

Hello, dear brethren and your families,

## 1. Situation in Gorlovka.

Recently I've got back from the city of Dzerzhinsk. This city is the closest to Gorlovka place controlled by the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The purpose of the trip was to legally document the hostile take over of the building owned by the Church of Christ and Bear Valley Bible Institute - Ukraine in 2014. This city gets a lot shelling from the territories occupied by pro-Russian insurgents. The policeman I talked to told me about the consequences of the shelling and informed me that the last one took place just on the night before my arrival. There used to be a Church of Christ congregation in Dzerzhinsk before the warfare broke out. According to my sources, all Christians have left the city because of the danger.

The Ukrainian media predicts that in the end of 2016 - beginning of 2017 there will be elections in compliance with Ukrainian laws on the occupied territories. After the elections the whole region will supposedly return to the jurisdiction of Ukraine. To achieve this goal both sides of the conflict will have to take steps to insure the presence of the Ukrainian Border Control forces on the border with Russia as well as pass the laws about amnesty for the insurgents and make the very important decision on what will be the legal status of the territories reunited with Ukraine. For us it will mean the return of Ukrainian laws and jurisdiction, the freedom of religion including, to the currently occupied territories. So we don't give up hope to reclaim the building that was taken over by the armed people 2 years ago and is still being used by them. We have a lot of good memories about the worship services, baptisms and impressive cooperation of Bear Valley Bible Institute and the local church of Christ taking place on this property.

The web-sites and on-line forums of the Donetsk People Republic host a discussion of what should be the legal status of the territories in their control upon their return under the jurisdiction of Ukraine, with the high hopes of getting special privileges and a "special status". However, in the meantime the warfare is still active, the number of shelling attacks as well as the amount of victims (killed or wounded) increase daily. It can be explained that by demonstration of their military might the leaders of the DPR will try to get more profitable conditions of the truce agreement.

I keep in touch with the Christians who remain in Gorlovka. I call them on the phone, teach Bible lessons. We miss each other a lot. I was able to purchase the train tickets ahead of time to travel to Gorlovka next week and spend two weeks there. I'd really appreciate prayers for the safe travels and safe worship on the occupied territory.

The Christians in Gorlovka are still struggling financially. All help is vitally necessary. We are thankful to LT Gurganus who had taught in Bear Valley this year and left some funds to help out these Christians on the occupied territories, the city of Gorlovka including.

## 2. Ministry in Kiev region.

This month I spent all Sundays in Shevchenko District Church of Christ worshipping with this congregation. Every week I taught Bible classes. Also before the worship we would try to evangelize the people in the streets. Praise God, the work in Kiev is fruitful. On May 8th Arthur Tvorogov was baptized. We worked a lot with this man encouraging him to obey the Gospel of Christ. Following his baptism I continue having individual studies with him. Arthur was baptized by Bear Valley student Uriy Romanov who wants to be the preacher of this congregation upon his graduation.



In cooperation with Bear Valley Bible Institute we continue evangelical efforts in the city of Bela Tserkva. Preaching in the hospitals, in the streets, having soccer games opened for public, youth group meetings - all these activities aim to find new people so the Gospel of Christ will become available for them. One of the most important ministries in my opinion is the service in Bela Tserkva Oncology Clinic. Being tired of their health struggles, people pay attention to every word preached from the Holy Scriptures, willingly take New Testaments and other Christian publications. In the course of this ministry we've managed to establish good relationship with the staff. They don't create any obstacles and don't have any objections letting us

spread the Gospel of Christ among their patients. Usually it goes like this: we go from ward to ward and in each of them I teach a short lesson based on a few New Testament Scriptures. Then we visit and in the end pray for all patients in the ward. Besides, we usually bring treats purchased with the funds of our mission committee. This method of Evangelism help to establish long term contacts with the patients and their relatives as well as the personnel of the Clinic. I have high hopes that as the result of this work the church will have new visitors.



Every week my wife Veronika and Vera Sopelnik teach Sunday School lessons for kids. The members' kids come to the class as well as children who live in the nearby buildings. We hope that weekly Bible Classes will lay good foundation for making the right decision in obeying Christ for this children.



### 3. The Institute.

Dennis had asked me to teach 1,2,3 John for the 1st year students on May 23-27. Taking into account the difficult teaching of these epistles and the fact that I was to taught this course the first time, I've spent a lot of time this month getting ready to teach it. To achieve my goal I've read a few commentaries and worked with the Greek text a lot. The students were diligent with memory work, daily tests and the final test.



On the 28th of May we held the Graduation Ceremony where the diplomas were presented to the graduates. All three graduates kept good grades and showed good attitude of working hard and helping out with the Lord's work during the two years time period. I am sure they will be excellent workers in their local congregations. After the ceremony we had refreshments and visited in the Christian fellowship.



I am very thankful to the brethren who give funds to support my work. I appreciate everybody who reads my reports, who prays for our efforts and for the peaceful resolution of the military conflict in Ukraine. Christians from Kiev, Bela Tserkva and Gorlovka send their greetings.

In Christ,

Andrew.