



BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES

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January-February 2020

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Cor. 5:17

Dear Pastors and Friends,

We count it a privilege to be workers together with you in the harvest fields of Russia and Eastern Europe. It is always a blessing to share God's blessings in our reports, presentations, and prayer letters. The Lord really does put His mighty hand on this church-planting ministry. Not that there are no problems. There are problems and awesome challenges which often drive us to our knees. However, we do not kneel alone. Through our prayer letters, our monthly prayer and praise sheet, and our newsletter we have the privilege of kneeling before God's throne of grace together with many of you!

This January found us in Ukraine for the winter session of our seminary in Kyiv, Ukraine where we are training nationals for ministry in Ukraine. Currently we have 60 students enrolled. 32 are Theology students, 14 are Christian Education majors, 13 study music with the goal of preparing them to be choir directors and 2 are missions majors. Over these years this school had graduated over 300 students which are now serving in nearly 70 cities and towns in Ukraine as well as a handful of foreign countries. This school functions as a partnership of BIEM and the Brotherhood of Independent Baptist Churches of Ukraine so the students come from all over Ukraine, which is the size of Texas. Therefore many of our students come from a long way. Praise God for this opportunity to invest in the lives of young people willing to serve God.

In the month of February we have one of our Ukrainian church planting couples, Vitaly and Alona Yurchenko with us. Bringing them to supporting churches is a great blessing since it enables folks here in the USA to hear testimonies and updates directly from overseas and get acquainted some wonderful servants of God. Despite the language barrier their love for the Lord and zeal for Christ brightly shines through the interpretation. This is not the Yurchenkos' first time the United States. This trip focused on meetings in Georgia, Indiana, and Illinois.

Though we have been assured that our container in Ukraine will be released, we are still waiting for the final green light from customs. We have never before experienced this major of a delay. This is due to major changes in procedures and personnel because of the new presidential administration in Ukraine. As our personnel has made numerous trips to the agencies that deal with humanitarian aid, they have become aware of the opinion from some officials that Ukraine will soon ban used clothing as humanitarian aid. To the astonishment and dismay of many, one official has been quoted as saying that Ukraine does not need aid from abroad and officials are recommending not to put used clothing on containers of humanitarian aid. This is of great concern to many and we hope and pray that this will not come to pass. There has been no official statement yet banning used clothing from containers of humanitarian aid. However, in the light of the present situation we are putting a hold on receiving shipments of used clothing.

We hope that this is just temporary and that the situation will be officially clarified in favor of used clothing being classified as humanitarian aid. This hold does not apply to local supporters of our office who occasionally drop off used clothing. We will inform them that should we not be able to put their donated clothing on our next container, we will give them to a local charity. If this was to happen at least no one would have paid to ship items to us which we simply turn over to a local charity. We can still receive shipments of donations that are not used clothing (church equipment and furnishings, medical supplies, sports equipment, musical instruments, gardening tools, camping gear, wheelchairs, etc). Please pray with us that God will work all this out in favor of the many needy people in Ukraine.

Thank-you for your part in this ministry. May God bless, encourage and greatly use you for His glory in this New Year!

The Slobodians

Church Planting • Evangelism • Bibles & Literature • Training Nationals

"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." Mark 16:15