

PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

October 2017

"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."
Philippians 1:4-5

This semester has been exceptionally busy. We began with nine students in the mission program. When I was a student, majoring in World Missions, thirty five years ago, I studied full-time for four years. Classes included regular Bible classes as well as specialized mission courses. Our program is structured differently: New students are required to already have Bible college training and be able to do local church ministry before entering the mission program. During our mission program they only take specialized courses in cross-cultural missions. Other Bible and ministry courses are necessary, so students are expected to have already taken these courses in other programs of study. Our foreign mission students have committed themselves to a 40 week intensive plan of study. They take twelve mission courses on our campus, spend time raising funds from area Ukrainian churches, and then participate in a six month guided internship.



The first course was an overview and call to world missions. This was followed by a course devoted to leadership on the mission field. Last year students requested the addition of a course to help with the preparation of learning a foreign language. This proved to be a very popular third course. Students have also studied culture and local church relations as well as a specialized study of Islamic culture and evangelism. In addition to concentrated courses in specific topics, Ray has been teaching an ongoing course that is designed to tie the entire program together and help students write and prepare a long term mission project. Ray has also had classes with regular non-missionary students.



Ray and Pam Trantham:

Missionaries in Odessa, Ukraine for the past 22 years

"Training National Leaders for Ministry"

I asked students why they wanted to be missionaries. Below are excerpts from some of their answers:

"We are all called to spread the gospel message throughout the world. At some point, I realized that living for myself, was not resulting in the happiness I had hoped. I understood that most people do not know the Lord. I knew this was what brings joy to people and the angels in heaven rejoice. This is what I want to participate in."



"I grew up in a Christian family where parents dedicated their lives to planting new churches. I have seen their example and how they care for people, and what was important in life. My parents often took us to area villages when they preached and conducted evangelism. My mother always said that I was prepared to participate in something in the ministry. When I was 7 years old, I watched my mother devote time to leading others to Christ and I prayed, "Lord, when I grow up, I want to love people like my mother."



"I became convinced that I did not want to waste my life on things that were not important and eternal. I had a dream to go to Asia to work with children. After two short-term trips, I made the decision that I wanted this to be the direction of my life. The short mission trips gave me a desire to study at Odessa Theological Seminary in the mission program."

As I was writing this newsletter I receive an e-mail from one of our students from last year. She is departing for long-term ministry in Egypt in three days and writes, *"Greetings to you! I want to thank you for your work! Without your ministry, I probably would not have gone anywhere. May God bless you and your family and continue to work through you. We are partners in the Mission."*



Mission students
visiting area
churches

Tax-deductible contributions:
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