

# The Gazette

## OF MUSIC MISSION KIEV

Music/Widows/Orphans and Children/Church/Victims of War

### 480 Widows and Pensioners Receive Weekly Food Packets

We end this spectacular year of 2016 with so many blessings: glorious musical concerts, many people having received Christ, generous gifts to the victims of war, and now 480 widows and pensioners are receiving weekly food.



Our appeal last month for widow sponsors has brought many new friends and an even greater commitment from some old friends. The Lord has led us to adopt 30 new names to bring our distribution total to 480. All of these new people are members of St. Paul's church, some of whom have been waiting for more than a year for food.

This is a difficult time for our elderly. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, those who had savings 30 years ago, were left penniless as they faced a meager retirement. Now they are in their 70's and 80's still struggling to survive, many facing the disabilities which come from aging, and nowhere to go for help. Health care has become more expensive, and staying well is the only way to stay alive.

Music Mission Kiev has assisted in some hospital expenses, surgeries, and provided walkers, canes, and wheeled food carts. They have provided new windows, toilets, sinks, faucets, and general apartment repairs.

But if you ask our elderly what their most important need is, they reply: Daily food. That is why our food packet offers a variety of nutritious foodstuffs and changes from week to week.

Jesus said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Those who receive food packages also attend a fellowship and Bible

class on Saturday unless they are homebound. We have 105 people who are homebound and have their food delivered by another widow or pensioner. We call this Steven's Ministry (Stefani, in Russian). We also deliver to those who are temporarily sick or in the hospital.

We distribute the food by issuing a ticket upon arriving at Bible class. Stevens ministers have both their number and their homebound person's number on their ticket.

Our entire MMK team is committed to serving these dear widows and pensioners with compassion and tender loving care.

The hope of food is often the motivation for newcomers to find us, just as they did with Jesus. The amazing result is that they find Jesus, or rather, Jesus finds them, and calls them to repentance and salvation, as they receive Him as Savior and Lord.



Sasha replenishes frozen chicken from freezer



Two women picking up food



Tonya distributes many packets



# St. Paul's Church – The Cradle of Changed Lives

By Diane McMurrin

The new birth in Jesus Christ usually comes to a young person, or a middle-aged adult, but rarely is it displayed in the senior years. Yet in Ukraine, elderly people who have never read the Bible or even had access to a Bible are coming to know about Jesus Christ and his free gift of eternal life.

This is one of the most precious experiences I've had in Ukraine: to see a man or woman in their 70's or 80's embrace Christ as their Savior, and experience peace in their life of struggle and despair.

In every new members class, we have the candidates write the answers to two questions: (1) Do you know for certain that you are going to Heaven when you die?

And (2) If you were to die tonight and stand before God, and He were to ask you "WHY should I let you into My Heaven?", what would you say?

Their written answers are kept for the interviews, scheduled that week or possibly the next (if we have a large number of people). And these intimate interviews are held in a little room in the back of the MMK office, which is the birthing place of many new Christians.

Just this past month, we had 39 people who wanted to join the church. Twenty-five prayed to receive Christ, and 14 were already Christians, most of whom said that they had come to faith in Christ through the Bible teaching of our mission.

When it came time for the church to receive them as new members, they stood together as a group in the worship service and publicly acknowledged that they were sinners, that they were trusting only in Christ for their salvation, and that they would seek to lead a life pleasing to Him.

Twenty-six received the sacrament of baptism that day. It was a wonderful sight to see them come forward, be baptized and walk back to their seats with faces of joy, some with tears of happiness. Each new member received a certificate, a Bible, and a red rose.



A few days later, a banquet was held for them at the office. And these new Christians had each been assigned a mentor, from the church leadership group called **Guardians**, which is made up of 15 women and 4 men. The membership class numbered 31 women and 9 men, so it worked out pretty well. These Guardians served the banquet, and then pulled up chairs at the corner of the table and visited with their new charges.

When a baby comes to a family, it is an exciting time. A baby is loved and cared for; comforted and taught. That's why we call St. Paul's "the cradle of changed lives." The purpose is to grow in knowledge, faith and love, while experiencing the safety of the cradle. New Beginnings....that's what it is all about.



## When the Roll Is Called

Yes, we take the "roll" of our church members before worship service, and the "up yonder" is the fourth floor of the building with no elevator. So by the time the widows and pensioners have climbed all those steps, they may feel that it is "up yonder."

This is the way we know who is coming to church, how often, and who is absent. The information is put onto the individual calling lists and given to the guardians at the next meeting. The attendance takers must be there one hour before the worship begins.

We have a great Worship Team. In addition to attendance takers, we have other positions. Valentina, Nadia, and Katerina set up the com-

## Here Am I! Send Me

We needed Ukrainian leaders. How could we communicate as a church unless we formed a network of people-to-people. We already had the Steven's ministry to reach out to the homebound population every week – to share the Bible lesson, pray with them, become their friend and helper.



But what about the church membership? Who was attending worship regularly? With such a crowd every week, we could not tell who was missing, sick, lonely, or distressed.

I asked for volunteers who would meet once a week, be a mentor to two new members, call 10 people each week from the church roll to befriend them, to say "We miss you" when they are absent, and to be a conduit for their prayer requests and concerns.

The Lord sent us 15 women and 4 men who wanted to serve. Some of the women have a helper who takes 10 more people and reports back to her. Therefore, we can make up to 250 calls per week to keep our church family together.



Here are some excerpts of their calling report:

- "Last week Galina was in the hospital with high blood pressure."
- "Anna is recovering from an operation and can't yet come both Saturday and Sunday."
- "Pray for Svetlana. She has cancer."
- "Valentina and her husband alternate weeks at church because their neighbor was robbed and they must guard their apartment."
- "Lidia promises that she will be at church next week."
- "Daria was very glad to get the call. We prayed together."
- "I called my new member Larisa. We spoke about God's Word."
- "Nella was in worship, but she did not get marked on the attendance list. She is singing in the choir."

Pray for our Guardians as they serve our Lord in pastoral care.

## Thirsting For God's Word

Since September, 32 women have been meeting every Tuesday in the MMK office to study the book of Romans with Diane. This is a continuation of last year's class, but 16 are returning and 16 are new. The group is so animated as they realize that the Gospel is in every chapter. And with that as a springboard, they understand the book more thoroughly. Here are some thoughts these women shared in a questionnaire when they completed the course.

*"I am 82, but by studying the Bible in our church for two years, I learned more about God than in all my life before. I like our classes very much and I feel God's presence near me." (Irina)*

*"These classes are like our life. We learn a lot about how to live the Christian life. The classes help us to love people as Christ loves us. Our faith in the Lord convinces us that we overcome all difficulties with Him." (Ludmila, a greeter in church)*

*"Since I have come to know God, I have completely changed. I became more attentive and kinder to the people. Now I want to be with the Lord Jesus Christ constantly. He is my Father, while I'm alive, and when I die I will be with Him too." (Lidia, a guardian)*

*We should not respond to evil with evil. We have to be patient and to pray*



*for those who offend us. We should be kind to all people. Only by doing good will we win over evil. The Lord loves us and wants us to be saved. (Victoria, new member)*

*"I have learned that Abraham was justified by his faith. He believed God. God knows everything. The end of the law is Christ, righteousness to everyone who believes." (Lidia, returning student from last year)*

Not only did the women learn from this wonderful book, but they also formed deeper friendships with their fellow Christians. Every week a lunch was served for them after the lesson.



## Up Yonder, I'll Be There

munion table and the flowers. Three other people are in charge of counting the offering and filling out the amount total papers before surrendering it to the office. Natalia and Nadezhda hand out the bulletins and hymn sheets. Alexander is a regular participant in worship by reciting memorized psalms. (He has memorized more than one hundred.) And eight people, including four men, take up the offering.

Now that we have provided navy blazers for Roger's men's class, we are hoping to provide 12 cranberry blazers for the women on the Worship Team. If you would like to sponsor a blazer for these ladies, notify Ronnie in the Orlando office.



# Coming to America in 2017!



Members of the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus successfully completed their Canadian Tour (September – October) with rave reviews. Tours have always been the “trumpet” of the mission to tell the world what God is doing through Music Mission Kiev in Ukraine. We thank Wes and Kim Janzen and the 42 musicians for their tireless effort in bringing joy and the Good News to so many in Canada. Watch for the dates and locations of their next autumn tour in the United States.



# Christmas Banquets for Widows and Pensioners

Christmas banquets begin December 1<sup>st</sup>, as we invite 35-40 widows every Tuesday and Thursday to celebrate Jesus’ birth, enjoy a special meal, and receive presents from the mission. This year Americans have shipped dish dryer pads, a unique kitchen helper that can be placed on the countertop, and drain the many dishes having been washed. It folds up and is easy to store. No such invention is available in Ukraine. Oasis Lutheran Church in Heathrow, FL, made drying mats a church-wide project and the shipment should arrive soon.

The other gifts are being purchased in Ukraine: a bed sheet set, which includes a duvet cover, sheet, and two pillow cases, and a gift bag of toiletries.



*Drying mats for widows collected by Oasis Church in Orlando*



## MMK Helping Hands Trip to Kiev, April 20 – May 1, 2017.

Contact Ronnie at the Orlando office for details.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT!

Our address: **Music Mission Kiev, 286 Wilshire Blvd., Casselberry, Florida 32707**

You may find more information on our website: **[www.musicmissionkiev.org](http://www.musicmissionkiev.org)**

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