

# PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

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Ray and Pam Trantham  
Training National Leaders for Ministry  
in Odessa, Ukraine

*"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." Philipians 1:4-5*

## Missions in Odessa

Ukrainians celebrate a "Harvest Day" similar to our Thanksgiving. Ray visited and preached in an area church with mission students and Bible college leaders. Usually on Harvest Day church leaders speak of God's blessings through his Word and by providing a bountiful harvest. On this day Ray also spoke of how God wishes to bless all nations through missionary activity.

At the beginning of this month, our mission students headed for Kirgizstan. Our Bible college president and Mission Program director went three days early to make sure everything was set up for their six month mission project.

Our college president writes the following about his trip: "As we were preparing to travel to Kyrgyzstan, an Islamic country, we expected difficulty when crossing the border. We expected to be searched for forbidden Christian literature, but instead we were greeted warmly at the airport and wished a good stay in Kirgizstan. God answered our prayer.

Our purpose in arriving a few days before our students was to become familiar with the city where our students would be living and ministering for the next six months. We immediately noticed many Islamic mosques but were told the



building of churches is greatly restricted by law. On Sunday, we took part in two worship services.

We were happy to see that even in this restricted area, Muslims are turning to the Lord. One church leader noted, "Even though Islam has taken roots and is trying to dominate, God still gives us the ability to proclaim his message. This is a good opportunity for Ukrainians to help us with this ministry."

May God bless our missionary students and the work of Odessa Theological Seminary."

- Vladimir Pomazkov

Thank you for your prayers and support.



Regular classes continue at the Bible college in Odessa, but we originally planned for a second group of Mission Students to begin in October. Because of a lower number of applicants than expected we have had to make adjustments to those plans. In our last newsletter I spoke of a Missionary Convention recently held by Ukrainian churches in Kiev. We now realize this mission convention, although well attended and very productive, was planned at the beginning of the school year and most potential students had already made commitments for this school year. Our Bible college expected participants would join the mission endeavor by immediately enrolling in a program of mission education. Following the mission convention, students did commit to preparing for would missions, but most of those commitments were for the 2017 school year.



Mission students speak in chapel just before departure for Kirgizstan

When we realized we had fewer students than needed to form a second group of mission students, we contacted the students which had applied and offered them an alternative opportunity to become involved in world missions. We offered these students the option of immediately enrolling as full-time students in a program of general Bible study, and working with us in developing the idea of missions in the local churches. They would then join the regular 2017 group of mission students, planned for the beginning of the next school year. We are happy that several students accepted this option and that others have made commitments to join the mission program in 2017.

By not admitting a second group of students in 2016, we will have the opportunity to devote our attention to further developing the idea of missions in the local church. Vitalii Shemchyshyn, Ray Trantham, regional church leaders, and Seminary leaders have committed to using this time to develop additional mission materials for use in the local church. In addition to continuing to work with our students during their six month internship, we will be working on developing a mission training seminar that will be hosted in area churches. Earlier area churches made request for such a seminar but we lacked the time to develop and offer such training. We are developing plans for a similar series of classes for youth groups and Sunday Schools that will aid the local church in promoting world missions.

On one hand we were disappointed not to have a second group of students this year, but on the other hand, we are excited to have several new students who are ready to work alongside us in developing mission materials for the local church.

Last year our Bible colleges planned a long winter break to help save on hearing cost. They will be doing the same again this year, therefore Pam and Ray will be spending the winter holidays in the States updating churches about ministry in Ukraine. This is a shorter time and we will only be able to visit with churches we missed visiting last winter.



Tax-deductible contributions:  
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