyone grasps the information easily. Despite



concerns, the first lesson went remarkably well. The children were pleased. At the second lesson, the children themselves took seats around the table and began to show their notebooks with the fulfilled assignments.



While I was examining them and putting in stickers, 7-year-old Masha (she is from a family of unbelievers and began coming to Sunday school with her little brother after day camp) took out a chocolate-colored envelope in which there was a letter and held it out to me:

“Dear Sunday School! Thank you for the Sunday school notebook. I want to come to you every Sunday. I thank you for such camps, and for the Sunday school. I will go there and pray to God. Masha P. ”

Praise God for our Sunday school and for all the children who come to it. We ask that you join us in praying that, in His great mercy and love, the Lord will bless each child and protect them from evil.

We do have one prayer request: For the younger Sunday school group and for camp we need a Flannelgraph to make the lessons more interesting to the kids and to help them to recall better the Bible stories.

