

# BENGE BULLETIN

Winter 2017



Our first year Pastoral Leadership students, after completing their first session at KTS in October.



Nearly 80 men and women attended the first Biblical Counseling training module in Lutsk in November.

## An “Inside Look” at Equipping Church Leaders in Ukraine

If you have been receiving the Benge Bulletin or our monthly prayer updates, you know that our primary focus is *equipping the next generation of church leaders in Ukraine*. What you may not realize is exactly *where* and *how* this takes place. Much of my time is spent on the campus of KTS where I teach courses in the Pastoral Leadership program (along with Introduction to Biblical Counseling).

Since residing on campus for four years is not economically feasible for students in this part of the world, most Bible colleges and seminaries here use something like a “J-Term” schedule. That is, most students come to the seminary four times a year for intense two week sessions. In each session, they take two classes (one class per week) for forty hours each week. This means that they complete one semester of class time requirements in one week! They also have extensive reading assignments and projects both *before* and *after* the course.

The advantage of such a schedule is that students can complete their education in four years while being away from

their jobs and families (many of them are married) *for only 8 weeks* of a year. However, the challenge (for both student and teacher!) is that class time lasts from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm. This schedule requires physical stamina—not to mention *much* preparation prior to the start of each class. So, as you pray for us and our students, pray for our health and endurance as well as dependence on the Lord and His enabling strength.



As relationships with the students have grown, I have had more opportunities to speak in their churches (throughout Ukraine) and to do conferences on topics such as marriage and family, biblical counseling, and biblical peace-making. This enables me to spend time with the students in their family and ministry contexts which helps my classroom teaching to be more contextual.

I also teach once or twice each year at other Bible Colleges. In April, I will be teaching a course at Kremenchug Regional Bible College on conflict resolution, featuring the book by Ken Sande, [The Peacemaker](#).

Another exciting teaching opportunity has come through partnering with an organization called Overseas Instruction in Counseling (OIC). We are currently involved in doing church-based modular training of leaders in three different cities in Ukraine over the next three years. The response has been exciting and very promising for the development of healthy, Gospel-centered churches in Ukraine (see the picture above).

Nevertheless, what has been *most exciting* is to see men in both of these training contexts develop in their lives and ministries to the point that already some men are becoming ministry partners in training other pastors! This is a huge step toward our ultimate ministry objective (2 Tim. 2:2). We praise the Lord for His faithfulness and thank you for your prayers. (See also the second “Praise” on the next page).

## UPDATE ON RUSSIAN RESOURCES



**Translation projects:** Another important book, The Shepherd Leader, has finally been published in Russian. We are grateful for your prayers and the strategic role several have played in praying and giving toward translation projects like this one. God has opened doors to network with a local Christian publisher (In Lumine media) with whom we have collaborated to publish not only this book, but also The Trellis and the Vine and Gospel tracts such as “The Story” and “Two Ways to Live.” Our next joint venture will be The Vine Project (Matthias Media).

**Book distribution:** What began as showing students samples of books available in Russian, has grown into a “wholesale discount bookstore” with nearly 100 titles for students and faculty at KTS. God has given us a partnership with several Christian publishers in Ukraine who offer us significant discounts which we pass along to the students. They can now buy books at more affordable prices in order to build a theological library at home. Some are even buying large quantities of books to distribute to their congregations or to other pastors and churches in their local regions. During the last three years, hundreds of books have been distributed to and through KTS students to believers in Ukraine and into nearby countries. We praise the Lord for this providential and strategic opportunity.



## PRAISES AND REQUESTS

### Praises:

**Family** – Our recent trip in December to visit our family was a great blessing and opportunity to spend some quantity and quality time with our kids and grandkids (see pictures below).

**Students** – Progress in the lives & ministries of our students. Two of them will be co-teaching with me a course on the Pastoral Epistles!

Translation projects – See article on the left.

### Requests:

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

Discipline and efficiency for Jerry in managing his KTS schedule along with other teaching and mentoring opportunities (see page 1).

**Kellie:** Wisdom in setting priorities for ministry with Jerry first, then others.

Wisdom in building redemptive relationships with Ukrainian unbelievers.

## BENGE FAMILY UPDATE



*A lot of exciting changes have occurred in our family since we arrived in Ukraine in the Fall of 2009. When we left, we had one grandson (son of Jeremy and Michelle) who was not even a year old. Now he is the “Big Brother” of three younger sisters (pic 1 above) and able to beat his grandfather in a game of basketball (see pic 3 above). He also has a new cousin, Finn (see pic 2 above) who was born recently to Tim and Karissa. So in December, we flew to Louisville, KY to be with our three children and grandchildren for our first Family Christmas since 2008. We had a short family vacation at a water park, attended recitals and Christmas programs, worked on crafts, told bedtime stories (one time in a tent!—see pic 4 above), opened Christmas gifts, helped to assemble a new basketball goal, and basically tried to catch up on life with our kids and grandkids. We thank the Lord that while we minister in Ukraine, we still can have a role in discipling our grandchildren (Deut. 4:9).*

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### Upcoming itinerary

Jan. 30-Feb. 2: Pastoral Epistles at KTS  
Feb. 27-Mar. 3: Exposition of Psalms at KTS  
Mar. 27-31: Pastoral Ministry 2 at KTS  
April 3-8: Biblical Conflict Resolution at Kremenchug Bible College.  
May: Biblical Counseling training in Bela Tserkva, Poltava, and Lutsk.