



THE BENGEBULLETIN

Spring 2011

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

Nearly Finished...and Just Beginning!

It is hard to believe, but мы почти закончили русскую языковую школу (*we are almost finished with Russian language school*)! While we are by no means finished with learning Russian, the formal part of our training is nearly complete. That means we have learned hundreds of verbs and the (often) complex rules of grammar that govern how they are formed and used in sentences. Perhaps even more challenging for us has been the formation of nouns, adjectives, pronouns etc. These, unlike English (which relies on word order), use **six different endings** (known as cases) to convey their function (subject, direct object, etc) in a sentence. Since each noun has a singular form (e.g. boy) or a plural form (e.g. boys), there are 12 different case endings for *each* noun (and even *more* for adjectives!)—which requires a lot more memory work than English.



Jerry teaching a workshop for the Biblical Counseling symposium at Kiev Theological Seminary.



Jerry preaching on Palm Sunday at our church. The introduction was completely in Russian!

But what is most challenging is the *syntax*, a word which should not be confused with *indulgences*. (*For those of you who do not know me well, I have a hard time resisting puns. For further explanation, read Martin Luther's 95 Theses*). Syntax refers to the way sentences are put together. Without going into detail here, let me just say that correct communication is not simply a matter of using a dictionary and then translating *word for word*. If you do not put the sentence together the “Russian” way, it may make little or no sense to a Russian speaker. Worse yet, it may mean something quite different than you intended. For some examples on this, check out our recent blog on **Lessons from Russian Bloopers** located on our website: www.sendbenge.com

Does all this sound **сложный** (complicated)? It certainly can feel that way at first. But our language training has given us an overview of the language and tools to use for our continued growth and development. For now, we are able to carry on conversations and are beginning to make friendships with Russian-speaking believers as well as non-believers. Thank you for your prayers in this critical part of our development. And please continue to pray for our ongoing growth in Russian language acquisition. Kellie will be using her Russian in building relational bridges with student wives and ladies at our church. I (Jerry) increasingly will be using Russian in preaching and teaching at our church and at Kiev Theological Seminary. Recently I was able to *preach my sermon introduction in Russian*—an encouraging milestone for which I give *praise to the Lord* (Слава Боры)!



Jerry begins teaching classes at Kiev Theological Seminary in the Fall.

So What's Ahead?

After we finish language school at the end of May, we will be attending our SEND Eurasia Family Conference in Lemgo, Germany (June 8-14) and then traveling on to the United States for one month to visit family and as many friends and supporters as we can. We are especially looking forward to seeing our new granddaughter, Lilly (daughter of Jeremy and Michelle) in Louisville, Kentucky. The remainder of the summer will be filled with some preaching at our local church, teaching at a couple's retreat in Western Ukraine and lots of preparation for the classes that Jerry will be teaching in



We are excited to see our new granddaughter, Lilly!

this next year at Kiev Theological Seminary. *Please pray* for him as he prepares to teach the class on Pastoral Leadership in the undergraduate program and the class on the Dynamics of Biblical Change in the new Master of Biblical Arts program in Biblical Counseling. Both of these classes provide opportunities to influence the next generation of church leaders toward a biblical understanding of “shepherdology” and Gospel-centered church growth. *Pray also* for Kellie as she continues to work with the English club outreach and prepares for us to host KTS students (and their wives) in our home in the coming



English Club kids singing at Easter service. Kellie serves in this weekly outreach ministry at our church.

Хвали Богу и Молитвенные Просьбы

(Praises and Prayer Requests)

Praises:

- Lillian Noel Benge arrived March 6.
- Joel is moving to Louisville at the beginning of June and finishes his first semester of seminary next week.
- Karissa has finished her first semester of Elementary Education with good grades and has a job for the summer.
- Kellie began sharing the gospel with Katya as we talked about the meaning of Easter.

Prayer requests:

Jerry:

- Final exams for language school – May 10.
- Ministry trip to western Ukraine to visit churches.
- Teaching preparation for Pastoral Leadership and Dynamics of Biblical Change classes.

Kellie:

- I have lost contact with Luda. Please pray for God's will in seeing her again.
- Katya seems more interested in hearing about Jesus. I am still meeting with her every week, and she has started coming with me to an English club for children at our church every Tuesday night.
- Final exams for language school at the end of May.

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