



Ferguson Report



Vol. 6 No. 9

"Go ye unto all the world"

September 2009

BVBIU Needs Your Help

You may remember a few months ago the challenge we faced to keep our extension preacher training school open in Gorlovka, Ukraine (BVBIU). Major funding for the school had been lost due to the downturn of the economy. According to our agreement which would make BVBIU new owners of the current facilities, we had to have operating funds in place by the first day of June. After a plea was made in May in behalf of BVBIU, a generous response was received from several churches and individuals. We were so thankful, and could finally breathe a sigh of relief.

However, the majority of the funds received were one-time contributions. With the current regular monthly support plus the one-time contributions we can operate until the end of 2009. Recently, BVBIU resumed classes, and time waits for no one. Before we realize it, we will be looking at 2010. This will be the dead of winter for Ukraine—and I do mean *"dead"* as the cold is incredible. Already, it is getting colder in Ukraine which means it will soon be time to start paying expensive heating bills for the institute. Many of you don't know this, but last winter BVBIU operated without heat. I know because I was there



*Preachers' meeting in BVBIU's freezing facilities in Gorlovka.
Notice the coats everyone is wearing!*

during part of that time! We currently have 11 students studying with great enthusiasm. I have made a personal commitment to see to it that these students have heat this winter in order to continue their Bible

studies. But I am going to need your help.

I need congregations of the Lord's people that will consider putting BVBIU in your monthly budgets. Taking the estimated heating costs into account, it is estimated that we need on average \$5,400 per month to operate. This amount includes heating and all other utility fees, teachers and all staff support, maintenance and operational costs, land rental, students' support and apartment rentals.

Some of you may not know how nice the facility is that we currently own and in which BVBIU operates. The Ukrainian government has estimated the building's value to be approx. one million US dollars. Now, you may be wondering why I mention this. Obviously, we know the church is not a building, nor is BVBIU (which operates under the oversight of the church) a building. So let me give a little background.

At the end of 2006 and beginning of 2007, it was decided to move BVBIU out of the facilities of the Kramatorsk Economic-Humanitarian Institute (KEGI) in which the extension school had been meeting. BVBIU had been under two five-year contracts and didn't want to renew a third one for the following reasons: first, it was becoming too expensive to operate out of KEGI; and second, BVBIU was only allowed to meet at very limited times. As a result, Terry Harmon, director of BVBIU began looking for a place to relocate. There was nothing found suitable to rent, so the idea was to try to purchase a building. However, the best existing buildings that could be found were all in deplorable condition yet still costing around \$100,000 to purchase. Even if we were to purchase such a building, it would cost nearly that much more to get it in useable condition.

However, God's providence intervened; and in February 2007, Terry received a telephone call from a brother in Christ from the Montgomery, AL area stating that he had learned that BVBIU was looking for a place to relocate the school. A 2-story building in Gorlovka had previously been purchased and completely renovated to begin a preacher-training program. However, it had not been successful; and an English language institute (GELU) to train Ukrainian Christians to become English/Russian translators was

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“Ferguson Mission”

Monthly commitments and one-time
donations still needed

***Bear Valley Bible Institute of
Denver***

A work of the Bear Valley Church of
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80227 (303) 986-5800
<http://www.bvbid.org>

Howell Ferguson, Ext. Coordinator
Chimala, Tanzania, E. Africa, and
Gorlovka, Ukraine
Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver
22 Tanbark Cove
Bells, TN 38006
(731) 574-1949
hferguson@bvbid.org

operating there instead. In addition, a body of Christians was also meeting there to worship.

After several meetings and discussions, an agreement was reached to convey ownership of this piece of property for the exclusive purpose of training preachers. We were overjoyed with God's answered prayer to find for us ***a ready-to-use building*** perfectly suited for our need. And even though the building cost Bear Valley nothing to purchase, the operational costs are obviously not free.

I have said so much about the facilities really for only one purpose: **We have an excellent platform from where we can train and send out preachers and Bible teachers throughout Ukraine and surrounding countries.** BVBIU is located near the very heart of Gorlovka—a city known for its reputation in producing translators. It is also only about 70 miles from the Russian border. Even though most students enrolling in BVBIU will speak Russian, English-speaking students are just literally around the corner from the institute. Potentially, this could further spread the church's influence as many of these students will travel abroad. In addition, this facility is rich in resources for both students and BVBIU alumni including a Russian and English library, internet access with state-of-the-art video-conferencing, and a staff of Biblically-sound and well-trained Ukrainian instructors. To top it off, BVBIU director, Terry Harmon is a seasoned missionary having lived in

Russia and Ukraine for well over 10 years. He speaks Russian fluently and even teaches in Russian. His familiarity with Russian and Ukrainian culture has made him invaluable to the work of spreading the gospel through the means of training sound men in the faith in Ukraine.

I just pray that someone reading this newsletter will give consideration to what is at stake for the people of Ukraine through preacher-training at BVBIU. Please contact me if I can answer any questions or if you would like for me to give a presentation for your congregation to further explain this work. May God bless your efforts in Him. Howell



Home of BVBIU in Gorlovka, Ukraine.