

# The Heart Beat

Heart of Ukraine Ministries

www.HeartofUkraine.com



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## USA Step Into The Water Tour

June-July 2007

They are not sure how it all started, but one invitation to speak after another led Mark & Laura to plan a two (2) month tour around America. So after selling or giving almost all they had away, they packed the rest into a small rental car and headed off across America.

During the two months they drove almost 8,000 miles, through 24 states, and visited 12 churches, Sunday School classes, and small groups. They visited small mountain top churches, new generation churches, large stately southern churches, starter churches, churches with deep long histories, and even a multi-church gathering at a park. God's church is so diverse & it's alive & active in so many different ways. The Bohanan's were welcomed at each with great love and generosity.

They were able to share with many different people, in many different ways, their history of work in Ukraine and the calling that God has put on their hearts for the people in Ukraine.

During the trip, a number of churches immediately dedicated themselves to praying for Heart of Ukraine Ministries, with some building financial support into their upcoming budgets. A number of churches also took Love Offerings for the Bohanan's, despite them not asking for money (most Christians know it takes money to forward the Kingdom of God). In addition, many individual prayer warriors and supporters were added.

People were excited to hear of how God is moving in Ukraine, that it is 'Harvest Time' there and want to partner in the work.

Speaking at Traveler's Rest Baptist Church, Snell, VA



The Bohanan's were extremely grateful to all the homes that were opened to them, especially the several 'house sitting' opportunities offered to them. One of the best things about the trip was catching up with old friends and deepening relationships, making some wonderful new friends, and visiting family. During the trip they were also able to visit many state and national historic battlefields, memorials, and museums. A highlight of the trip was visiting Washington DC.

## Changing Enemies to Friends

A short story of God's Amazing Love

Every year that Mark & Laura traveled to Vinnitsya, Ukraine, for short term mission trips, they stayed with Pastor Stepan Gonchar, his wife Irena, and their children.

Right now Stepan is building a house for his family. His in-laws will also live with them. In Ukraine this means lots of personal work, so Mark &

Laura have been helping him with the hard & heavy labor of cement and rock work.

One day at the house, Irena related that her father had spoken to her the night before about the house. He told her, with tears in his eyes, that he was so amazed that Americans were helping to build the house he would live his last days in.

You see, he served in the USSR Army in the end of WW II, but also during the 'Cold War.' Americans had been the enemy and he had grown to hate the enemy. Now the enemy was building his house !

Oh, how God's love changes things ! And Mark & Laura had no idea how their help would change a hardened heart.

### Inside this issue:

Kaleenivka Rehabilitation Center	2
Seeing God Move in Little Ways	2
Growing the Ministry in Vinnitsya	2
Americans, Are They Really Helping?	3
Housing Struggles	3
That's the First Time I Ever Did That !	3
New on the Website	4

### Special points of interest:

- The Bohanan's are in Ukraine !!
- New Blogs & Journals on the Website !
- Kaleenivka Rehab Center needs \$1,500 for indoor heat, plumbing, kitchen and bathroom.
- Starting the Ministry with Feeding Homeless Children in the Park

## Kaleenivka Rehabilitation Center—A Good Start

The second day in Ukraine we were visiting the house that we helped purchase outside the village of Kaleenivka. It wasn't the original house we looked at the previous year. That house's owner did not want to sell to Christians, so the Kaleenivka Church had to search for another house. But isn't it just like God to provide a better house ? ! ? !

We were so excited to see the work that has been done at the center . There had been repairs to the windows, roof, and exterior and a garden had been planted and was starting to provide crops. The house was filled with some furniture to include bunk beds in the men's dorm room . The old

inoperable decaying heating/stove that was built into the wall had been cleared and the room readied for a more modern kitchen (by Ukraine standards). A septic holding tank was also being finished out in the yard.

There are now 3 men on the program and 2 Supervisors, one of which was a man we met last year. There was a daily routine posted on the wall, as well as scripture in different locations. On one wall was a art drawing of 8 steps that one goes through when being lifted out of sin and darkness and into God's full will.

Due to a busy schedule we didn't spend as much time as we wanted there., but were

able to give short testimonies, sing a few songs and tour the facility.

We are so proud of how Pastor Leonid Solenyenko and his church has taken the lead in starting a solid rehabilitation center. They have put into practice much of what we have discussed over the past five (5) years, as well as what they have seen at other rehabilitation centers they have visited outside of the area/state.

**There is a desperate need for \$1,500 as the house has NO heat, NO bathroom, NO water, and NO Kitchen.**

## Seeing God Move in Little Ways

One day, through miscommunication, we were not where we were supposed to be for Stepan to pick us up to go work on his house. As he had to meet some men from his church at the house he couldn't change his schedule and come get us.

Feeling bad about the situation, we set out on our own for Stepan's house. We took the #4 Tram to the end of the line, bought lunch at a store and then walked several miles to his house in the rain. As we had only come that way once or twice we were unfamiliar with the exact route once we got off the four



Stepan's House

(4) lane highway. We could see his house but took a dirt, well mud at this time, road that was not real direct. As we slipped and trudged in the mud up the last little lane to the house, one of the men in the group spotted us and announced our presence. Stepan turned around in shock and disbelief. He stood there with the other men, all with their eyes big at the site of us. We just laughed and held up our bags and said 'kooshet' (Let's eat).

We all moved out of the rain into the garage of the house and set up pallets and wood for chairs and a table. As we gathered around and I took out the bread we had

bought, the men and Stepan began praising God. Apparently they had brought some food, most of which was to be put on bread, and then realized they forgot the bread ! They prayed for bread . . . and then there we were with bread ! God is too good ! !



Septic Holding Tank

To read more, see Laura's blog for 08-13-07 on the website:

<http://www.heartofukraine.com/blog/laurablog/blog.html>

## Growing the Ministry in Vinnitsya

In the few weeks we've been in Ukraine a lot has happened in growing the ministry here. Although a lot has happened we still feel as though we are moving at a snail's pace. We've prayed and talked and thought and planned for five (5) years both in America and here in Ukraine. We are all excited and ready to go !

The first step here includes several different tasks. One, is to under local church authority, start feeding the homeless children in Vinnitsya, many who are addicts

and/or alcoholics. The ministry will grow from just feeding them to an Awana's program afterwards and maybe down the road a clothing and shower ministry. The Mayor of Vinnitsya is interested in this work.

The second is to continue to support the Kaleenivka Rehab Center through special Bible studies, advising the lead Pastor in the area, and raising financial support for desperately needed heat and plumbing.

Third is to start to have a small group at

Pogachova Church where we work through the 12 Steps and other materials so that anyone interested in working in the main Homeless & Rehab Center in Vinnitsya will be trained up by the time we get a building. This process will also help us work out 'cultural' issues, as our material is from America.

To read more visit the Ministry Growth Blog at <http://www.heartofukraine.com/blog/growblog/blog.html>

## Americans, Are They Really Helping ? 08-03-07 Mark's Journal

Yesterday my heart was broken as I spoke with some local Pastors over lunch. They began openly and honestly telling me about numerous American groups that came to minister in Ukraine and the poor testimony they leave behind.

They spoke of a famous crusade that happened in June in Kiev where millions of dollars were "wasted" and the audience was seeded with those who would immediately jump up & walk forward at the Invitation. One of the Pastors was a Prayer Counselor at the event and said that most who came forward had no idea why they did so, they were just following the crowd.

The Pastors related stories of American groups that worked with orphanages, spoke at churches, and did other events, all with a

focus of evangelism. I believe that these groups think that these events are profitable in building the Kingdom, but the testimonies they leave behind are actually negative. Most groups come with their own

agenda and they don't really stop to ask or listen to what the Ukrainians think is really needed. Almost like bullies, they charge right in and do *their* thing. We know, we did it our 1st year visiting (& have asked for their forgiveness).

"My heart was broken as . . . they began telling me about numerous American groups that came to minister in Ukraine and the poor testimony they left behind."

The Pastors shared some actual comments

as we've come to call it a 'paycheck.' The paycheck has taken over their focus and they often lose sight of what the Ukrainian church & people really need.

To read more . . .

<http://www.heartofukraine.com/blog/markblog/blog.html>

## Housing Struggles

Going to Ukraine we had already accepted an invitation to stay at an apartment, paying only utilities, for the next several years.

Unfortunately two (2) weeks after arriving we were asked to move out. This of course caused us great concern as we had only planned for the minor cost of utilities and not the cost of rent or the 3 months due up front, nor having to get furniture.

Thankfully a friend's mother allowed us to 'apartment sit' her 1 room apartment while she was out of town for a month. Isn't God good how He provides for us? This gave

us more time for money to come into the ministry and for apartment searching.

Tuesday, 08-21-07, we went to look at an apartment that was supposed to be in our price range. It turned out to be a 3 room apartment (2 bedrooms & living room) that had been remodeled some (it looked a bit American too). One of the Pastors we know here was the owner and wants to lease it to us at a lower price, which is great as we'd never be able to handle a market value rent on a 3 room apartment.

It seems like a good fit for us (and our dogs when they come) but it is completely empty, to include the kitchen (no appliances or even a sink). Our first purchase will have to be a bed ! It does appear to have independent hot water though ! We will probably paint over the bright orange hall way (previous renter was youth ministry) and fix up the unremodeled bedrooms.

To read more . . .

<http://www.heartofukraine.com/blog/prayerreq/blog.htm>

## That's the First Time I've Ever Done That ! 08-16-07 Laura's Journal

Today marked another first for me. If you can imagine this. . . I'm sitting on a small stool about 1 ½ feet tall, with a travel pillow as a cushion, beside the bathtub in the bathroom . . . I was washing clothes by hand ! I wasn't sure really what I was doing or how to do it initially, but I got to thinking how a washing machine washes, rinses, spins, rinses, and spins and figured I'd try and do the same.

I used a round red tub about 2 feet in diameter and about 10 inches deep as my wash basin. I put in a little laundry detergent and then filled it with cold water. I then put in about 4-6 items of clothes and

swished them around with my hands . . . kind of like a washing machine would. I knew that I couldn't sit there on my little stool beside the bathtub and swish the clothes around as long as a washing machine would, so I also grabbed each clothing item and quickly raised it up and out of the water and then back down into the water a number of times. Wringing out each item lightly, I put them aside, emptied the red tub, rinsed it, and filled it again with cold water. I repeated the routine twice more (but without soap) until the clothes left the water clear. I then wrung out the clothes very tightly so as to wring out all

the water I could and hung them on the 4 rows of a mini-clothes line above the bathtub. I put a small fan in the bathroom door pointing up at the clothes in the hopes that it would help them dry quicker.

In one sitting (1 ½ hours) I was able to wash a handful of delicates and ½ of our whites (with hot water from the stove) before I ran out of clothes line space. My back, fanny, arms and hands were aching by the time I was done.

Read more at:

<http://www.heartofukraine.com/blog/laurablog/blog.html>



## Heart of Ukraine Ministries

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- Sharing the saving grace of Jesus Christ and ministering God's love and light to the homeless, the addicted, the afflicted, the lost and the hopeless in Ukraine.

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We're on the Web!  
[www.HeartofUkraine.com](http://www.HeartofUkraine.com)

Laura is really getting the hang of managing the Heart of Ukraine Ministries website, [www.HeartofUkraine.com](http://www.HeartofUkraine.com), and as time goes on what works better and what doesn't really work is being identified.

You'll notice a number of new things on the website.

**First** are the Blogs or Journals. You can find them by clicking on any tab on the 'home' (front) page, then finding the different tabs on the left side.

1. There are personal daily blogs for both Mark and Laura where they share their experiences, personal struggles and funny moments.
2. For you Prayer Warriors, there is a 'Prayer Request' blog where you can find different things to add into your prayer time. Updates to the requests and answers to prayer are also posted here.

3. A 'Life in Ukraine' blog shares some of the differences from American life.
4. A 'Ministry Growth' blog is where the building blocks of the ministry are shared along with highlights from meetings, visits, etc...

**Second** is the 'Man of the Week' section. Until we can feature men from the Kalleenivka Rehab Center, we are featuring local men we have interaction with.

**Third** is the 'Photo Gallery.' Working with photos is a bit more time consuming and the organizational 'how' of displaying them can be challenging.

A number of photo's have been loaded on the website from the 2007 Step Into the Water Tour as well as current pictures of where Mark & Laura are living, the Pogachova Church River Baptism, and their work at Stepan's house, to include Stepan's tractor!

**Fourth** is the 'Support Us' section. Many of you have asked how to get us notes or letters, care packages, and financial support. This section now better spells all this out. As a reminder all donations sent to the SASBC should have 'Ukraine Missions' or 'Heart of Ukraine' on the memo line.

**Fifth** and final is the 'Shopping' section. If you need laundry detergent, spot remover, skin care products you can now get them through several providers linked to our site and the profits go to supporting Heart of Ukraine Ministries. Currently there are links to Quixtar and Arbonne with Pampered Chef and others coming soon.

We want to thank the many of you who send us e-mails and have called us in Ukraine. It warms our hearts tremendously to know that we and our ministry are of important to you.

## New on the Website !