September 4, 2018

Dear Praying Friends,

As Summer fades into Fall we want to thank you for your essential prayers. They are the vital force that uplifts and propels our ministry here through the satanic obstacles that seek to hinder the glory of Christ from being known. We sensed your prayers this summer in various ways, one of which was through Slavic Baptist Institute’s three camps. Two of our camps were located in the region of Lugansk, which is the region of Ukraine where the war with Russian separatists is taking place. One camp was about 50 miles north of the fighting and the other about 40 miles south and only 10 miles from the war. Children in this area have been especially impacted by the war. Due to the trauma they’ve experienced, some are unable to speak, others speak with very poor grammar. The third SBI camp was located on the western side of Ukraine with a former graduate’s church.

In all, SBI students impacted around 250 children and parents with the gospel through the three camps. We were proud of our students who showed forth a servant’s heart with a thankful spirit and displayed the love of Christ in their actions. Not only were they a blessing in the camp ministries helping these three local churches, but also, they were an encouragement to each in Sunday services preceding the camps. Some students preached, others sang, some gave testimony and others encouraged through Christian poetry.

Last week we saw the continued hand of the Lord at our Summer Session of SBI. There was a good group of students, including five new students. Please continue to pray for SBI and especially the beginning of our graduate degree program through SBI Advanced this Fall. This new program is directed at pastors and those in full-time ministry seeking more instruction. Julie and I are preparing for our move to Kyiv and covet your prayers for God’s grace to begin a church there. Continue to pray as well for Pastor Kestas and the building fund for the church in Ukmerge, Lithuania. We have received gifts, but still have a way to go. Please seek the Lord’s direction as to whether He would have you take part in helping this special group of Lithuanian believers, the only Baptist church in the entire region!

Remember, that souls being reached, lives changed, churches begun, laborers called and ultimately the glory of Christ known in Ukraine will be in direct correlation to your essential prayers. We give thanks for you and echo Paul’s commendation to the church in Corinth, “Ye also helping together by prayer for us.”

For the glory of Christ in Ukraine,

Derek and Julie