



BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES

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January-February 2017

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Romans 15:13

Dear Pastors and Friends,

Hello again from the Slobodians! We praise the Lord for another year to serve Him in these interesting times. We are grateful for the opportunities to proclaim the Gospel and plant churches and for you who make this ministry possible through your prayers and support.

January was a month of wonderful blessings. New church buildings were dedicated in Shahovskaya, Russia and Ternopil, Ukraine. Services are now underway in these new facilities as well as in Bilogorodka, Ukraine, which still has some more work to be done before the dedication of this building in June. Praise God that the Gospel is being preached and for souls being saved in these new buildings.

After taking part in the dedication in Shahovskaya, I had the wonderful blessing of visiting with Pastor Peter Rumachik in his home. I had brought some of the first issues of our newsletter, *The Challenger* from the early 1980's, in which we had printed information about Pastor Peter's imprisonment. As I presented these to him, I translated these articles, one of which described how he was sentenced to another term of imprisonment as his current term was nearing its end by the use of false witnesses who were promised freedom in exchange for their false testimony against brother Peter. A broad smile swept across brother Peter's face when I translated the part where folks were quoted predicting that he would not survive. "Yes", he said, "the authorities promised that I would not leave that prison breathing. Those false witnesses were never released as promised and have all died. But Praise God at the age of 86 I continue to serve God and was able to take part in planting and building this new church."

One of those coming to Christ in Bilogorodka is Victor, who is a neighbor who did quite a bit of work on the construction. He often heard the Gospel during construction breaks and began to attend the services, though his relatives were not pleased since many in Ukraine consider Baptists a harmful cult. It was obvious the Lord was working in Victor's heart. Recently, some of his relatives came to his home because of a big Orthodox religious holiday that many Ukrainians celebrate with heavy drinking. They could not convince Victor to join their celebration and he could not get them to understand why he could not, even when he explained that he was going to a Baptist church and was seeking to get closer to God. Therefore, they keep pressuring him to join in. Finally in desperation, Victor said, "Look, let me explain it to you this way, I am now a "Shtundist" which is a derogatory name that people in that part of the world call believers. They backed away as if he had suddenly contracted leprosy and left him alone. The next Sunday, Victor went forward during the church service, repented and received Christ as Savior!

January's seminary sessions in Kiev were blessed with 45 students including 9 students from the War Zone in the East. For over a year, students from this war torn area had stopped coming. Then we had two, then 5 and now 9! Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine and for these students who cannot afford to come on their own. Currently, \$400 is needed to provide transportation for these students each session, which amounts to \$1200 each year. With more students, we are facing a housing shortage. \$10,000 is needed to finish the attic in Bilogorodka in order to accommodate more students.

In February, we have one of our Ukrainian church planting couples, Vitaly and Alona Yurchenko visiting churches in the Midwest and Colorado. Please pray for these meetings. May God bless you all!

The Slobodians

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