



The Hawes Family

Ukraine

Building the Church Through Technology
electronic discipleship, outreach, & training



Light in Dark Times

by Jody Hawes

While these times often appeared very dark, God continued to show us His light. Over the past months, we have looked for the Lord's leading in many things. It has been a difficult process that required us to reach out day-by-day for His hand of mercy, grace, and love. In that mercy, He provided His comforter and the love of His people to encourage us.

To our amazement, the Lord has blessed us with opportunities to reach out to others around us, despite our own personal difficulties. A few needed friendship and a listening ear while they experienced their own pains of broken relationships. We shared meals with a brother from Iran as we tried to encourage him along his journey of faith. Then, there were those who needed some help with their English.

It never ceases to amaze us how God can renew our souls when we seek to help others. We thanked God for these opportunities to serve others. We pray the Lord will lead us to continue to help our brothers and sisters here in tangible ways. We are so grateful for our friends in Ukraine who have fasted and prayed with us during this difficult time. God is using our pain to help bind us to His church here.

From the Kitchen to the Classroom

In October, a team from Michael Gott Ministries came from the States to have English lessons for

two weeks in our church. It was a well-organized, evangelical outreach that touched many in Kharkov. Throughout the two weeks, there were many struggles, like no water, no electricity, and no heat at various times, but God's work continued.



I had Russian lessons three days a week, but I was able to go to the church a few days each week to help the ladies of our church cook for our guests. This was quite an honor. Some

kitchens here seem to be "off limits" to outsiders, so I found it a privilege to be allowed to help. It was such a joy to peel potatoes and wash dishes along side these ladies who served so faithfully. My Russian was definitely helped during this time and I learned several tasty new recipes. One of my favorite ones was a salad consisting mainly of liver. (It tastes much better than it sounds. Really!)

Through it all, we saw many people, ages 16 to 60+, learning English and discovering the love of our living Savior. Over 400 students completed the course! An unexpected illness of one of the instructors gave me the blessing of stepping in as teacher for one of the intermediate evening classes of about 13 students. The students were wonderful and very eager to learn. Most of them were in their



late twenties or early thirties. They were so excited to meet an American who was not just visiting, but was actually living in their city. I really wanted to continue to get to know them and answer their questions, but I didn't know how to do that once the outreach was over. God provided an answer.



Back by Popular Demand

Our church received over 80 phone calls over the next few weeks asking for more English lessons. Pastor Vitaly knew this was a difficult time for us, but he asked us if we would consider having an English club once a week until Christmas. We prayed about it and knew that God was at work and that we needed to play our part. I excitedly contacted all of my former students to let them know we were having the club.

That was five weeks ago. Since then, we have had about 25 people show up each week. One brother from Nigeria teaches the lower students more formal grammar lessons and a couple from Canada works with us, teaching the upper level students. Half of the students from my original class have been able to make it, and some have even brought friends! Even Andrew's friend Oleg, who he met over the Internet, has come to English Club.



We have had a great time and would love to continue. However, we know we don't have the availability to continue after the New Year on a weekly basis. Andrew and I are praying for the Lord to show us creative ways in which we can still meet together with these dear people on an even more personal level. We have thought about asking if any of them would be interested in meeting together to read the Bible and discuss it. We also considered having a game night at our house a couple times a month for those who are at a lower level of English and wouldn't be able to participate in a Bible study. Please pray for the Lord to show us His will as we seek to care for those He brings into our lives.



A Brother in Need

We know first hand that we are not the only ones struggling. Please pray for an Iranian brother from our church. We have been getting to know him and we have had him over to the house. Our brother is in a difficult situation. He is currently a student here, but he has almost run out of options for staying in Ukraine legally. He is facing deportation back to Iran where the Islamic led government is becoming more aggressive toward non-Muslims, especially Christians. It is so hard to comprehend the danger this brother is facing and we feel so helpless to stop it. What can we do? What should we do? He is just one of many facing persecution in our world today. How should the Church respond? We know God is in control, but our flesh struggles to understand. Please pray for wisdom. We have fasted and prayed for this brother and the other Iranians here at our church. These are challenging times for these young Christians. We have little experience with situations like this. It is hard for us to know how to encourage others with such problems when we are citizens of a free nation.

How's Josiah?

Josiah is doing fine considering everything we have been going through. He has been pretty bored for the last month. He hurt his back unknowingly several weeks ago and he hasn't been able to skateboard since that time. This may seem insignificant to some folks, but for Josiah it has been very difficult. He was making friends at the skate park and he was skating there for about 20 hours a week. He even had a couple kids over our house for a meal and some games. Generally, these kids are part of a sub-culture that isn't readily accepted and cared for. Josiah was doing a great job getting to know them on their level. Some of the kids are skating competitively and



Pictures Josiah took at the skate park

Josiah had to work hard to skate well enough to be taken seriously by them. We were all aware of the risks taken to reach out where there were dangers. On a few occasions, Josiah found out first-hand how other teenage sub-cultures choose to harm and hate people who are different than they are. We aren't sure where the Lord is leading in all of this or when Josiah's back will feel well again. We pray Josiah will find where he can connect here and be able to develop deeper friendships. We have seen a peace in him over these last few weeks that we had not seen in a long time. We pray this will continue and he will know the Lord deeper so he may share a greater love with those around him.





С РОЖДЕСТВОМ ХРИСТОВЫМ! or Merry Christmas!

Finally, we want to bring you Christmas greetings from Ukraine. After all, it was a baby born in the manger 2,000 years ago, that gives us all the hope and strength to continue in times of trouble. In a world so shackled by sin and death let's not waste the opportunity to share His hope and love. Merry Christmas, and have a wonderful New Year!

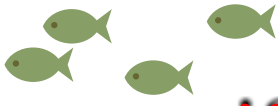
*Thanks for Your
Prayers and Support!*



Things to be praying about...

-  **Pray for the people of Ukraine.** The global economic crisis is hitting Ukraine quite hard. The value of the local currency is almost half what it was just six months ago.
-  **Pray for the computer outreach plans in Kharkov for 2009.** Six events are planned. Most lead by local teams. In conjunction with two new church plants.
-  **Pray for our new team mate, John Charlier,** who hopes to arrive in Ukraine early next year.
-  **Pray for our eDOT strategic planning meeting** in February, as we address new mission goals.

С Рождеством Христовым!
Merry Christmas!



The Hawes Family
P.O. Box 231654
Centreville, VA 20120

