



*In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your **partnership in the gospel** from the first day until now....*

Phil. 1:4-5

New Year Reflections

Praise Reports:

- Memorable, meaningful time with family during the holidays.
- Progress on our college decision for Karissa.
- A new partnership with a church in Indiana!
- God's most recent provision to Kiev Theological Seminary of over \$900,000 toward building expansion to accommodate more students (see photo).

Prayer Requests:

- Discipline to make loving and trusting God our priority.
- Continued wisdom on education plans for Karissa.
- Creativity in finding more churches interested in reaching Russian-speaking world.
- Tensions between Russia and Ukraine and its impact on the progress of the Gospel.

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We write this letter at the beginning of a new year, experiencing the same feelings of uncertainty that you are. In the last few months our country and the entire world have been mired in an economic crisis. But a closer look reveals that the real crisis is not economic but *moral*. The problem is not merely "frozen" **credit** in the financial markets, but the disappearance of **credibility** in human relationships. Greed and individualism have trumped concern for the well-being of others. The picture is dismal and a cause for anxiety and discouragement for many. Yet, in God's Providence, this is also a window of great opportunity to point people to our **credible** (i.e. trustworthy) God and His Gospel.

As we have looked back over this year of many changes for us, we want to encourage you to consider in your life who this great God is for you and how He works for us who know Him (Rom. 8:28-29). This time last year, we had just made a momentous decision to apply to SEND International as missionaries to Ukraine. We knew God wanted us to do this, but Jerry's mother had recently gone to heaven and he was recovering from his second hip replacement. Karissa encouraged us to get moving so we could be part of the training in January. We were accepted and began our

Candidate Orientation Program where we learned a lot more about ourselves and saw servanthood modeled in the SEND staff. We began to see how God had prepared us, starting back in 1984, by opening our hearts to Russian-speaking people.

March 3rd was a milestone as we were officially appointed as mis-



Artist rendering of the KTS Expansion (colored area) includes dorms, a library, guest housing, offices and classrooms.

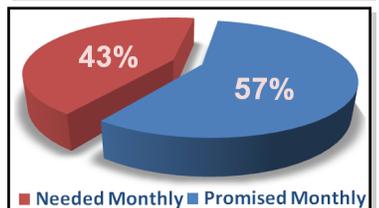
sionaries to Ukraine with SEND International. That whole month was one of excitement and anticipation as we got used to the idea of being missionaries! Our first individual support came in, and our home church mission committee called to say that they wanted to partner with us for twenty-five percent of our monthly support!

April brought our first church presentation of our ministry, and by May our house was on the market (in Metro Detroit)! We continued to present our ministry in June and were encouraged by the number of people interested in reaching the Russian-speaking world through

equipping Ukrainians. We completed our second round of training at SEND in July and during that time learned that our house had been sold! Within twenty-four hours God provided a place for us to live, and we moved in on August 16th. Gradually getting rid of our things has reminded us that we are sojourners here on earth and that our ultimate home and eternal possessions are in heaven (1 Peter 1:3-5).

As we enter 2009, we praise our **trustworthy** Lord for providing 30 individuals as prayer partners and 5 churches and 20 individuals as financial partners. We are officially over half way to acquiring our monthly support and have already seen God raise 100% of our outgoing expenses! Sola Deo Gloria!

Monthly Funding Update



Needed monthly: 43%
(Current status: 57% promised)
Outgoing expenses: \$48,000
(Current status: 100% provided!)

Note: Contributions are solicited with the understanding that the donee organization has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds.