

BENGE BULLETIN

Winter 2015



Just a year ago, few could have imagined what would unfold in 2014. The year-long conflict has cost many lives, displaced hundreds of thousands, and left Ukraine on the edge of economic collapse. Yet in the midst of this, God is raising up a new generation of spiritual leaders for such a time as this.

God's Certain Promises for Uncertain Times

So much has transpired in the last 12 months. So far, we have witnessed a protest that morphed into a bloody conflict, the flight of a corrupt leader, the annexation of Crimea, a deeply entrenched war in Eastern Ukraine, a rising death toll that has claimed nearly 5,000 lives, and a currency that has lost 50% of its value in the last year. And with all this, a very uncertain future. While such times are very troubling to all of us, they also serve a vital and even gracious purpose in God's plan. For our greatest problem is not uncertain

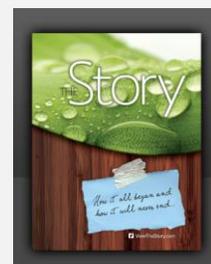
times but rather a false sense of certainty (and security) with our own plans and dreams. The more prosperity that we taste, the more hungry we become for things that ultimately cannot satisfy, let alone guarantee our future and ultimate security.

Though this past year has been difficult, we rejoice in the many Gospel conversations that God is giving us and our Ukrainian co-laborers. We are especially excited that the Lord has allowed us (through 2 generous donors) to proceed with two important

translation projects: 1) The Story (a Gospel tract that has just been translated into Russian (see under "Praises" below) and 2) The Shepherd Leader (a textbook for training pastors on how to shepherd their churches toward spiritual growth and multiplication). We are grateful for your prayers and the strategic role you have in the strengthening of God's people for the advance of the Gospel in the Russian-speaking world.

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Georgia On My Mind...and In My Heart!



Shortly after we arrived back in Kiev, Kellie had the opportunity to go with a team of ladies (an American missionary, a Ukrainian girl and a woman from Armenia) to Georgia for a women's leadership conference. The theme was running the race of life. There were over 100 pastor's wives and women's ministry directors who came and were encouraged.

Because of the recent war with Russia (2008), much of the male leadership has been destroyed leaving the church extremely weak. The country is also in a financial dilemma which just amplifies their problems. The women came to the conference tired and discouraged. Kellie had the opportunity to speak on "How to Handle Trouble" (which appeared to be very timely). She has been able to stay in contact with two key women's ministry leaders and provide resources for them. It was a blessing to be able to help those dear women to see the relationship of the gospel to their daily lives.

PRAISES AND REQUESTS

Praises:

Family – The hope of the Gospel that brings comfort in the midst of the pain of separation from loved ones.

Precious times with our newly engaged daughter and her fiancé, Tim McKay in Ukraine. An April wedding is planned.

Students – Amazing stories of perseverance and confidence in the Lord as the Gospel advances in uncertain times.

Translation projects – We just printed 30,000 Russian copies of The Story. This booklet is another great tool for explaining the "big picture" of the Gospel. (To view it online, go to ViewTheStory.com).

Requests:

For the growth and multiplication of healthy churches in Ukraine who will display the Gospel.

Discipline and efficiency for Jerry in managing a heavy teaching schedule along with two spring retreats (one for students, one for couples).

Family Update



This past year has been a year of transitions with both of Kellie's parents going home to be with the Lord, the birth of our fourth grandchild (Ella Reese Benge), and our daughter becoming engaged to Tim McKay on December 26th. Our greatest hope and joy throughout all of life's transitions is that they are part of a bigger story and a glorious transition from the ruin of sin to the redemption and restoration brought about by the cross work of Jesus Christ.

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Current itinerary

Jan. 26-31: BC at Kremenchuk Bible College
Feb. 24-Mar. 5: Exposition of Psalms at KTS
Mar. 23-Apr. 2: Pastoral Ministry 2 at KTS
TBD Two spring retreats
Mid-April: Karissa's wedding in Louisville,