

PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

Training National Leaders for "Ministry"



Training National Leaders for "Missions"



A Visit to the States and beyond:

In the 1800's missionaries booked a one-way passage on a ship, and sailed off to some dark jungle, often never to be seen again. When I was a student in Bible college, part of my mission training was a six-month internship in central Africa. At that time, any trip less than six-months, was just not economical. Most missionaries during that period of time, spent three years on the field, and then one year visiting churches back home. When we moved to Ukraine, we began a rotation process of 20 months in Ukraine, followed by 4 months reporting to American churches. We modified this schedule about six years ago at the beginning of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Our college began to take a longer winter break to save on heating cost, and we began to take this time to visit the States each winter. The fact that flights to Ukraine are half the price during the winter made this a viable alternative.

This was our plan again this winter, but after booking our flights, plans changed. We have three Ukrainian mission students on an extended internship in Kenya and Uganda, as well as several former students serving as long-term missionaries in Uganda. We have had students working in this area for the past five years and the possibilities for service have continued to grow. There is currently a Ukrainian initiative to develop a mission outreach center in Uganda. This is part of the dream of our mission training program – to see Ukrainian Churches send their own people as cross-cultural missionaries. This is currently in the early developmental stages, but I was invited to go along as a representative of our Bible college's mission training program to assess how we might integrate our mission training program with this grass-roots opportunity.

That means, at the time Pam and I would have normally been returning to Ukraine, I will be flying to Kenya and Uganda to meet up with two Ukrainian church leaders and assess first hand, the possibility for future mission work by our students. I will spend three weeks traveling in Kenya and Uganda, and meeting with our interns and former students. This also means that Pam and I will be delaying our return to Ukraine until after Easter.



Ukrainian mission graduate teaching in Uganda

Updated Logo:



Training National Leaders for "Missions"

Five years ago, when we made a decision to begin visiting the States during our Bible college's winter break, instead of during the summer, we also made a decision to work more closely with our college's mission training program. This has proven one of the most rewarding and productive parts of our ministry in Ukraine. As "missionaries," Pam and I often find ourselves in a unique position to identify with our students who are also training to be missionaries. One of the immediate challenges faced by our Bible college in training Ukrainians to serve as missionaries was the additional cost of training these students to work in another country.

When I went to Bible college to prepare to be a missionary, I did so right out of high school. But that is not the way we train missionaries in Ukraine. In Ukraine, potential missionaries first go to college and receive a general Bible education and get involved in the local church ministry in Ukrainian. It is only after receiving Bible training and getting involved in local ministry, that students enroll a second time and receive additional training in our mission program. We admit students who are already capable church workers, and prepare them to do that ministry in another culture. Each year, 6-10 committed students begin cross-cultural classes on our campus, and by Christmas, we have placed those students in a six-month guided internship in a foreign country. This is where the problem of cost begins. The internship portion of the program is by far the most expensive. We work with each student to raise about \$1,000 from Ukrainian churches, but this still leaves another \$2,700 to be provided by outside supporters. Three years ago, we began to use the name "Odessa Missions" to refer to the internship part of our college's mission program. We used this name to raise designated funds for the internship part of our mission program. Because the

mission program has grown to be a large part of our ministry in Ukraine, we have chosen to add the "Odessa Mission" logo to our letterhead. In the past we have said, "**PARTNERS IN MISSIONS is Training National Leaders for Ministry.**" The addition of the phrase, "**Odessa Missions – Training National Leaders for Missions**" is a fitting growth to our work in Ukraine. We are training Ukrainians to do ministry in Ukraine, and to do missions in the world.

Some of our regular supporters have chosen to make additional contributions to help specifically cover the cost of involving our Ukrainian students in mission activity. This is great and we need these additional funds. Checks made out to **PARTNERS IN MISSIONS** will support the work of Ray and Pam Trantham as missionaries in Ukraine. Checks made out to **Odessa Missions** will be viewed as special gifts and used to train and send our Ukrainian students as cross-cultural missionaries. Both checks should be mailed to the same address in Fulton, Mississippi.



Trump and Ukraine:

It is the general understanding in American culture, that corruption and the use of one's political position for personal gain, should be avoided. And it is because of this foundational American value, that the Trump/Ukraine/Biden relationship has made the news. I should say, "Made the news in America." While visiting in American churches, people have often asked what Ukrainians think about impeachment and the American political drama. I have to respond by saying that the events that have made the headlines in the American news, have largely gone unnoticed in Ukraine. The reason that accusations of inappropriate behavior have gone unnoticed in Ukraine, it that too often they don't stand out from "normal" behavior. In any society where what was once "scandal," becomes "commonplace," average citizens are desensitized to the fact that something is wrong and our world needs a Savior.

I am reminded of a time while traveling in Uzbekistan and being questioned by police on the street. I spoke to them in Russian, and they did not realize that I was American. When they asked where I had come from, I said "Odessa," and that I lived there with my wife. They asked me if I also had a wife in Uzbekistan too, and the church member who was with me told them, "No, that would be a big sin." They responded, "It is not a big sin for us, ... Muslims can have up to four wives." They implied that they understood having more than one wife was not a good idea, but it was only a "big sin" if you had more than four. The writer of Hebrews reminds us, "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord." 12:14

Dr. Raymond S. Trantham
ray@partnersinmissions.org
Phone: 662-872-0748
<http://partnersinmissions.org>

Stateside Address:
Ray & Pam Trantham
31 CR 511
Corinth, MS 38834
Phone: 662-286-2502

Tax-deductible contributions:
PARTNERS IN MISSIONS
or **Odessa Missions**
P.O. Box 212
Fulton, MS 38843

Give on-line:

