

*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, Resolutions and Requests



*Jerry presenting his testimony (in Russian) at end of first semester.*

The beginning of a New Year is a good time to reflect on the past and resolve for the future. As we look back over 2009, we are amazed and indeed grateful to God for how He has worked in our lives and family. We thank Him for: (1) providing the prayer and financial support we needed to come to Ukraine, particularly in such difficult economic

times; (2) graciously working in our hearts and the hearts of our children as we adjusted to living far away from each other; (3) enabling us to adapt to a new culture and language; and 4) opening doors of relationships

for fellowship, ministry, and sharing the Good News about Jesus Christ. **We praise God and thank you for your part in all this and for your partnership with us in the Gospel (Phil. 1:3-6).**

As we look ahead to 2010, we see several opportunities and challenges. After a respite for the holidays, we resume our studies at the SEND Ukraine language school on January 11. We have one semester under our belt with three more to go. While we feel we have made significant progress, some of the biggest challenges with the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary are yet to come. **Please pray for perseverance and steadfast discipline (1 Cor. 15:58).**

While ministry opportunities are limited by our language studies, we still have many opportunities for ministry. I (Jerry) will be coordinating a special Prayer Day for the SEND missionaries throughout Ukraine on January 23. I also will be involved in teaching a biblical counseling module in Sumy in March (23-27) and doing some guest lecturing in a church planting module at Kiev Theological Seminary on March 31. Both Kellie and I regularly participate in an ESL class at our church on Friday nights where we have the opportunity to interact with Ukrainians and thus learn about their language and culture as we explain to them our language and culture. Most importantly, it gives us a natural opportunity to talk about the Gospel! Also we have ongoing opportunities to talk with our neighbors, vendors at the local outdoor market, and of course fellow believers at our church. **Please pray for wisdom in our time management and sensitivity as we seek to promote the Gospel in each of these relationships (Col. 4:3-6).**



*We praise the Lord that Karissa could be with us during the holidays!*

We have frequently emphasized that God has positioned Ukraine to be a strategic launching pad for the Gospel to the former USSR. While that is still true, there are serious challenges lurking. Ukraine suffers from the “hangover” of its communist history. Many former communist bureaucrats remain embedded in its political structure, resulting in widespread corruption and a serious weakening of the economy. Ukraine is ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world according to Transparency International. Add to this Russia’s desire to reassert direct influence over Ukraine and you have a very fragile geopolitical situation. **Please pray that God would be pleased to bring about a positive change of leadership in the upcoming elections (January 17) so that the cause of the Gospel may advance (1 Tim. 2:1-3).**

### Praise Reports:

- Our daughter Karissa was able to be with us during Christmas.
- God’s provision.
- We are adapting to our new culture and language.

### Prayer Requests:

- Perseverance and steadfast discipline.
- Wisdom as we seek to promote the Gospel in our new relationships.
- Bring about political change that would allow the cause of the Gospel to advance.

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