



## June 2021 Ministry in Ukraine!

Hi Everyone!

We recently completed our first international ministry trip in 18 months, and we want to share with you about how God is at work in Ukraine! Our trip started with a hiccup. Tania Martin, who worked there for 11 years and was to serve as our guide, was unable to leave Orlando due to a mix-up with her Covid test. She was delayed for a day. As a result, we spent our first night at the Kyiv Theological Seminary where we met Anatoliy Prokopchuk, the founder and Chancellor – a great connection for future ministry in the area!



Saturday we went to the church, which rents space in a former Soviet-era factory with extensive space that includes a worship center, offices, and classrooms. During the week they host a kindergarten that serves 60 children and has a waiting list of 80! They are planning to open a Christian elementary school so that they can continue to reach out to families in the city. The church is pastored by two friends who met in first grade – Valodya, who is a local dentist, and Peter, who is an engineer. They are passionate in their pursuit of disciples. The Ukrainian word for disciple is учень, which means “student.” A disciple is a student who learns from their master and becomes like him. Eighteen gathered for the second of four workshops in disciple-making (information about the first is found [here](#).) The focus was the spiritual health of the disciple maker. We become disciple makers when we are disciples ourselves – when the Great Commission permeates every part of our lives, and we demonstrate that we are Christ-followers in all we do. It was a great workshop, and the people were very responsive!



On Sunday, Bob preached at the worship service in Rivne. The worship center was packed with worshipers. The times of praise and worship songs, prayer, encouragement, and hearing the Word were followed by a beautiful baby dedication. For almost an hour after the service, connections and conversations took place as we met the church family. Carol had incredible chances to speak to young men and women as they were drawn to her to ask about dating, long term relationships (they were amazed at our 40+ year marriage!), and

inviting friends to church.

On Monday, we took a 4-hour bus ride to Kyiv and made our way to the airport for a pre-flight Covid test. That evening we had a chance to meet a young couple who have planted their first church in January of this year. Yura and Nina have previously served as Christian camp directors, but God led them to begin a church to provide a place to worship for those who came to Christ at the camp – since there was none in their area. They began in obedience but feel the need for help. They reached out to Converge and because they are in Europe, were guided to us. We were excited to be able to tell them that we would be in Kyiv in a week and could meet with them! It was a great blessing to sit across the table from these two dedicated and faith-filled servants of Jesus. We are going to meet with them regularly via Zoom to serve as their coach as the move forward.



Pray for the church in Ukraine! After years of religious oppression, pastor Valodya describes the nation today as “one of the most favorable places in Europe to do ministry...but the pressure against Evangelical Christianity is growing from both Russia in the East, and the European Union in the West.” They know that the window of freedom they are enjoying now will close...and it motivates them to do all they can while they can!

**Thank for your prayerful and financial support of our work – we are blessed by your partnership!**

~Bob & Carol

For more information: Go to <http://bobcarolmarsh.com/>