



TERNOPIL, UKRAINE

3rd Quarter 2014 Report

Youth camps summer

Peace be with you dear friends, workers for our Lord. For us, it's a great blessing to work with you toward a common cause. When it comes to summer, we always feel this unity, because the ministry of camps is the fruit of the efforts of a large team, which we are together. Due to the fact that we are somewhere closer to the finish line of this work and we can see the fruits of our work together, I want to talk a little bit about the blessings in this labor. To share with you in order to thank you for your participation in our ministry.

This summer, God revealed to us an opportunity to hold 4 camps, two youth camps and two for children. In this letter I want to tell you about youth camps.

Youth ministry is a priority ministry for our young church. Although we do not have a particularly strong team of youth leaders--all the ones who are in this ministry are fairly modest and not very charismatic (in the sense of outstanding or influential) leader--that ministry is pretty stable.

Like last year, we decided to hold camps in two formats. The first was a day camp, or more accurately an evening Christian youth camp. Everything was pleasant, simple, and sincere. These meetings were held on the premises of the church. In this way, we hope to overcome the barrier for young people regarding the "non-traditional" (to them) church. The camp was held for almost a week, from 17 to 22 June. Overall the camp was attended by about 30 guys and girls, ages 14-18. The main ingredients of the camp was made of a few important parts. Everything started with the games; afterward it was time for the spiritual and edifying parts.

As for the gaming part, every day of the camp was different. One day, there was time for games in the park; the next day games took place in the room rented by the church. Then there was a day in the city center, etc. To me, it seemed that the most interesting day was the day when several groups received a common paperclip, which they had to trade for something better, then better, over and over in the city. The winning team would be the team that came back with the most valuable item. They needed to approach people in the city and ask them to trade something more valuable for something less. For example, some traded the paperclip for a business card, then the business card for 10 griven [Ukrainian money], then the 10 griven for an inkpen, then the inkpen for a ticket to some concert. An interesting incident happened to this same team: at some stage, when they already had a pretty good object, one of the passers-by agreed to accept that valuable thing in exchange for some kind of invitation. When they opened the invitation, it was an invitation to a meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses. This was a disappointment and shock. Unfortunately, they could not trade this to anyone else for two reasons: first, in order to give someone an invitation to a meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses, they would have to belong to that belief. The second reason they couldn't was because the leader escorting the team knew this was not the kind of information that they should spread. The young people learned a lesson: that sometimes you can spend a lot of time and energy accumulating something of value in this life, only to trade it for something useless and empty ...

And then there was the part when the campers could sing Christian songs and listen to the gospel from the team members. Basically Gospel was told through testimonies and stories from the lives of young people who have already found the Lord.

After that camp was a stationary camp in the Carpathian Mountains. In this camp were 39 people from the youth camp and 14 people from the church who went as leaders. In this camp we shared the laws of the kingdom of God. During this camp, over 10 people prayed the prayer of repentance. Usually these prayers took place during the evening fellowship times in small groups.

One of the main objectives that we pursued in this ministry was to build personal relationships between the 14 members of the team and the 39 young campers from unbelieving or religious families. It is still early to talk about the results of all the camps, as only time will tell whether we build long-term relationships with these young people, whether we make disciples of at least some of the youth. This process and the work are ahead of us. But what has already been seen is that we had an open opportunity to proclaim the Gospel of God. Already we have seen that some have accepted this Gospel, and if accepted, then God will continue working.

Pray for us about in our ministry. Please pray for leaders to serve. We really need young leaders who will fear God and love young people, who can "lead" the youth ministry—someone who will go to the youth himself and lead others.

Update: September 30



My phone rang at 1:30 am this morning. It was Dennis calling (the minister responsible for the Rehab Center). “We’ve got an emergency. The rehab building is on fire. Firefighters are on the way!” He hung up. I could not gather my thoughts; I was shocked... My wife and I got up, had a word of prayer, and drove to the Rehab Center. I also phoned Volodya (my assistant), and we three together drove there. As we were driving, I received peace in my heart. God reminded me that He is not sending more trials than we can handle. All 6 people and the minister were there, unharmed and doing well. One of the men in the Rehab Center had a dream that the house was burning; he opened

his eyes to see the kitchen on fire. He awoke everyone. They started to put the fire down as long as they had electricity. Once the electricity stopped working, there was no water pressure. The fire spread from the wooden kitchen to the roof of the building.

As a result, the roof and kitchen are ruined. Their bedroom is also destroyed. All the beds, clothing, and bedding are destroyed. We do not know what started the fire. There are no wires close to the place where it started. The cooking oven might be a cause, although it was inspected already. Another possibility is that someone started that fire (arson), but since we also have a wooden storage, we hope that isn’t the cause. Pray for us.

What makes the situation even more complicated is that yesterday and today we have to move out of the facilities the church has been renting. God has shown us another place we can rent on hourly basis to conduct church services and hold children’s and teens’ meetings. We will be renting a room from a Trade Union. We thank everyone who prayed for the rent situation.

From BIEM: If individuals or churches wish to donate funds toward rebuilding the Rehab Center, BIEM will forward all gifts received. Please mark donations “Ternopil Rehab Center.”