



FEBRUARY 2014

Kyiv Connections

Prayer letter of George & Sarah de Vuyst
Serving with Christian Reformed World Missions
in Ukraine



Christian Reformed
World Missions

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It's Not Over Yet—Keep Praying

It's difficult to express in words everything that we have lived through and felt in Ukraine over the last couple of months, and especially over the last few weeks. As many of you know, protests began on "Maidan Nezalezhnosti" (Independence Square) in Kyiv around the end of November. The protest movement has taken on the name of the location and is known simply as "Maidan", or "The Square". The President and his party betrayed the trust of the electorate and suddenly shifted course away from European integration toward Russia. Brutal crackdowns on the protestors only served to solidify and grow the protest movement around the country. At the end of January things began to heat up again. On February 18-20 the government opened fire on the protestors. Up to a thousand were hospitalized and over 80 unarmed protestors were killed, mostly by sniper-fire. It was a terrifying time. Most of our work stopped and we were monitoring the situation around the clock. In a whirlwind of events, the police forces withdrew, the President fled, an interim government was established, and new elections were set for May 25.

The greatest need now is for stability and for Russia not to get involved in Ukraine's affairs. Russia is already actively intervening in the Crimea region, which may just be a precursor to a more large-scale invasion of Ukraine. Nobody knows what to expect.

The second key issue today in Ukraine is the economy. The previous government plundered the economy (to the tune of \$70 billion in the last 3 years) and the country is broke. The new government is ready to do painful economic reform and needs the support of the global financial structures.



Tens of thousands of Ukrainians gather in downtown Kyiv

Please Pray! Pray for the new interim government. Pray for wisdom for how to work with, and if necessary against, Russia. Pray for the international community to uphold their commitments to Ukraine. Pray that the leaders of the free world would support the incredibly positive changes in Ukraine in every necessary way. Pray for the safety of the people of Ukraine and for quick and just reforms. Pray that those who have robbed and killed would be brought to justice. Pray for transparency, honesty and a war against corruption carried out by the new political leadership. Pray for the church in Ukraine during this time of great upheaval. Many are open to the gospel in a way that they have not been until now. Pray that the church would be ready to present the gospel of peace and comfort.

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More stories and pictures at
www.devuysts.com and
www.devuysts.blogspot.com

New Openness to the Gospel

Today a call went out to pastors to come several times a day and present the gospel in 5 minutes from the main protest stage in Kyiv. That said, we also need to point out how the changes have been bathed in the prayers of the Ukrainian people. Every morning and evening the protests are covered in prayer

publicly from the main stage. There are prayer tents on the Maidan and pastors counsel and minister around the clock in the protest camp. We see God at work in all of this in amazing ways. For that we give thanks to Him!

Worship Symposium

At the end of January George was privileged to travel to Grand Rapids, Michigan with three pastors from Eastern Europe to attend the Calvin Institute on Christian Worship's annual Worship Symposium. This was an eye-opening experience in global worship for everyone involved. We were enriched and empowered for greater

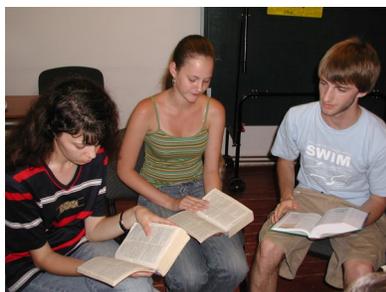
ministry and more authentic worship. Our hope is that this will become an annual event for pastors from this part of the world. We also hope that the Worship Institute will be able to work with us to do Russian language worship symposiums here in Kyiv in the future so that we can have a greater impact on renewing worship and strengthening the church in the Russian-speaking world.



Worship Symposium in Grand Rapids, MI

Two Mission Opportunities for You

We would like to invite you to join us! In June there is the opportunity to come to Kyiv and lead English clubs to reach out to young people with the gospel. English clubs bring joy to those living in difficult circumstances and are one of the best outreach tools that the church has to reach young people in Ukraine today. Here is a link to learn more: http://www2.crcna.org/pages/crwm_summercampuk.cfm



A second opportunity is from the beginning of July through the first week of August. Two of our partners, one in Hungary and the other in Romania, would like to continue the English language camps that we organized together for 10 years already. Two weeks would be spent in a village in Romania working with high-school students from the region and then two weeks leading an evangelistic English camp for a

church district in North-Eastern Hungary. These camps have been transformative in the lives of many young people over the years that they operated. Young people still ask when the next group will come. We need 6-8 young adults (college/career aged) to make these camps a success. Here's a link to learn more about this opportunity: http://www2.crcna.org/pages/crwm_campsinhungary.cfm

Please prayerfully consider if you can partner with us in the field in this way. We would love to have you join us!