

Greetings from Ukraine!

Dear Friends, Winter- Spring season has been full of great adventures with God and I am looking forward to sharing some of the highlights with you!

FAMILY

In personal life the central theme for us has been our daughter's health. Sophia's struggle with arthritis has been up and down. There were moments when everything looked better and hopeful, but also the days when she was lying in bed in pain unable to walk even to the bathroom. **Please continue praying** for a miracle of healing!

Ministry continues to bring us much joy and a sense of being in the middle of God's will (and lots of hard work). To share this joy with you, I will begin with the recent baptisms.

BAPTISM



The baptism happened during the worship on Sunday. We did it at the basement while the church watched on a large screen and cheered.

I would like you to meet Sophia, a girl we met at our summer camp three years ago. She is 18 now, serves on worship team and in Fusion outreach, leads workshops during a camp, attends small groups and is in love with Jesus.

Now I am convinced there is nothing impossible for God! – Sophia exclaimed with excitement.

And she explained why:

My mom came to our church! She entered a door of a protestant church. The same church she has been trying to keep me from attending using all means possible. From gentle suggestions to strong orders mom did her best to keep me away from “the sect/cult” (Protestant churches commonly have such a reputation in a very religious environment of Western Ukraine with the predominantly Catholic/Orthodox religion).

I prayed day after day and month after month and her heart would not soften. Whenever I tried to appeal to my human right of freedom of faith, she would respond “As long as you stay under my roof...”

And after the countless arguments and conflicts I could not believe my eyes, when I saw my mom at our church Christmas Program. Now she is different. Mom does not prevent me from going to church any longer. She asks questions about it. She shows interest. I even have a feeling she secretly desires to come one of our Worship meetings on Sunday.



Sophia (red hat) leads a workshop (picture from the recent camp)

Sophia was not very engaged nor happy (picture from the 1-st camp)



When we first met Sophia, she seemed to be walking around with a dark cloud over her head, was closed and suspicious. Sophia became a different person the next day after she accepted Christ at camp. She turned into the most joyous and open person and remains such till today.

But a bitter disappointment awaited Sophia when she returned home and shared the exiting news with her mom. Her mother was angry and forbid any contact with the church. Soon she soften a bit and allowed Sophia participate in our Fusion since it was not about religion but about music. For a long time, Fusion rehearsals were the only place where Sophia could grow in her faith through the fellowship with her new Christian friends.

About two year ago, when Elina formed a brand new worship team out of young people who recently came to Christ through our Fusion ministry, Sophia joined the team. But with her mother's restrictions, Sophia was able to attend worship team rehearsals only. It was a real answer to prayers when a year ago Sophia's mother allowed her to play instrument during the church service, but not to be a part of the church. This permission sounded as a contradiction, but nevertheless allowed Sophia to be at church every Sunday.



When Christmas came, I was trying to convince our church not to do a Special Christmas Program that would cost us an equivalent of our monthly venue rent. But the key people insisted and I reluctantly agreed. And I am glad I did. This was the first time Sophia's mother stepped into the church, as well as parents of several other teens. I trust it is their first step toward God.

Please pray with us for the days to come when we will see them baptized and become the disciples.

Exit Tour – a major outreach we did in February in partnership with Josiah Venture. They are the once who brought the musicians and the equipment for the concert.

We worked with two high schools in our community. Each school gave us an entire day to work with the students instead of the regular classes.

Each day started with an hour concert at the gym. The students loved the Faith Child, talented musicians who came to serve us for this outreach (picture below).

EXIT TOUR



Students considered it the best school day ever!

EXIT TOUR



Then for the rest of the day students were sent to different rooms where we offered them talks on various subjects, like bullying, addiction, discovering your personality etc (picture below).

EXIT TOUR



We ended the day with a fun meeting at the gym, inviting them to a big concert the next day. The concert was cool and colorful!

EXIT TOUR



Over 300 students heard the Gospel at the concert (picture above)!!



We also invited them to a special youth event at the church. Over 100 students came from two schools over the next two days! The musicians shared their testimonies and the Gospel at those meetings. Our existing youth did their best to make a new friends.

As a result of this outreach, our weekly youth program, Fusion, doubled in number (picture above).

Please pray for the new students and their salvation. Also pray for their parents who tend to forbid any contact with a protestant church.

We couldn't do any of this without you. Thank you for standing with us!

With love, Igor & Elina.

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