

## Holiday Update - Heart of Ukraine Ministries

Merry Christmas (Dec 25<sup>th</sup>), Happy New Year, and Merry Christmas (Jan 7<sup>th</sup>)!!!

God has proved to be ever so faithful to us over this past year. In our Holiday Email last year we mentioned a few things:

1. Challenge of computer problems. God's provided us with a new lap top and a used copier/scanner/fax. We also discovered we can use the Internet free of charge at the 'Window on America' International Section of the local Library that is supported by the US Embassy. No more waiting for hours to get a computer at the Internet Café! We still have to work around electrical outages, holiday schedules when the Library is closed, etc... but things are so much easier now.

2. Last year we got sick constantly and by December, Mark had been admitted to the hospital. We couldn't even begin to count days we were sick, it was much easier to count the days we were healthy. This year, we've been sick, but very mildly in comparison, and less often. The Ukrainian microbes are finding our bodies less hospitable this year.

3. This year we were able to get into the swing of things and decorate for the holidays. We were able to purchase a small fake tree and a few decorations, and with the Christmas music we've gotten, our house actually has the 'Christmas' spirit. We celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> with my English students at a Christmas Party and ate a traditional Christmas dinner with a young American woman and her Ukrainian husband on December 27<sup>th</sup>. We are having a New Year's Day Party at our house for our home church, friends, and English Students. On the Ukrainian Christmas, January 7<sup>th</sup>, we will visit Operation Mobilization (native mission group) and spend the day with them. Our Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>) brought several gifts our way . . . . One of the greatest gifts this season was three days of beautiful snow, giving us a 'white Christmas,' helping a man, Gregory, get into a Rehab Center; and finding out that Annya, a young woman we had tried to get to a Rehab Center a few months ago, had actually gone, has cleaned up and is getting ready to graduate from the program. What a wonderful Christmas Day it was!!!

### Some New Blessings:

1. Getting to meet with the Mayor of Vinnitsya; August
2. Getting the final proceedings done for our Ukraine Charity (Non-Profit) Organization.
3. Getting the final document for the USA Non-Profit filing completed.
4. Taking a trip to the USA Sept 16<sup>th</sup> through October 30<sup>th</sup>.
5. Our first granddaughter, Sofia, was born on November 1<sup>st</sup>.
6. Being able to bring our dogs to Ukraine.
7. Starting a new church in Vinnitsya, Ukraine.

Prayer Concerns: 1) Final approval from US Government of Non-profit status. 2) Enough financial support that we can consistently feed the homeless; 3) For our new home church to focus on Jesus' example of loving others and showing grace and mercy; 4) that the Christian churches in the area join in fully in the work of feeding the homeless; 3) that trust can be built between the government and the churches and that they can work together, each operating within their own responsibility and realm and not trying to control the other; 4) for our personal strength as we meet the heavy demands of ministry and that we would keep focuses on what God wants us to do, to say, to not say.

As we looked forward into 2009, we can only wonder at the awesome things God is going to do this year in Vinnitsya, Ukraine, in reaching the lost, freeing those enslaved to addiction, and giving the understanding of grace to those who are caught up in trying to earn their salvation.

We hope that you have a wonderful Christmas and holiday season. Our prayers are that you would see the daily blessings that God gifts to you, that you would experience His grace at a more intimate level, and that you would seek Him with all your entire being and come to know and experience the abundant life He promised those who follow Him.

Love in Christ,

The Bohanan's