



BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES

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"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice." Psalm 55:17

Dear Pastors and Friends,

Warm greetings in Christ from the Slobodians! We along with most of you are grateful for springtime at last! We have been looking forward to the warmer weather, which aids everything from evangelism to the church building projects we are working on.

I am writing from Kiev where we were thrilled to participate in our 16th graduation of the school in Kiev where your prayers and support have enabled us to train hundreds of nationals for Christian service over these many years. What a blessing to hand out diplomas to 20 graduates who have completed their courses. Though most are in their early 20's this class had a 65 year old graduate which is a little bit unusual for us. We are thankful for the testimony of this Ukrainian doctor who was saved later in life and is very active in evangelism and local church ministry. Praise God for the desire to obtain Bible training in order to be more effective in working for Christ at any age. This enthusiasm was warmly received by the much younger students as well as the professors.

The question we are being asked quite often these days is how is the situation in Ukraine affecting our ministry? Other than needing your prayers more than ever, there are some definite ways that our outreach has been affected especially in the three following areas:

1. Summer camps: Normally we have at least one American group who comes to work alongside our nationals in these summer camps. Mostly these are church groups though sometimes groups from Christian colleges have come as well. Due to the situation in Ukraine with our State Department issuing travelers warnings for Ukraine as well as withdrawing groups like the Peace Corps, the church group scheduled to come this summer have had to cancel and make other plans. This of course is a disappointment because Ukrainian youth and workers alike really look forward to interacting with American Christians and practicing their English. Nevertheless the camps will go forward this summer though the ministry of Americans working together with Ukrainians will be sorely missed.

2. Seminary: Likewise the American pastors scheduled to teach classes this spring have had to cancel for the same reason. Therefore this session of classes were taught by Ukrainians or experienced pastors from nearby Eastern Europe. We were also missing some students like those from Russia where people are influenced by Russian news and media firmly under Putin's control, which portrays Ukraine as a dangerous place of lawlessness being overrun by violent Fascists. For example we would have had 22 instead of 20 graduates since two scheduled to graduate are from Russia where people are truly misinformed. Here in Kiev it is quite peaceful and life is going on normally despite Russian media portraying otherwise. To be sure, there is much apprehension about the future.

3. Building Projects: The church building project in Bilogorodka, Ukraine is facing a delay since once the foundation is in, which we anticipate will soon be done, the next phase is to have American construction groups begin construction. This also has to wait until the situation is considered stable enough for American groups to come. With large Russian military forces positioning themselves along the Ukrainian eastern border, waiting for now seems to be the prudent course of action.

A link on our website (BaptistInternational.org) has a list of ways American Christians can pray for Ukraine during these difficult times. May God bless each of you in your walk with and service for Christ!

Sam & Amy Slobodian

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