



# GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

## Church Planting in Chervona Sloboda

### 1st Quarter 2010 Report

#### January 2010

Thanks be to our Lord for His constant love and care toward us. Our Seminary keeps working, bringing much fruit for our Lord and His Kingdom. Many students are very thankful for the opportunity they have to study and use the experience they get in their everyday life. God always blesses every ministry done for His glory. After studying in the Seminary, students preach God's Word more effectively and enlarge His Kingdom. Brethren from Georgia come especially to our Seminary to study. They do not have a school of this kind in Georgia and spend much money to buy tickets, to come and receive knowledge they need for their ministry. In the future I will write you about our brothers from Georgia, but now I want to share with you the testimony of Vladimir Kryshko, who is a student of Kiev Theological Seminary:



*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born again to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I prayed to God for repentance on 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1997. After that day I started a new life with new friends, new work and new desires. One of my wishes was to study in a Christian school or Seminary. With the spiritual and financial help of my home church in Berdyansk (Vasiliy Denisovich Natha is pastor), brother Roman and I were sent to study at Kiev Theological Seminary.*

*My decision to study in the Seminary sparked the interest of my coworkers. Many questions and opinions arose. So I witness now about my longing and hope to be with God and serve Him every time before I leave for Kiev to study.*

*In the educational process I receive a lot of material: books, lectures, videos and sermons. On my return, I share with brothers and sisters my impressions and studied topics. Many lectures, video seminars and sermons I copy for our church members and for my friends from different cities. Brothers often remind me to remember that they are waiting for new materials and books. I do my best to execute "orders" for different theological materials and questions on Christianity.*

*There is a good library in the Seminary. I read many books and find out many authors. And now at home in conversations I often recommend to people the books and authors I read.*

*Students don't stop fellowshiping even on breaks during the classes. We cooperate, visit each other and pray for our needs. God gave me opportunity to visit*

*home churches of some students in Khartsizsk, Kharkov and Kiev. We also spend time with our professors after classes.*

*Paul wrote in Philippians 1, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you." That was his testimony about the saints from Philippi. So do I every time I remember my studies at the Seminary, the hospitality, the books I have read, new friends, and new opportunities to serve brothers and sisters. I am very thankful to God for the opportunity to study in the Seminary, which upholds me greatly in my spiritual life and helps me in my ministry. Thanks to everyone who cares for the existence of this Seminary.*

I, too, am very thankful to God and to all brothers and sisters for our Seminary. Thank you for its existence and for the opportunity for many brothers and sisters to grow spiritually and serve the Lord. Please pray for us. May God bless you.

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## **February 2010**

At the present time, religious educational institutions in Ukraine are experiencing uneasy times. Seminary, institutions, universities, schools in recent years have deficits of students, a financial deficit, and a shortage of instructors. Several years ago, spiritual-educational institutions in Ukraine were full of students. Students passed a strict selection, which took into account many factors such as: belonging to the denomination, spiritual maturity, prior education, recommendations by a pastor. Now everything has changed; most schools lean toward an interdenominational posture. Management is in various assignments in order to keep their spiritual school. To maintain credibility, academic institutions have invited renowned professors from various denominations; one seminary can teach Baptists, charismatics, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostals. Accordingly, these denominations send their students for training. You can put yourself in the position of such schools and can understand, because they must pay rent of buildings. Many have their educational buildings half empty now. Perhaps that is what people would also expect of us, if our seminary were not located on the property of the Baptist Church Temple of Salvation on General Pukhova street.

BIEM and the Brotherhood of Independent Churches and Missions of Ukraine work closely. We have common goals. We do not just want to give people spiritual education; our goal is to help Christians in their work, support them spiritually, share experiences in ministry, because 90% of the students have been serving in their churches. In addition to the curriculum, students work during the session in various churches. They attend church, preach, and testify about their faith to people. Thus, churches have opportunity to learn more about each other, meet new churches, to share their experiences and needs. Students who attend other churches in our brotherhood during the session remain forever in the hearts of the faithful; they become like part of the church, they remember them and pray for them.

The atmosphere in the seminary is most favorable for the spiritual development of students. In the evening, students gather, socialize, pray, prepare for exams. When it comes time to go home, students are not willing to depart. They're so accustomed to each other, it's hard to separate. Thank God for our seminary.

This month's regular session taught very relevant and important topics, such as: Practical Apologetics, Church History, Pastoral Counseling, counseling people with mental disorders. Evening seminars were held about the delusions of recent times.

Praise the Lord, He richly bless these activities. And although it was very difficult and painful these last two weeks, leaving at 8:00 from home and returning at 23:00, yet we have experienced great blessing from God. One of our instructors was Ivan Virk from Bulgaria. For

many years he has advised people who pray for relief from various dependencies, including the occult. The arrival of Ivan Vylkova was made possible through the support of the mission BIEM and your donations.

We plan soon to visit several churches with the youth choir of our church. Our goal is to develop choral singing in our churches in our brotherhood. To do this, to teach choir directing to those who wish to serve in this way. At the seminary we have choir-directing program, but it needs financial support. We want to encourage churches to donate to the development of this branch, so we organize such trips. Please pray about this.

Thank you for your participation in our seminaries and churches, for your help. We know that you are going through the hard times when the country's economic situation affects the family budget. But in spite of that you remain faithful in the ministry, in donations, financial and prayerful support of the ministries. We pray for you and believe that the Lord is mighty to fill all your needs. Thank you for all your love and sacrifice.

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### **March 2010**

We became acquainted with the Iranian church two years ago. During this period, we've had the blessing of meeting and collaborating. Our Temple of Salvation Baptist Church made available a room for the office of the Star of the East Church; thanks to this favor, the Iranian Christians who live in Ukraine have helped BIEM implement a project to build an mp3 player for the evangelization of Muslims who speak the Farsi language. Pastor Ali and his team have built a homemade sound studio, and in the studio they recorded testimonies and songs in Farsi for mp3 players. Our relationship has grown, and we invited Iranians to study at the Kiev Theological Seminary. Five Iranian students today testify of their spiritual growth and knowledge of God through studying in the seminary. Thank God for this opportunity to serve ex-Muslims, now our brothers in Christ Jesus. Our BIEM mission has taken an active role in all of these projects. BIEM allocated money to cover the cost of renting office space for the Iranians; the Iranians are being trained in the seminary through the sponsorship of the mission BIEM.

Recently, our church has provided the Iranian church premises for meetings, as they were asked to vacate the location that they previously rented for services. At the moment, Sunday worship is held simultaneously in several rooms. Our Church holds its worship services in the main auditorium; the Iranians in the small one. Now the number of prayers and praises in our house of worship have doubled. Thank God for everything.

Yesterday the Iranians celebrated the new year 1389. They evangelized and invited many Iranian Muslims living in Ukraine; they prepared a special program in the kitchen after the meeting, all waiting for the Iranian dishes, such as pilaf and others. To this celebration were invited ministers of our church as well. The holiday was a success. However, the greatest blessing was when two Muslims accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. Several other Muslim Iranians took an interest in Christianity and promised to attend services. Everyone rejoiced at such results. They were glad, because God gives salvation to people and extends his grace to our land. All this thanks to the work of the Holy Spirit, the grace and love of our God. We are just worthless servants, doing what we must do.

Thank you brothers and sisters in America for your prayers and financial support. Thanks to you, God's work is a success in the Ukraine. Thanks to your prayers and material resources, Muslims in Ukraine are getting saved. Thank you and God bless you!