

One Body, One Spirit, One Hope, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism and One God and Father.

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. {There is} one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

(Ephesians 4:1-7)”

Dear brothers and sisters last month, February, has been the most difficult month of the whole winter and the coldest in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Russia. We've lived through it because of God's grace and His mercy. So thankful to God for keeping us warm, for blessing us with the heating in our apartments, for encouraging us daily and for surrounding us with wonderful Christians and just good friends in Kharkov.

In the Bible we read about the first century church that was gathering in the home. In fact they may have had several homes for their gatherings. I would like to share few examples from the Bible about that fact: *“Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; also {greet} the church that is **in their house**. Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia. (Romans 16:3-5); Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is **in her house** (Colossians 4:15); Salutation Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church **in your house**: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philemon 1:1-3)”*.

Both Julie and I agree that this concept is Biblical but according to the Ukrainian tradition the tendency is that when the church is growing people will rent a building. This method (home gatherings) has advantages and some disadvantages. Because of our small apartments in the Ukraine we are very limited to a bigger number of people in our apartments. We do though consider a great advantage as to have stronger unity and bond with those who come and fellowship. We treat everybody alike and make them feel welcomed as a loving family; we care about all who are coming to our apartments. So far on the average bases we have 10-15 people gatherings at our apartments (plus American families). Our apt is two bedroom apartment 44 square meters can handle maximum 15. Also this Biblical method is working when a congregation consists only from 5-15 people. It will be better if we will invite strangers from the street not to our own apt but to the neutral location. Considering the mentality of a Ukrainian person he or she (as strangers) will not come to the apartment (general meaning, any apt) they've never been before (stranger's apartment) because of the caution reasons or warning. That's our opinion with Julie. In the future if the church would agree on renting a place or buying a building that's fine it is going to be the local church's decision. We are not opposed to rent a place and we will always support the decision of the local church.

Julie and I are involved in three different methods of Lord's work in Kharkov and these are:

- 1) Evangelism work has been progressing in Alexeevka. I brought up an idea to Alexeevka to teach Bible in English to those who are strangers or have never been in the Church before. Our main goal is for the people to hear the Gospel and they can hear in English and Russian. It is up to those people to make the decision to become Christians. But they are interested in continuation of those lessons. In my adult class I have: Andrew, Alex, Julie, Evgeniy, Alena, Ella and Vlad. Also I have invited several folks to our American friends. Alex and Evgeniy attends Mike's group and Alena attends both David's and Mike's. Alena will be our translator this coming summer in Poltava camp. So I asked her to attend those meetings. In the future we are hoping invite more of our friends from Julie's school to Mike, David and Rob. We

are happy that Vlad attends Mikes' class as well. In my Children's class I have: Nastya, Alex, Shahnaza, Vladik, Vladik, Sasha, Lena and Viktoriya (she attends both classes). This program allows adults as well as children to learn about God and strengthen their knowledge in English.

Last November 2010 we've met with Bimbo our Nigerian friend. Imoh brought him to the church. By talking to him inviting him in our apt showing him Christian love and Jesus' attitude he got into study Bible deeply. We talked about baptism a lot in our apt, in the church with our friends. As a result of such encouragement Bimbo got baptized and I had a privilege to baptize him. Just recently our Nigerian friends started to use one of the classrooms in Alexeevka for the worship in their Nigerian language. Imoh and Bimbo are responsible for that. Every single Sunday for the last 9 or 12 weeks I have been translating every Valeriy's sermon for those guys too. I am very thankful to the Lord and fortunate to use this gift to help others.

Thank you for keeping this wonderful Lord's work in your prayers.

2) The New Testament example of a 'house gatherings' is as one of the several methods effective evangelism work according to the Bible. We are hoping that in our house we will learn many ways how to be effective Evangelists and we would like to concentrate our idea on increasing members *"And when they had come to him, he said to them, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:18-21)."* 'House to house' evangelism is an old-new method of work where we will learn more by studying it deeply and teaching others of course too. What I mean by others, we would like to continue on building our friendship with our friends: Katya, Julie, Artem, Alena, Ella and others. We would like to encourage members of our small congregation in Saltovka and Novye Doma: Ivan and Sveta, Natasha, Katya, Andrew, Onome, Valeriy and Julie to learn new method 'from house to house' evangelism and have gatherings in our apartments. But we do not believe it would be sinful or wrong for the church to meet in a rented space or to own a building. One of our primary goals in helping and working with local churches in Kharkov is that it can be, as much as possible, a fully Biblical church. By the way, last Sunday we have invited our friends from HTZ they also gather in their homes because of their small number. We visit each other on regular occasions. Ukrainians do not own big apartments an average apartment could handle only 10 – 15 maximum in number. When I think about that I do have a question in my head what about 3000 people? Where did 3000 people had their own gatherings? In the book of Acts in chapter 2 we have a record about 3000 people have baptized that day when they heard the first sermon by Peter. According to the text Acts 2: 44 "those who believed were together"; Acts 2: 46 "continuing with one mind in the temple" etc... Is it possible for them to stay outside Acts 2:5 "under heaven"? Only Lord knows. Ha!

3) As a logical conclusion of the Lord's work with children in Alexeevka. We would like to take them to the camp where they can practice their English theory skills in practice. It is a Christian camp, which is going to be in Poltava. Lyudmila Viktorovna gave a permission to invite 13 kids this coming summer. Praise the Lord! That's great☺ So with our good friends who are coming from Church of Christ in US and will be teaching interesting Bible lessons 'character traits', as much as they could, kids will learn more and their faith in God will be even stronger. Unfortunately we don't have yet an opportunity to do such camps in Kharkov region because we don't have a camp or a friendly camp director with a camp. Ha! But we are hoping that in 2012 Lord will help us to do a combination of camps: a. one in a forest area for a week or 10 days; b. another one in the local church building or locally in Kharkov somewhere in the park and call it VBS camp for 5 days. We would like for the local church members in Alexeevka being more involved in such project so we are working on it.

We are hoping that those kids who will hear good lessons this coming camp, listening good lessons at my English Bible class and later will hear more will be baptized into Jesus Christ.

We are very thankful to three missionary families who came to Kharkov in 2008 to establish several congregations. In 2009 they laid foundation of a new congregation by baptizing

Andrew Zolotyhin. Later on some of our old Ukrainian friends (from Slavyansk) came to Kharkov. Julie and I were involved in all those projects and were in this new congregation from its foundation day.

Thank you very much dear David, Mike, Rob and Brandon for doing such great job. We are thankful to your wives and kids and their encouragements. Dear friends thank you so much for treating us with respect and lots of love. Thank you for respecting Ukrainian customs and traditions but most of all thank you for fulfilling Lord's plans for His Church. We are hoping that with our involvement as members of our new congregation both Julie and I can do more for the Lord by encouraging, increasing, edifying and sharing love with those who are already there in the congregation and new comers too. As a well – organized team we definitely can do a lot more for the Lord. Thanks to Jesus most of all for allowing us to be a part of this hard work that is going in Kharkov.

May God bless all of us with courage to preach the Gospel to the lost.

We love you very much.

Please, please, keep us and this Lord's work in your prayers.

In Jesus' love, your co-workers in the Lord Valeriy and Julie Kachuk.

As usual I would like to share some pics from February.

Children's group; we are studying Bible in English in Alexeevka Church of Christ:



Studying Bible in English with adults in Alexeevka Church of Christ:



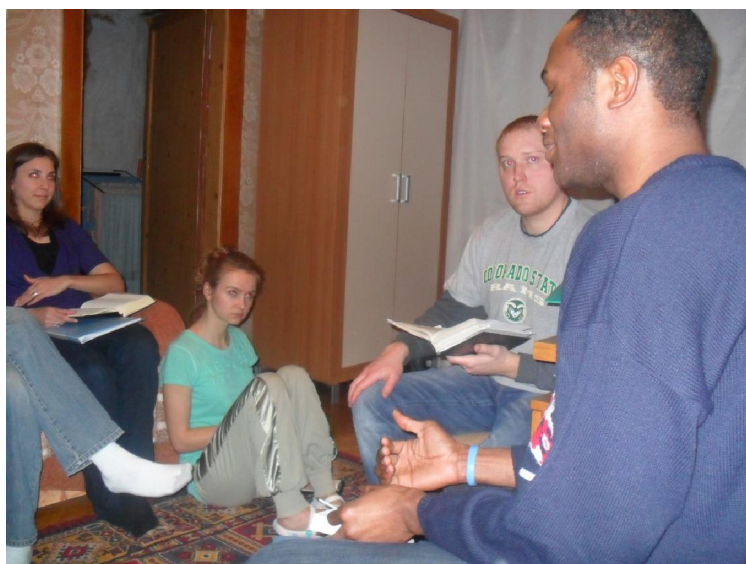
Youth meeting in Alexeevka Church of Christ:



Our usual Friday morning fellowship with brothers Mike, David, Rob, Ivan, Andrew and David:



Our new congregation meeting at Kachuk's apt, Nesteroviche's, McDougale's and Hindman's. We also had EEM meeting at Hindman's and game night at McDougles apt:



Plans for March:

- 1) We will continue to grow in our MINISTRY: “WE VISIT and ENCOURAGE.” **2 Corinthians 2:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Peter 4: 7-11; Philippians 4:6-8; 2 Timothy 2:2.**
- 2) To have a parents meeting on the 6th of March. Those are of those kids who attend English group.
- 3) I need to find the rest of the translators for camp.
- 4) Julie will be teaching in March, kids in the Sunday school in Alexeevka.
- 5) We will continue to use our apartment for our church gatherings.
- 6) I will continue to work with English through the Bible program in Alexeevka.
- 7) Both Julie and I will continue to encourage downtown congregation.
- 8) My personal studies and preparation is going to be done during the office hours.
- 9) We have 13 on the list and we will plan to work with those 13 people who will go to camp Mayak.
- 10) We will continue to share Jesus’ love and care with those people who are around us.

Meditating on the Word

"In His law he meditates day and night" Psalm 1:2

"Meditating on the Word," edited by Wayne Burger, is a work of the Columbine church of Christ, 7453 S. Zephyr Ct., Littleton, Colorado, 80128. E-mail: burgpreach@prolynx.com -- Suggested topics are welcomed.

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Acts 13:46-51

“Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first: since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles’...When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But they shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium” (Acts 13:48-51).

The events recorded in this section occurred in the city of Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:14). When the Jews rejected the gospel then Paul and Barnabas turned to the Gentile people. The Gentile people rejoiced at the opportunity and obeyed the gospel, but the Jews became jealous and began persecuting Paul and Barnabas. Finally, Paul and Barnabas left and went to the city of Iconium. When they left the Jews ***“they shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them.”*** This was a symbol of utter rejection. Jesus instructed the disciples that He sent out on the limited commission to do the same thing (Matthew 10:14). Later in Paul’s missionary travels we see a similar action when he left the Jews in Corinth. ***“He shook out his garments and said to them, ‘Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles’”*** (Acts 18:6).

Principles: While on the mission field, one may have to turn from one group or an individual who is not receptive, to a group or individual who is more receptive to the gospel.

Second, when missionaries proclaim the word of God, they have been successful. Our responsibility is to preach and teach. If that is done one is successful even if people reject the message (I Corinthians 1:17). But, the truth to keep in mind is that in most cases when God's word is taught some seed will fall into good and honest hearts that will obey (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23).

Third, Satan will do all in his power to destroy the efforts and work of the missionary. Often he does his work ***“through devout women of prominence”*** or other notable people. We can't let that stop our efforts even though it may mean that we have to work among a different group or use a different method.

A fourth principle can be seen in that there may come a time when the missionary has to symbolically shake off the dust of those people in protest. In other words there may come a time when the missionary has to come to the conclusion that he is ***“casting his pearls before swine”*** (Matthew 7:6) and move on to more receptive hearts. This decision must not be made quickly and without much thought, prayer, and advice.

Advice should be sought from other missionaries, particularly missionaries who would understand the situation, or the people or the culture and from the sponsoring congregation.

Wayne Burger