



**Petrenko
1st Quarter Report, 2019**

January

Greetings to you, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ! Allow us to share with you some of the blessings that God has given this past month.

This month, thanks to the BIEM mission, we were able to host a children's Christmas program. At it, the children were able to hear about the miraculous birth of the Savior of the world. We talked to them about the goal for His birth. And it's interesting, that when we began to talk about famous people in history, they didn't know about any of them, but about Jesus they know, and they celebrate His birthday. We had a good time with them, and in the end of that meeting I explained the Gospel and called the children to repent. Twenty-two of them prayed a prayer of repentance.



Each child received a gift, which brought them much happiness.

Please pray concerning those children who prayed, that God will work in them, and in their parents.

Also this month, a neighbor died of cancer. And in small towns such as ours, there is a tradition. When someone passes away, people go from apartment to apartment and collect material aid for the family of the deceased one. After money has been collected, everyone goes to the family and delivers it to them. Since this was a neighbor, my wife Ira also did the same. When Ira walked over to give them

the money, several other neighbors were there and talking with the widow. One of the women there said, "Do you have funerals too?"

Ira said that we do.

So someone else asked, "How do you [Baptists] differ from us?"

Ira told them about the One in whom we believe, and in the end all of them replied as one, "Then they are believers too. They don't bow down to icons, but they are normal people too." ☺ And a normal family. After such encounters, we understand that people are watching our family and making conclusions. Of course, we would wish for them to become sincere believers. For our part, we witness in word and in deed, and we hope that God will awaken their hearts.



Please pray for the following needs:

1. For the children who were at the Christmas service.
2. For the neighbors who watch our lives and hear testimonies of Christ.
3. For the growth of the church.
4. Thanks to the Lord that in Smolin the electricity and gas will be hooked up.

That's how our first month has been in this new year. Thank you for your involvement in our joint labor for the Lord!

February 2019

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

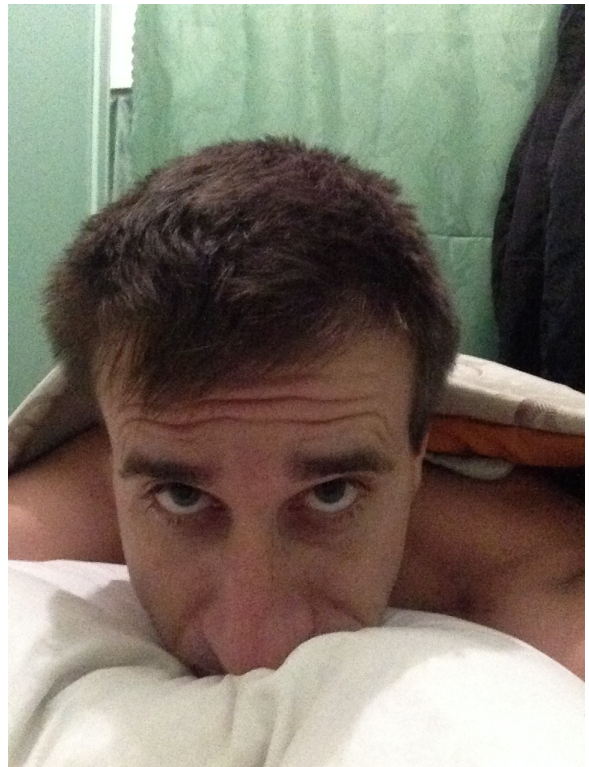
We would like to share with you some of what has happened with us over the course of this past month. This month has been a month of journeys. The first journey was for me a necessary measure I had to take. For the past couple of years I have felt poorly due to tumors in my neck. And in recent days my health was so affected that I resolved to go for treatment. I found a place here [in Ukraine] where they treat those and set out for Vinnitsa region, to a medical sanatorium. And when I went there, I waited impatiently through my treatment.

I really wanted to feel good again. I was there for eleven days of treatment, much of which was useful for me. And I also thought of how to make quality use of the time I spent there. For the most part, the people who were there for treatment had been wounded in the east of Ukraine, and there were very many guys who had musculoskeletal problems. I met a number of men. One man whose hand had been wounded had been to a hospital and then was sent here for rehabilitation. It was obvious the war had left its imprint on his life. And the psychological emotional condition of many guys was on the edge.

Many had left their minds back at the war and could not get accustomed to peaceful life. Sitting with me at the table in the cafeteria there were interesting people, a man with his wife and another colonel, Valery A., commander in the air assault brigade. I got acquainted with them, and while I was there we talked a lot, and he told me much about himself and what he had been through. I told them that I'm the pastor of a church. One of them, amazed, asked me to repeat who I was. 😊 I told them what I do, and they also asked various questions.

One question concerned alcohol, and I told them I don't drink. One of the listeners said that this is proper, since a cleric should not drink and then turn around and tell others that alcohol is bad.

I also enjoyed plenty of time for fellowship with God and for reading His Word and meditation. And of course the treatment gave its results, and when I left there I felt very good. The doctor recommended that I undergo a repeat treatment after 8 months and not to wait until it was aggravating me. I am thankful to God for this time when I could receive physical treatment for my body, but also received much time for spiritual fellowship. Praise God for this time!



Another blessed time this month was that the floor hockey team and I traveled to the quarter finals, and for us it was a good time when the guys and I played, prayed, and fellowshiped. It was a remarkable time, a time that God gave us, and which will remain imprinted in our memory. True, we did not bring home a prize, but for us this time was its own success given by God. I often reflect and pray about how to use floor hockey more effectively to witness for Christ. We still have time to instill the Word of God in these boys, and in the next school year, I plan to select boys from the younger ages so as to have more opportunities to share about Christ.



So that is how this month was, a month in which God blessed in a special way.

Please pray about the following needs:

1. For the children's ministry.
2. About the cooking time for girls.
3. For the floor hockey ministry.
4. For the village of Smolin.
5. That God will give strength and health to perform ministry for Him.

Thank you for praying for us, and for being concerned with us for the ministry in Goncharovsk!

March



Hello, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ!

God has allowed us to live through another wonderful month, and I would like to share with you some of our news and prayer needs.

In the first place, Sveta (I've already written about her) is struggling with sin, and this is very hard for her. She struggles with alcohol, and is not always successful in this struggle. Old friends and the sinful nature unfortunately take over. She returns to her sin, but then comes to a church service and asks that we pray for her and about how hard it is for her to fight against sin. Please pray about this situation, so that she would truly hope in God and that the Holy Spirit will work in her life and she will have salvation.

Also, there is a man who came to a service. His name is Sasha. He's the brother of Sergei, who came to Christ and was baptized in our church. Sasha called me and said that he'll be in Goncharovsk for a while and that he needs help,

since he has problems with narcotics and alcohol. Because of this, he has problems with his wife. He came to the Sunday service, and after the service I talked with him about his life. He told a lot about his problems and about how his wife had left him. He talked a lot about how he wants to prove to her that he can do a lot in this life, but I said to him that the first thing he needs is a relationship with God, and then to build up everything else with God's help. Actually, I understand that many people don't understand and don't desire to see their need of God.

But all the same, I see how God is working in the hearts of people and that people take an interest in God. This is a good opportunity to tell them about Christ.

That's what we have to report about our remarkable month. Please pray with us about the following needs:

1. For Sasha and Sveta, that God will prompt their hearts and give them sincere repentance.
2. For the children's and teen ministries.
3. That God will bless our preparations for summer camp.
4. For God to grow our church, both in numbers spiritually.

Sasha Petrenko