



The Petrenkos in Goncharovsk, Ukraine

4th Quarter Report, 2021

October

We send greetings to you, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord!

We would like to share with you some of things we have experienced in ministry for the Lord this past month.

First, this month we celebrated the Harvest holiday. We had many people in our service, and among them were unbelievers who were able to come and listen to tidings about the Lord. We're also considered how God blesses us each year with a good harvest, and we thanked God for it. In addition, praise God, we have already installed the heating, so we have no fear of cold weather. We can hold services in the new building.

This month we resumed youth meetings in Smolin. We had about 30 young people at the first meeting. We talked about suicide. To take a poll, I asked whether any of them had ever contemplated suicide. I surprised and sad when many of them raised a hand. Nowadays, many kids receive information from the internet, and this information depresses them and gives them thoughts about death. This is horrible. But for us, this is additional motivation to spend time with young people and to show them that there is an alternative—the Gospel. Please pray for these youth, that God will work in them and draw them to repentance.



I also want to tell you about another way that God is working. Recently, when Zhenya Buyko came to Smolin, a certain woman walked up to us. She oversees the Center for Administrative Services. Previously, she had been the head of social services but has now been promoted in her duties. So, we had a chance to talk with her and to invite her to a church service, and Zhenya gave her a New Testament, which she joyfully accepted. Her little daughter had ridden with us to the youth tent camp, and she also attends our children's meetings in Smolin.

We also have a prayer request about the ministries that we continue to conduct in Goncharovsk. I'll remind you that we are renting a meeting place with the assistance of the BIEM mission to have a place where we can hold Sunday school, cooking classes for the girls, and play floor hockey.

But this month the authorities once again issued a ban against mass gatherings. However, for the moment the man in charge of the military club is permitting us to continue using it. Therefore, for now, we're continuing to minister as usual.



That's how this month has been. Thank you for remembering us and supporting our joint ministry for the glory of God!

Please pray for the following needs:

1. For the salvation of young people.
2. That God will add believers to the church in Smolin.
3. That there will be a continuing open door to hold services in Goncharovsk.
4. That God will further bless the construction of the church building in Smolin.

November

Greetings to you, dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

This month was productive, just as the previous month was, for which I say, "Praise God!" This month, there was a girl named Ksenia who came to the cooking fellowship. Her mom had sent her to a boarding school and currently this mother is busy with her own life. She isn't particularly glad when her daughter comes home, since, in her view, Ksenia interferes with her personal life. Of course, it's very sad that there are parents who are ready to rid themselves of their children simply to make their own lives easier.

Ksenia comes home to her mom twice a month. During one of those visits, she heard that there is a fellowship time for girls where we discuss various topics, read the Bible together, prepare food together, and then talk around the table. She came to her first one and was in ecstasy! It's obvious that she has experienced big disappointments in life, and for her it's also a huge source of pain knowing that her mother has basically rejected her. However, after visiting the cooking fellowship she wanted to go to the youth fellowship at the church in Smolin. It's evident she is very interested in God, and we pray that God will work with her heart and save Ksenia.

I also wanted to write and say that, in our church, one brother got sick with Covid and lay in the hospital for a couple weeks. This is Vika's older brother. He told us how even there in the hospital, he had an opportunity to share about Christ with people. Some accepted this news; others did not.

Another interesting event happened this month. The president of Ukraine gave an award to our brother Sasha (Vika's husband) for service to the Ukrainian people. They summoned him to Kyiv to receive the award, and the president handed it to him personally. This was an interesting event in Sasha's life as a military man.



This month we made a combined outing with the youth of Desna, Goncharovsk, and Smolin. There were many young people there, and it was a good time filled with games, competitions, songs, and of course the most important thing—good tidings about the Savior. The young people love when we arrange such combined trips. Praise God for such opportunities, that we have youth we know and a place where we can gather.

So, that is a little about the kind of month we had. Please pray concerning these needs:

1. That the ones who attend the cooking fellowship, the youth meetings, and the Sunday school will place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. That God will protect us from sicknesses and give strength.
3. That the church in Smolin will grow in numbers and in spiritual growth.

We thank you for your active involvement in our common ministries for the Lord's glory.

Your friends in Goncharovsk and Smolin, Sasha and Ira Petrenko



December 2021

We greet you, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ!

We would like to share about how this month has been. It's the last month in the year, and so it's time to draw some conclusions. There have been many blessings in this year, including construction of the church building. Many see how nearly impossible things can seem at first, such as building the new church in Smolin, and what kinds of works were done in this year.

We recall those times when we held worship services in a tent, but now we meet inside a comfortable, warm house of prayer. God is good, and we affirm that.

Recently we held a Christmas evangelistic service in the church. We invited children, adults, and youth. We also invited the mayor of Smolin and his family. They came, and even after everyone else departed, they sat and fellowshiped with us. Vanya and his wife said that it's so comfortable and peaceful in the church that they didn't want to go home. 😊 We as a church had prepared a holiday service, and thanks to the BIEM mission, afterwards we distributed Christmas gifts. No one there remained apathetic to the words they heard about Christ and about the purpose for His birth.

We were also able to give gifts to the boys who participate in floor hockey. They were very glad to receive Christmas gifts and to hear the good tidings of the Savior!

In this month, important work was accomplished. We added gutters and drainpipes to drain water from the roof. And we enclosed the eaves under the roof around the church. This was necessary because birds could get in and pull on the insulation and damage the prayer house. But, praise God, we managed to do this work before the frost came.



Also, God quickly and marvelously responded to our need for the floor hockey team, that is, to purchase borders [for playing outdoors]. I had been on a waiting list for two years to buy some, and then a miracle happened. One fellow wanted to sell such borders, and I was the first to learn about it. ☺ Also, praise be to God that BIEM helped us to acquire the borders, and we were able to pay for them first. There are a lot of people who wanted them, but we are the ones who got them. Now we can offer higher-quality training. And in summer, we can simply set up the borders and the goals and hold games outdoors, and this will be a good way to attract new people.

That is how this month went. We thank you for your involvement in the ministry in Goncharovsk and Smolin. We hope the coming year will be just as productive for the Lord! Blessings to you, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord!

Please pray for the following needs:

1. For our health. Many people around us are ill with coronavirus.
2. That God will draw new people to the church.
3. That God will grow the church spiritually.
4. For the Holy Spirit to work in people.

Sasha Petrenko

