

Dear friends,

Spring has arrived in Ukraine, bringing warmer temperatures and snippets of beauty to offset the normal gray and dullness of buildings.

As we think of you, we wish you could sit down with us to hear the stories of what our students are doing around Ukraine and globally for the Glory of God. *Through your faithful prayer and support you have invested in a ministry which continues to multiply.*



Pavel graduated from the Pastoral Leadership (PL) major at Kyiv Theological Seminary (KTS) in 2014, with a heart of fire for service. God is using him to mobilize his local Ukrainian church for missions in Uganda. Pavel travels to Uganda for 2-3 months at a time, each time taking a larger group from his home church. He has been working in children's ministry, building orphanages and providing humanitarian aid. A few months ago Pavel stopped by Andy's office to discuss ways to reach pastors in Uganda with Biblical training. From that discussion, Pavel has contacted and recruited Oleg, a 3rd year PL student, to travel to Uganda for the first time with the goal of training a group of local pastors. Oleg shared, *"I am confident that the ministry of pastors and their teaching will influence the Church, and the Church will influence the country."* Isn't God good! Please pray for Pavel's ministry and thank the Lord for how He is using him to stir a desire for missions. And pray for Oleg as he travels in June to teach 1 Peter to pastors in Uganda.



Sasha graduated from the Pastoral Leadership major in 2012, and he recently stopped by to give an update on his chaplaincy ministry to soldiers in war-torn Eastern Ukraine. The war in Ukraine almost seems forgotten both in Ukraine, and certainly in world news. Yet, soldiers are dying daily and people are suffering. The evangelical church in the East is also facing difficulties with new restrictive laws. They need to have a group of 50 to be allowed to gather and the churches are limited in what they are allowed to do. Pray for these churches to continue in faithfulness during this difficult time, and pray for Sasha and other chaplains who put their lives on the line, to share Jesus with our Ukrainian soldiers.

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Update on Sokil Church plant:

You might remember, from a few updates ago, we told you about our student Marcel and wife Oksana, who work with a small group of believers in the village of Sokil, Western Ukraine. By God's grace, Marcel was ordained as Pastor of this church just a few weeks ago. This is progress and a significant change from last summer, when we helped this tiny body by coming alongside them to host a kid's camp. Andy and his colleague, Andrei, traveled to the village to participate in the ordination service. Previously, this small group of believers had a "circuit" Pastor, Stephan, who ministered to 6 churches on a rotating basis. Praise God, that's now down to 5! Pray for Marcel as he leads, and pray particularly for young families and men to be saved in this village.



Family Update:

Andy's Activities: It's all a blur . . . at least it seems that way. This is his busiest time of year, with a heavy teaching load, followed by the requisite grading of student's work. But a highlight for him, it was a great winter in Kyiv – with lots of snow and even colder temperatures, and he only fell on the ice twice.

Holly's Happenings: Last month Holly and Noah traveled to Budapest for testing to help us better meet Noah's educational needs. It was a very fruitful trip and we gained a better picture of how to proceed for next year.

Abigail's Adventures (17 yrs. old): Abigail was inducted into the National Honor Society, but the bigger adventure is this summer's trip to Costa Rica, with Royal Servant's June 21- Aug. 1st. She'll have one week of training and then four weeks in Costa Rica, using soccer as an outreach. If you'd like to join her prayer team or learn more, write her at abigailrist2000@gmail.com



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Drew's Discoveries (15 yrs. old): A highlight for Andrew this winter was his first year of basketball. Following the coach's instruction, he did sleep with his basketball during the season. As for the picture – The two “bros”, Andrew and one of his boyz, Sidney, are chillin' in the park.



Noah's Notables (12 yrs. old): And the winner of the Rist family NCAA tournament is, drum roll please, NOAH. His strategy for the final game was simple. “I could make a sentimental choice and pick Michigan, or beat Andrew and Abigail, and choose Villanova.”

As you can see in the picture, Noah acquired a taste for goulash when he was in Hungary.

Prayer needs:

- 1) Praise God for the ordination of Marcel as Pastor of Word of Life church in Sokil, Ukraine. Ask God to put a hedge of protection around this tiny church and their family. May they be bright lights for the gospel in this community.
- 2) Pray for Pavel and Oleg's ministry in Uganda. Pray for Sasha's ministry in Eastern Ukraine.
- 3) Andy will be team teaching Theology 2 (Man, Sin & Angels) with a Ukrainian brother, April 23rd-27th. Pray for Spirit led teaching and learning, for a solid foundation to be laid which these students can build upon in their personal lives and ministries.
- 4) Praise for Abigail's trip to Costa Rica and that she is fully supported. Ask the Lord to teach, guide and stretch her as she makes preparations for the trip.
- 5) Andy will be in the States for a mission's conference at Woodside Bible Church (Michigan) May 11-13th. It will be a really quick turnaround. Pray for strength and that he'd represent well what God is doing in Ukraine.

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