



# Ferguson Report



Vol. 7 No. 4

“Go ye unto all the world”

April 2010

## Second Month in Ukraine

It’s hard to believe it, but Mary and I are already in the last month of our three-month stay in Ukraine. The weather has changed from sub-freezing temperatures and daily snows to blue sky days with temperatures in the mid 70’s. Actually, I think this is a perfect time to be in Ukraine. Everywhere you look there are turfs of green and a vibrant array of tender colors sprinkled among the variety of trees. It was amazing to see the transformation of the scenery as the Ukrainians cleaned leaves and rubbish in preparation for Easter. The “commons” areas between large apartment blocks—which I thought were hopelessly trashy—are now neatened areas where children play and grandmothers converse with one another.

There were four weeks between two short courses I’ve already taught and the two regular courses which I’m now teaching, that I was able to focus more time and energy on evangelism. Of course, a part of me wishes I could spend more time now doing that; but I also love teaching in the classroom. During that time, we were able to meet new people and develop some stronger relationships.

Not knowing Russian continues to be more of a hindrance than I would like. Mary and I have sought the help of several people; however, we’ve settled on a professional English teacher who instructs Russian-speaking students at the Gorlovka State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages. Her name is Ira Kramarenko. Her daughter, Lera, has translated for us on numerous occasions. Ira, Lera, and her sister-Sasha, are all faithful Christians. Ira is a very polished and precise instructor of English and is fondly referred to by her daughters as Ira “Grammarenko.” The challenge, however, is Ira has never taught Russian to English speakers which is just the opposite of her normal occupation. So, we’re all kind of working through this together.

Notwithstanding the inconvenience of not knowing Russian well, we’ve still been able to maintain a certain level of communication in nearly every area in which we’ve been involved. We’ve had good translators for most situations; and of course, Terry Harmon is always a great resource anytime we need more details or explanation. But Mary and I have

been able to manage a great deal of our daily business without any assistance. That, to me, is a great achievement. There’s no way I could say that the first time I came to Ukraine three and a half years ago.

While there are a couple of people Mary and I are praying for that they will respond soon to the gospel; there have already been three precious souls who’ve responded to the Lord’s invitation to salvation. I wouldn’t say we’re responsible for their conversions, but I do hope we were at least of some encouragement



*Students and secretary, Natasha Parakhina of BVBIU.*

in their decision. I’ve said this before, but people are not easily converted here in Ukraine. I’m still trying to figure out exactly why that is. But I’ll always be convinced that the gospel of Christ taught with the right combination of love, patience, and sacrifice will one day produce the fruit of righteousness (cf. James 3:18).

As our weeks are coming to an end here in Ukraine, there are still two places Mary and I plan to visit. On May 9<sup>th</sup>, we plan to visit the church at Slavyansk. This is the home of Albert and Irene Bagasarian. Albert is a BVBIU graduate, an instructor at BVBIU and a local preacher in Slavyansk. We’re looking forward to going and meeting the church there especially since this will be our first trip there. And then on May 16<sup>th</sup> we plan to visit the church at Krasny Luch. Yes, I know I said in one of my last updates that we were going there back in April, but due to unavoidable circumstances we had to postpone that trip. Krasny Luch was the first place I worked in

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Ukraine, and was where Elvira Akzhygitova—our first convert, lives. So, I guess Krasny Luch will always hold a special place in our hearts.

As I mentioned, I’m currently teaching two classes – the books of Jeremiah & Lamentations to the 1<sup>st</sup>-year students, and the book of James to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students. Afterwards, two Americans will be coming to teach two short courses – Jim Sherman and Steve Housley. There are two special upcoming events scheduled: One is a “youth day” on Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup> with a theme of the “Judgment Day.” This promises to be a highlight of the year for what we anticipate to be a large group of young people from all over Ukraine. Andrew Zhuravlev and I will be the two speakers at the event. The second special event will be the BVBIU graduation scheduled on Friday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. Afterwards, Mary and I will be wrapping up our three months in Ukraine, packing our suitcases, and flying out of Donetsk on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June for our trip back home.

Lord willing, in next month’s newsletter, I’ll give a general overview of the “fruit” of the work during our time here in Ukraine. There really is no way to accurately measure the good that is being done by everyone associated with BVBIU. But I want to at least mention the visible results that have already occurred, and hopefully that which will occur in the near future. Your prayers are always needed and appreciated. This work could not happen without your prayers and support.

Howell

**15 МАЯ 2010 ГОДА**  
в г.Горловка ул.Пушкинская 21а  
состоится христианская  
молодёжная конференция  
на тему:  
**СУДНЫ ДЕНЬ**  
Проведующие:  
**Хауэлл Фергюсон**  
**Андрей Журавлёв**  
Начало 10:00  
Регистрация 9:30  
Контактные телефоны:  
Терри Хармон: 0958591321  
Денис Сопельник: 0507794313

*“Judgement Day” (Судны день) advertisement poster for the youth day in Gorlovka, May 15<sup>th</sup>.*