
UKRAINE NEWS

Newsletter № 74

Erich and Tetyana Salzmann

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Dear friends

Making decisions is sometimes hard, especially if there are still a lot of uncertainties. I find it twice as hard, if I myself don't really know what I want. That is how I felt during the last few months, torn forth and back, unsure, and at times simply without any energy to move forward. But it also became more and more clear to me, that nobody will make the decision on my behalf. Now I have come to the point, where I give myself a push and start some big changes. It helps to know, that our God is always good and will be with us everywhere. Sometimes we will make mistakes, but he will still be with us. It would be a great encouragement to us, if you would go with us through this next phase and support us. But first some impressions from the last few months.

Studio recordings and translations

Our new Russian website is now live. Some minor details still need fixing, but the site is already active. At www.zanovo.info you can check it out. "Zanovo" means "anew". The sermons, books and posts we make available there, are meant to challenge people, to rethink, maybe issues, in which they are stuck, or traditional views, which prevent them from growing. The content is meant to "teach the head and inspire the heart".

The book "God of the Possible" is now available in Christian bookshops. We got some first positive feedback. Unfortunately, because of the political situation, it is difficult to get the books to Russia as well. Please pray for a good opportunity.

With the help of some friends in Switzerland and Germany we have translated some sermons into German language. The first two are already recorded and can be downloaded from our own website. We heartily recommend them for German speakers.

Volodya and his team have now finished the five books of Moses and the book of Joshua. The Youtube-channel with the Video-Bible has already been accessed over 10000 times.



The audio-version of the book "He loves me" by Wayne Jacobsen is now recorded. Some sound engineering still needs to be done. Once finished, this superb book about who God really is, will be available free of charge on the internet. Often, Volodya and Igor spent over an hour talking about the chapter they had just recorded. They were both deeply touched by this book.

Since they asked me to send a photo with their thumbs-up to the author, I thought I might add this picture here as well.

House group ministry

To work in small groups both precious and difficult at the same time. Precious is, that you really get to know each other well. During the conversations after the sermons we every so often experience these beautiful moments, when somebody shares about a breakthrough. In these moments you know, that your work is not in vain. The more you get to know each other, the more concrete becomes the fact that we are "one body". At times embarrassing or painful issues rise to the surface, or even conflicts arise. To allow this, to be real, and then practise real reconciliation, is often difficult, but always worth it.

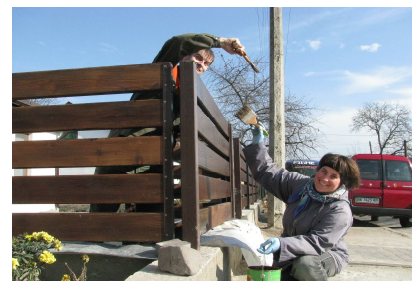
Often you also empathise with other members. That was the case with Igor, the "voice" in Volodyas recording studio. His already grown-up son Andrey has descended into a state of depression. Now he has stopped his education, sits mostly at home and can hardly be motivated for anything. This is a most difficult situation for the parents. We try to advise, but often feel helpless ourselves. The only thing we can do is pray. Just last week Igor shared for the first time some news about some positive development.

Practical help



Our ministry is every so often very practical. Oleg and his wife were able to move into the house of their grandmother. Quite a lot of reconstruction

was necessary. Some of it he was able to finance by selling his previous apartment. Since he himself sits in a wheelchair, he cannot do work himself and needs help. Together with Grisha we built and painted a new fence for them.



Already a number of times we have been like a transit solution for some folks. This spring a former missionary worked for us for a little while. Due to some problems he had returned from the mission-field. Sadly enough he received hardly any real help from his mission agency or church. I was able to provide some labour, thus enabling him to earn

some income, while at the same time going easy on my back. On top of that, we had many a good conversation over lunch. Meanwhile he connected with the new house church of our former mission's director. They are now also working together, earning an income by renovating apartments.

Back to Switzerland

Because of the education of our children, but also for health reasons, it became the longer the clearer, that a return to Switzerland is inevitable. Without the health problems we might still have added another two or three years, continuing with home schooling. The medical treatment Tetyana got here did not really help at all. My own back is much better, but I still have to be careful. So, now a phase of transition begins. During this time it has to become clear, where we will live, where the children will attend school and also whether we will remain in some form of ministry or will have to return to a normal secular job. I would prefer the former, but this depends on a variety of factors.

Transition period

First of all we need some rest. Since last summer we haven't had any holidays. Before tackling all the changes, we have to give body and soul a break. We found an apartment just one village away from our parents, in the area of Thun, where we can stay from the 26th of July until the 23rd of August. During this time we will try to find a more permanent place. We would prefer something in that very region of Switzerland. It would be great to live in a place, where we don't have to build up all relationships from scratch. Once we find a suitable apartment, it will also be clear, where the children will have to attend school. Ideally this would be already starting with the new school year. However, that is now on very short notice. It might take a few months longer. In that case it would be great to find someone, who will help our kids with their learning. After that, two things will happen parallel. On one hand we will have to find someone, who will rent or buy our house, and we will have to move our personal belongings. The old furniture we will not move, only the smaller personal belongings. On the other hand we have to find out, whether it will be possible to go on with ministry, or if a part-time or full-time secular job is the thing to go for.

The following ideas concerning ministry are currently on our minds. Best of all I would like to continue the translation ministry also when in Switzerland. Our friends here have already asked to translate them at least one sermon per month. We also would love to translate another book. "Is God to blame?" is the best book I have read so far on the issue of suffering. We really would love to make it available to Russian speaking people. The recording of the video-bible continues. An audio book has just been finished and more might follow. If we could travel to Ukraine from time to time, we could continue to support this ministry and at the same time also bring some humanitarian aid. Apart from that we are communicating with the mission agency "Meos" in Switzerland. They work among foreigners and currently they don't have someone to minister among Russian speaking people. With these various things I could easily fill up my time. I could continue to use the things I have learned,

especially in the area of the Russian language. Also, they would stay fresh in case should we return to Ukraine at a later stage.

The crucial question is a financial one. In this area we really were blessed during the last years. We were even able to invest some of our support into projects, without asking for additional funding. Overall, however, the support level has been dropping. We were able to compensate, because our house is now debt free. For a full-time ministry in Switzerland we would need significantly higher support. Should this in any way be something God puts on your heart, then we would love to hear from you.

While writing this newsletter, there is a sense of sadness. We had hoped that we could go on with our ministry for a while longer. Now it is very practical issues, such as school and health, who dictate otherwise.

On one hand there is a certain relieve, because the decision has been made. On the other hand I am also feeling tension, because so much is not yet clear. I realise, that I struggle much more with such changes than when I was younger. We appreciate, if you can accompany us during this not exactly easy time, both emotionally as well as in prayer.

Many greetings from Ukraine

Erich & Tetyana with Darja & Dan

Prayer requests

Give thanks for

- the progress with the video bible
- the now functioning new website
- the growth of the house church members

Pray for

- the transition
- a suitable apartment
- guidance concerning ministry or job
- health and protection
- the sermon recordings and the new website, that God would use them
- the printed book to get into Russia
- peace for Ukraine
- Igors son Andrey

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Video-Bible in Russian sign language:

www.youtube.com/user/surdobiblia

Direct link to sermons in Russian language:

www.zanovo.info