
UKRAINE NEWS

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Erich and Tetyana Salzmann

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Dear friends

Good things take their time. To us humans, it just often takes way too much time, we get bored and easily tempted to rush into something of lesser value.

House church

We continue studying the books of Hebrews. Every Sunday we have quite a lively discussion. Very slowly I get the impression, that some of the folks are starting to think about how to continue. That is good. We don't want to be only a nice little club. If we are filled with the love of God, then it will overflow simply on its own and the love will be passed on to others.

A Christmas story

Just before Christmas, Tetyana remembered the story of the Shoemaker Martin (by Leo Tolstoy). She, like the shoemaker, prayed to God: Please come to me. You see, that because of the kids I cannot that easily search after you.

Just a few days before Christmas, Dan fell on the stairs. Initially, that seemed, apart from a bruise, not to have done any damage. But already on the next day, he started to complain, that his belly hurt. On the third day, I had to take him home from school. After making a few phone calls, we decided to see a doctor. We were directed to the emergency ward of the children's hospital. There they had a look at Dan. Because there was a possibility of appendicitis, the doctor wanted him to stay at the hospital. Since Dan was afraid to stay there alone, Tetyana decided to stay with him. Of course we were wondering, why all this happened just a day before Christmas. When they got to their floor, Tetyana felt, that she would meet God here (just like Martin in the story). Arriving at their section, they quickly got to know a few other patients and their mothers, some of them in really difficult situations. All of a sudden Tetyana knew why they were there. Dan already felt a lot better. To the doctor on duty there, Tetyana said openly, that she was totally convinced that Dan was healthy and the reason of their being there was her prayer. In the end, that doctor permitted, that they spend the night at home and come back only in the morning for a follow-up check (which confirmed Dan's well-being).

The next day we drove there together. Our children had packed some of their toys and I bought a big bag full of bananas. With that, we were able to spread at least a little bit of Christmas spirit. Later, Tetyana was able to help a lady from a remote village by giving her a contribution towards the costs of an operation for her baby. While still waiting for the results of the follow-up check of Dan, one of the nurses approached Tetyana, asking whether she could not help decorating the dining room for the Christmas days.

During this time, Darja helped me (Erich) to decorate our own Christmas tree and prepare things for our own celebrations. When Tetyana and Dan returned home, God gave suc-

cess and both meal and pie were ready before our guests arrived.

Carpentry work

I used some of the free time I had, to make a sliding door for the kitchen. She nicely slides in behind the kitchen furniture and thus is not getting into the way at all. Thanks to the door it is now better possible, that people can sit and talk undisturbed by others in both kitchen and living room. Often the adults are in the kitchen, while the children watch a video in the living room.

Grisha had also some setback this winter. Due to the extreme cold part of the heating system in the carpentry shop froze. That resulted in some damage to piping and radiators. So he had to make unplanned expenses for new pipes and on top of that comes the loss of income. Insurance is something the people here haven't really heard much about yet.

Already twice I was acting as lumber-jack. Around the carpentry shop there is a little bit of land and there are trees growing. We have cut down some to get firewood. Through this I have been able to help in a practical way. Somehow I keep getting reminded of Acts, when the early believers supported each other with what they had. Grisha has been helping me out with the welding equipment and now I could do him a favour with my chainsaw. Each one helps the others as he can.

We are tinkering around with a folding bed. We have one at our house, which serves us really well. Considering, that there are lots of people here living in tight accommodation, we think, that this could fill a niche in the market. I hope to develop something, which would really help Grisha to see his business growing, pay off his loans and improve his own living situation.

The apprenticeship for the young man from the Bondarchuk family will not happen this year. His professional school has planned such a practical time only for next year.

Studio recordings

Those of you who have ever done studio recordings know, what a tiring process this can be. X-times the same song is being recorded until it finally is exactly as desired. Recording just a spoken text should be simpler, one would think. However, if the original is in English and being translated by a Swiss into Russian, it is not all that simple. Even though I can fluently communicate, I still do make a lot of mistakes. We therefore had to try out a few things. First we simply tried a direct simultaneous translation recorded in the studio, after I exercised the whole sermon through three times. Then we decided that there were still too many errors. So we corrected about 70 of the worst mistakes (within one sermon). Oleg then took the result of that and put it together with the original video file. The sound quality was now very

good, but my Russian remained not all that great. We decided to make still another try. A transcription was made from the simultaneous recording. Then I corrected and improved the translation. Afterwards the text was edited, so that it was without mistakes and of good style. Now, the new recording has turned out very well indeed.

Of course we have at times wondered, whether it was really worth all this effort. In order to achieve top-quality we need about two weeks per sermon. But at least we can work on several sermons simultaneously. But still, is it worth it? We believe, yes. First of all, we see, that certain good video series are being used in churches here already since over 15 years. But more important, we think that this sermon series about Gods Love, which we are translating, is really unique. Marina (17), the daughter of Ivan, has listened to all our live-recordings (low quality, from mobile phones) and was so deeply touched by them, that she asked her father: "Dad, why, why nobody ever tell us that Gods Love is like this?" In spite of low sound quality and poor Russian she was really moved. Marina is not the only one.

So, we are convinced that it is worth to invest in this. However, we already see again and again delays. It seems that the enemy is not too happy about our work.

Ice Age

Already the winter two years ago was very cold, but this one really topped it. Twice within a short time the thermometer showed temperatures below 30° Celcius. Just before that it had snowed, so that everything was below a 40cm thick white cover. Unfortunately, some of our water pipes froze.



In the house we only had water in the kitchen. At least we were able to take a shower in our guest house. Meanwhile it is warmer again. Much of the snow has been melting. The water pipes unfroze again. The plastic pipes are flexible and suffered no damage, thank God.

Family corner

Tetyana's nerves still are very sensitive. When her mother was close to death due to an asthma attack at night, and had to be brought to the hospital by the ambulance, Tetyana struggled with it almost more than her mother. Thanks to morphine, she was already joking again the next day, while Tetyana apparently still does not cope well with such stress situations. In the last few weeks we have seen improvement though. She has been able to relax and permit herself a nap throughout the day, when necessary, without having a bad conscience. We appreciate your prayers.

The kids are doing well. Darja is now in fourth grade and just this month she turned 10. Dan is in second grade and also this month turned 8. Sometimes it is a bit scary, when you realise, how fast they grow up and how little time there is left, until they will be grown-ups. We appreciate every prayer for them and also for us as parents. Just because we are in missions does not mean, that things are easier, rather the opposite is often the case. Cultural differences, language issues, and even such questions like "Who are we?", are things already the kids sometimes wrestle with. Darja is already showing the first signs of a teenager.

Bible for deaf

A friend of ours, Volodya, also has his own recording studio. Mainly he also records spoken texts. Among other things he has recorded all the sermons of Spurgeon in Russian. He has also recorded the entire Bible in Russian and Ukrainian. These recordings are especially helpful to minister to people with poor or no eye sight. Now Volodya would like to also do a video recording in sign language, so that deaf people can "watch" the bible. Up to a million of them live in the former Soviet Union. About half of them cannot even read. The recording project would take about five years to complete. In the end it will be about 125 hours of finished video material. Volodya has already found a professional translator. Now he asked me, to get some prayer support for him through my friends. Would you please pray for the necessary finances to do this recording? About 400 USD per month are needed. Volodya will give his own work and the studio for free, but he needs funds to pay translator and some technicians.

So much for this time. Thank you for all your prayer support.

Many greetings

Erich & Tetyana with Darja & Dan

Prayer requests

Give thanks for

- the development in our house church
- the Christmas Story
- the progress with the studio recordings
- the undamaged water pipes

Pray for

- Gods guidance for us as house church
- for continued good success with the studio recordings and that still many more people will be blessed by these sermons
- for Volodya, and for the realisation of the bible for deaf people
- Tetyana's health
- Darja and Dan, and for us as parents

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