



The Petrenkos in Goncharovsk, Ukraine

1st Quarter Report, 2020

January

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

So, we now have behind us the first month of the new year, and for us it was fruitful. Thanks to the BIEM mission, we were able to hold an evangelistic Christmas project. We purchased children's gifts, and then we invited children to a gathering in order to talk with them about Christmas. In the children's minds, they have confused incorrect traditions and understanding concerning the meaning of Christ's birth. For children, this holiday is associated with presents and with the opportunity to go out and sing for money. At the Christmas meeting, they heard the true meaning of the birth of Christ and were able to ponder that. In addition, every child received a gift at the end of the program.

We in the church prepared a Christmas song, took a guitar, Bibles in which we had inserted information concerning the service times of the church and then set off for the first home. We knocked on the door. When people stepped outside, we sang and shared about the birth of Christ. People responded with a very good reaction. Some said the song really touched their heart. Others said they had never heard such a song, and later they bumped into us on the street and thanked us for coming to them and wishing them a good Christmas.



There was also one other Christmas project. This one was aimed at children from disadvantaged homes, to likewise wish them a good Christmas and to tell about the birth of our Savior. After this project, a woman brought her children to church on Sunday. She said that she has very many questions that she would like to ask. I don't know whether she will come back for another service, but at the meeting she heard the Gospel, and her reaction to it is her responsibility.

In Goncharovsk, our mayor Vitaly Nikolaevich once a year talks at a meeting about the work done in the town in the past year, and about what has happened in our community during this time. Most of the residents of our little community come to this meeting. And Vitaly

Nikolaevich spoke about our activities in Goncharovsk and about the work that we are doing in this town. I didn't request this of him. He provided a good advertisement, and I hope that this, too, will favorably influence the opinions of the residents of Goncharovsk concerning the church.

So, that is a little about our first month of this year. Please pray for these needs:

1. That those who heard about Christ will come to Him as Savior.
2. For the floor hockey ministry.
3. For the youth.
4. For the cooking ministry - Bible study
5. For the growth of the church.
6. For Ira's health. In recent days her stomach has been hurting. And recently she had a strong attack, but praise God, she didn't need an ambulance.

February

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

We'd like to share with you some of what has happened during this past month. This month the floor hockey team and I traveled to Lutsk for our second tournament. And for us, this was a special time. Our team trained, and then with hope and prayers took part in a two-day competition with strong rivals. If last time we lost to everyone, then at this tournament we had victory, which made us rejoice greatly! And this victory was given to us by God. After the game we had an evangelistic service, where many unbelieving youths heard about Christ.

This time a new boy, Lyosha, went with us. He's three years younger than the other players. I spoke with his mother to see whether she would mind him going along, and she was surprised that I took him. Lyosha tends to keep to himself, and in school nobody really associates with him. After a time, his mom thanked me and said that Lyosha had begun to change for the better and had become more open and had more joy in life. He listens to the Word of God, which can change people.

Furthermore, the local newspaper wrote about our team and expressed thanks that we are working with children. I keep in mind that these activities are possible thanks to God, who wills for us to get involved, and to the finances that the BIEM mission sacrifices for this good ministry.

Also, this month we held the children's ministry, which about 20 children attend. They like spending this time in such company and in hearing the Word of God. Also, Ira and Vika continue to hold the cooking group for girls, where they not only learn how to prepare meals but also study the Word of God.

That's how this month has been. Please pray for our needs:

1. For our health.
2. That God will continue to make it possible to speak of Him through the various ministries being conducted in Goncharovsk.
3. For those who heard about Christ, that God will work in their hearts.

4. That God will bless our summer projects and provide a good time and preparation. Thank you for being with us in this God-pleasing ministry!

March



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

We would like to share with you some of the events that we've gone through this month. To start with, like many other countries, in this month our country was struck with the coronavirus, and due to that, our country has been in quarantine. At this time, we're not able to conduct the Sunday school ministry, or the cooking group, or the floor hockey ministry and the youth outreach. So, we are under the necessary quarantine, but the boys want to talk, and we talk by telephone and through Zoom. Just about every evening we fellowship. The boys say that before they didn't really value fellowship with one another, but now they value it. As is said, we don't appreciate something while we have it, but we miss it when it's gone.

As for the Bible study group and the Sunday services, we haven't changed anything. Upon the recommendation of the authorities, groups of up to 10 people can gather. We decided not to transition to an online ministry. We just keep the children at home, and the adults gather as usual. We thank God that we can still hold worship services. And this situation has likewise caused us to do some reflection on our values and each of us has begun to value more our freedom of belief.

I'm imagining how those brothers and sisters who have gone through persecution felt and how much they treasured worship services. It's truly important to treasure fellowship and the opportunity to serve for the Lord. It's hard to say exactly where all of this will end, but I want to believe that the quarantine will soon end and that everything will return to the way it once was.

That is basically everything that we wanted to share with you, dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ!

Please pray with us for the following needs:

1. For everyone's health.
2. That we will be able to use this situation to continue sharing the Gospel of Christ.
3. That during the quarantine we will not lose those who were attending various ministries.

Sasha Petrenko

