

PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

Training National Leaders for "Ministry"

Ray and Pam
Trantham

 **Odessa Missions**
Training National Leaders for "Missions"



84 days: Regina stood up in a church to speak about the ministry in Ukraine, and she said, "It has been 84 days since my children, and I said good-bye to Sasha in Ukraine." The war continues and the number of days and the destruction continues to mount.

- Sasha remains in Odessa, Ukraine
- Regina and daughters are in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.
- Ray and Pam are in Corinth, Mississippi.

We are currently reviewing options for returning to Ukraine, while we continue to provide assistance to Ukrainians who share in our ministry.

We continue to function as missionaries.

Twenty-seven years ago, we defined our purpose as;

"Training national leaders for ministry."

Today our immediate task is:

"Working to preserve the ministry we have built over the past 27 years, by preserving the people we have trained and their ability to continue in ministry."

Update on Ukrainian missionaries: Last month we explained that one of the most significant areas of our ministry in the past few years, has been the training of Ukrainians, who wish to serve as cross-cultural missionaries. The goal has been to train Ukrainians, so they can be sent out by Ukrainian churches. This idea is new in Ukraine, and it has taken a lot of work. When the conflict broke out, many of these Ukrainian missionaries, found themselves suddenly cut off from the support they had been receiving from Ukrainian churches. Last month we described the need to find temporary support for twenty of our former students involved in missionary activity, while they worked out how they can recover their support from Ukrainian churches.

Last month we explained that:

- These Ukrainian missionaries are the result of our ministry over the past few years.
- The Ukrainian church is "temporarily" unable to support them.
- There is a need of \$40,000 to make up half of the lost support from Ukrainian churches.

We are thankful to the many churches and individuals who have committed to helping us meet this unexpected need. We have received numerous letters of thanks from the Ukrainian missionaries who have been helped by your generosity.

"Hello Ray: I haven't been able to send this message to you for a long time. I am working to disciple a group of boys from my home. I invite them in and we pray and read the word of God. I thank the Lord that He provided for everything, and I also thank you for praying for me and participating in my ministry. Please pray for my military service, and that I will be able to continue my ministry. Also pray for our student ministry and time in the church. Thank you for your prayers and may God bless your family."

(He is serving as a missionary in Tajikistan)



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Missionaries in Odessa, Ukraine since 1995.

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Two pictures on Sunday morning: Sasha takes a picture on the way to church of exploding missiles, and then another as he lead a youth meeting after church. During the past few days a shopping center has been hit and the runway at the Odessa airport has been destroyed.

Tonya graduated from our mission program three years ago and has continued to remain very active in cross-cultural mission activity. She is from the "Donetsk" region that has been occupied by Russian backed fighters for the past eight years. (She missed graduation because it was unsafe for her to travel in her region.) When I told her that we would be helping to provide her with some temporary financial assistance, she quickly sent me her latest newsletter. She said that the situation has come to the point that she and her family "had" to flee from their home in Donetsk, but they "chose" to go to Russia as missionaries. (Tonya is in the brown coat.) You are helping those like Tonya and her family who want to make a difference in the world.

I am reminded of the text in Acts 8:1

"On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria."



Yana arrived in Uganda almost a year ago and has decided to stay instead of returning to Ukraine. She sends a picture of a baptism. I visited this church with other students two years ago.

