

Our January 2015 Prayer Letter

Dear Brethren,

The new year has started off with more shelling and bombing than usual. Over a hundred people were killed in twenty-four hours. That was a day involving four areas of conflict. Those areas are not near us but there is a group of the Ukrainian National Guard that have entrenched themselves in on a hill about eight miles from us, so the sounds have intensified. (I hear shooting while I'm writing this.) Three days ago I heard return fire from the rebels. There was a missile that landed near the apartment building of a grandmother of a family we know and it reportedly shook every floor. That apartment building is probably ten to fifteen miles from us. According to militarymaps.com I think we still have a few months before this area will be seriously engaged in combat, if at all. Everyone is hoping and praying that there will be no shooting in our settlement. The Germans, during WWII, occupied Tsukurino and all of this region because of its strategic position...they even built some homes that stand today.

We are continually having services despite the obvious shooting. Last Wednesday, with everyone there, we had prayer service and watched a documentary about "Jehovah's Witnesses". It was good for them to see the personal testimonies of former JW's. The "Watchtower" is everywhere.

Sasha's dad returned home from the "battlefield" and Sasha is thankful for your prayers and his dad's return. His dad is lost and seemingly content in his sins. He burned two New Testaments that we gave Sasha and his sister. If we were Muslims we could have incited a riot and had Sasha's dad's head cut off because he defamed the "holy book". Well we're not and, instead, we prayed about it together as a church. The next day, the National Guard arrived at his house early in the morning and took him somewhere and beat him up a little. Sasha's dad had served on the rebel side last year. God is more than able to defend his Word if he wants, and as long as Sasha's dad has breath in his lungs, he has a chance to receive the Lord's mercy. Sasha's dad called him a fanatic because he's always coming to church.

The Ukrainian government has decided to require Bible teaching in the schools this year. I think it's part of the anti-corruption/regime-change they are supposed to accomplish in order to get funds from the IMF. May God bless them for it.

Our young people are growing in the Lord. I was sick recently and it was a blessing to hear seventeen-year-old Yasha say to me, "I prayed for you". Tonya said she has begun to read her Bible at home. She likes crafts and has drawn and painted some pictures for the church walls. Every morning, Silas and Paul pick out a "special" verse of their choosing (from wherever they're at in their Bible reading) and read it to me. Silas read a verse about hope (in Russian) last Sunday. We have sword drills in Russian and in English.

Tsukurino is without water again, but despite the distractions, we are having a blessing on the mission field. It's an honour and blessing to be your missionaries to Ukrainian and Russian peoples. We thank you for your support and prayers. One last, quick note: I'm not writing to try to sensationalize the current situation; contrarily, I'm writing about how I honestly see things to be.

Thank You,
The Wiles Family