

NEWS FROM CHERNIGOV, UKRAINE

Jake & Anya Knotts
Fall 2009



HELLO

It has been about four months since our last letter.

Our church has found a new location, we have new opportunities for ministry, and our family has grown with the birth of our son. Needless to say, a lot has transpired since spring.

We hope this letter will help you connect with what is happening in our lives and the life of our church here in Chernigov.



LEV DAMIEN KNOTTS

Lev was born on August 18th, weighing 4.35KG (9.5LB) and 56CM (22") tall.

He has a thick head of hair, a manly cry, and an insatiable appetite. We are happy and red-eyed these days.

In Russian Lev means "lion."



FAMILY

All is going well with the family.

Lev is growing, he is only a month old and seems to be as big as Maia was when she was 3 months old.

Maia is talking more and more, getting ready to attend Sadik (pre-school) a few days a week, and seems to be developing quite well as a little translator. She learns words in both languages at once. She has even put her dad to shame by knowing words in Russian that he doesn't know, and she isn't even three yet.

Anya is adjusting to life with an infant, wanting to have guests over more now that she is home with Lev most of the time.

Jake was able to take some medical tests this summer not showing much of a regression with his kidneys, and is feeling good over all.



SUMMER

This summer we were able to hold another free English course for a week. Another outreach we did were a few kids' festivals near the museum where our church meets.

A few girls in the church will be starting an English language kids club later this month in effort to connect with more kids.

We are planning on having a few English language outreaches next year for adults as well as children. If your church is interested in bringing a team out to help, please contact us.

By the way, the large cheek on the bottom right is our daughter's.





BAPTISMS & BBQ



This summer was planned around our end of July BBQ and baptism. We invited our friends from Priluki and Nezhin to join us.

The event was held at the Blue Lakes, a trio of beautiful lakes about 45 minutes from Chernigov.

Quite a few folks showed up, probably about 70 in all. We had a great time together, ate a ton, swam, worshipped, and celebrated the new believers expressing their faith through baptism.

This is by far my favorite church event of the year.



BUILDING

In June we rented a new facility for our church office and mid-week church events. Our old building wasn't very practical any longer for our meetings, seeing that we had outgrown it a while ago. It also had no bathroom, no running water, and no room for kids.

The new place is more centrally located, about twice as big, and has storage for our library, music equipment, and children's ministry resources. We also have a large room for moms and kids, a kitchen, a bathroom, and a large meeting room that seats over 20 comfortably, probably up to 40 if we cram in.

We can also receive guests overnight as well as operate our English Club with a lot more space.

Currently we are preparing our old building to put up for sale with the intention of purchasing land to build a facility of our own at some point in the future.

Our new apartment/office is pictured below.



CONFERENCES

This spring I had the privilege of speaking at two conferences.

The first was a youth conference in Kagarlyk and the second was for the church in Priluki.

It is always healthy and refreshing to visit with other churches, I am looking forward to similar events over the winter.

We decided to hold off on our annual fall conference outside of Chernigov this year. Right now we are leaning towards putting together a men's conference this winter as well as dialoguing with some other missionaries about a marriage conference in spring.

Recognizing how beneficial such events are for the church as a whole, we are also praying about providing a framework for concentrated teaching on a more regular basis, maybe a monthly one-day seminar/retreat somewhere outside of town. We aren't really sure what shape it will take on, but are convinced that it would be helpful and worth attempting.



MEN'S MEETINGS

With new guys in church, we decided to meet twice a week in the morning for prayer and study.

The fun part is that they are all different (for instance, one guy just got out of prison), which makes for great fellowship and a lot of interesting conversation.

Spiritual formation and fruit is already visible from us getting together regularly, which is and will be a huge blessing for the church.



WINDOWS FOR KIDS PROJECT

Outside the city lies the mental hospital Halavin. Believers from our church have visited the children's ward there for the last 6 years and from time to time we try to help out by remodeling certain things.

Over the winter we realized how under heated the ward was and saw an opportunity to help out with windows. As you can see below, the windows were actually rigged with different pieces of glass with gaping holes covered by tape.

In the winter there is cold air blowing into the rooms and the kids are living under piles of blankets until Spring. During the summer, the windows can't be opened which means no fresh air and a terrible inescapable stench throughout the whole place.



WINDOWS FOR KIDS PROJECT

(CONTINUED)

Thanks to some folks from our church as well as the church in Priluki running a window retail business, we were able to purchase and install seven large windows at wholesale price.

Our church paid for five at first, and then some people stateside decided to help out and we were able to purchase two more. One lady decided to ask friends to give towards the project instead of giving presents at a birthday party. Pretty cool.

We hope to continue purchasing one or two windows at a time throughout the year. So far we have been able to replace the windows in the classroom, a large playroom, and the kitchen. Next will be the bedrooms. All in all, there are over 20 windows that need to be changed, not including hallways.

The cost of each window is roughly 200\$ all said and done, in case you are interested.



MEDICAL EQUIPMENT PROJECT

As many of you probably know, the medicine in Ukraine is socialized. It is very underfunded therefore corrupt and lacking a lot of equipment one takes for granted in the States. The further you get from large urban centers, the worse it gets.

A friend who lives in Kyrgyzstan told me that he approached local hospitals in one large US city asking for used medical equipment donations to send to needy hospitals in Central Asia. The hospitals agreed.

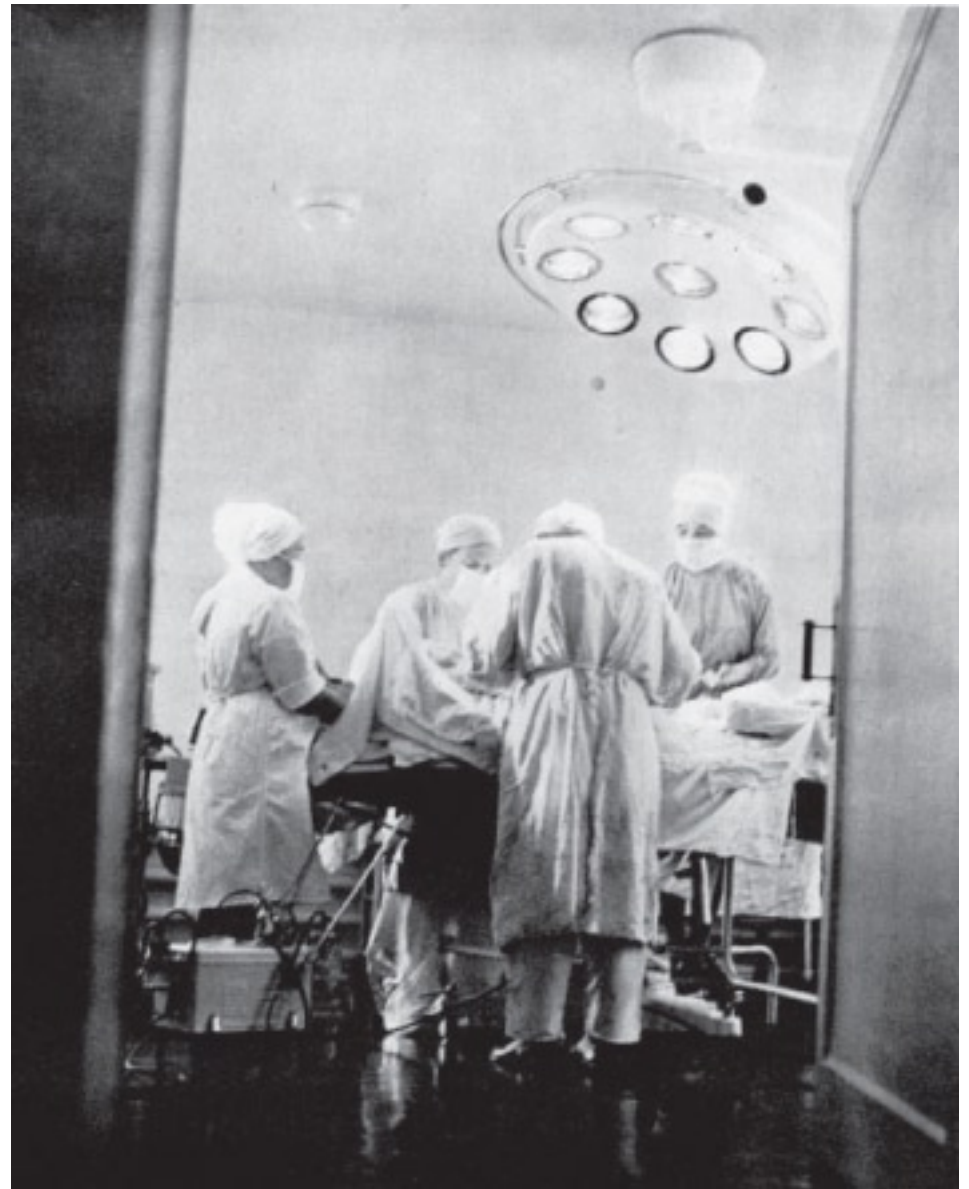
USAID will cover the cost of shipping for such projects.

Upon hearing about this opportunity, we would really want to see a project like this take place in Ukraine. Giving away medical equipment would not only help the quality of medicine here, but would also be a great way for the church to show that it is interested in the welfare of the community.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Would you consider approaching your local hospital and asking for used medical equipment for underfunded hospitals in Ukraine?

Please [email us](#) if you are interested in helping out.



PRISON OPPORTUNITY

A few hours from Chernigov outside the town of Shostka there is a Men's prison with a small fellowship of believers in it. Christians in that fellowship have been looking for a church outside prison to develop a friendship with. The way we came in contact with them has been through a guy attending our church who was released from this facility earlier this year. Last month the church pastor (an inmate himself) and I met.

As a result we were asked to consider regularly visiting as well as receive Christian inmates once they are released. Most of them don't want to return to their homes (old bad influences and relationships scare them) and want to move to a city with a church they can get plugged into.

While understanding the complexities of working with prisoners, our church wants to help. We hope to get them an apartment and help them find jobs.

Please [email us](#) if you're interested in helping financially.

(The prison was built by the Soviets on the territory of an old monastery (most of religious facilities in those days were converted into something more "useful"), the church's blue domes can be seen below.)



PUBLISHING

In Lumine, our grass roots book publishing ministry, will be publishing one new book this fall, *Christian Beliefs* by Wayne Grudem, as well as republishing *The Passion of Jesus Christ* by Piper.

Along with the additions, we plan on developing our distribution in Russia as we have finally been able to secure shipping to Moscow.

I will be taking two trips to Russia this fall. The first will be to meet our shipment and get it forwarded to different buyers, the second - to attend a large conference in Samara, Russia where we will be selling our resources.

The greater access to the Russian market is a huge blessing and step forward for us as a publisher.

We also recently incorporated our ministry in the States and are currently filing to get a 501c3 non-profit status.





L'VIV

Before summer hit and before Lev was born, Anya and I decided to take the opportunity to leave Maia with her grandma and grandpa in Kiev and visit the Western Ukrainian city of L'viv for a few days.

I was absolutely shocked, it felt like we were in Vienna or Prague, it was unexpectedly European.

We had a great time visiting museums, Gothic churches, eating fun food, as well as drinking an unhealthy amount of coffee.

L'viv is known for having a lot of coffee shops but I wasn't ready for just how many there actually are.

We loved the place and hope to return again down the road.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

What can you do to practically be a part of our mission work here?

1. Pray for our church and for the city
2. Pray for networking resulting in more books published
3. Pray for us to find property for a church and to sell our old facility
4. Consider teaming up with others to buy a window for the hospital
5. Approach your local hospitals about medical equipment aid
6. Pray for the prison opportunity we have
7. Consider financially supporting our mission work



SUPPORT

If you are interested in supporting our mission work or any specific project financially, you can do so by debit or credit card by simply going to:

<http://www.calvaryslo.com/missions/>

Or you can send a check to:

CalvarySLO Church
p.o.box 1463
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

CONTACT

jakeknotts@gmail.com
anyaknotts@gmail.com

38 063 563 0069 (cell)
805 426 5222 (skype in)
jakeknotts (skype)

P.O. Box 1842
Chernigov, 14000
UKRAINE

www.chernigovblog.com (blog)



THANKS

We appreciate you taking the time to connect with us through this letter.

Jake & Anya Knotts