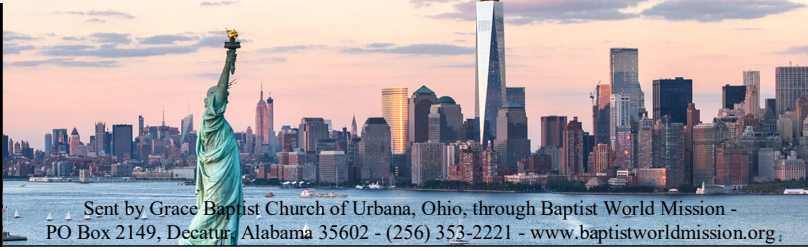


600,000 Russians in New York City need a church that speaks their language...



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Sent by Grace Baptist Church of Urbana, Ohio, through Baptist World Mission -
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Dear friend,

With a month of winter still remaining on the calendar, it has so far been a very mild season here in New York. We have only encountered difficult weather once, and that was actually in Wisconsin.

On the first day of winter, December 22, we held our morning and evening special Christmas services. Including our family and only two visitors, we finished the day with exactly 100 different people in combined attendance. As sometimes happens here as we work with three basically distinct churches (dependent upon the people's work schedules), our evening service (66 people) was larger than our morning service (41 people).

Two weeks later, we were thrilled to have a pastor and his wife from the Central Asian country of Kyrgyzstan in one of our services, and a week after that, we were the first houseguests of their recently-married son and his new wife. The timing was interesting because the newlyweds live 950 miles from our church! They are both finishing their college programs at Maranatha Baptist University in Wisconsin, and we were pleased to share a brief visit with them as we were returning our daughter Lacey back to nursing school there at the end of Christmas break.

Along the way home, Dan got to have a wide-ranging and substantive spiritual conversation with an employee of the hotel where we stayed because of the winter storm.

February has been a fruitful month. One lady (Olena) put her faith in Christ to be her Saviour, and another lady (Oxana) clarified her salvation.

Olena first came to our church in September of 2018. She is something of "a man without a country." A Ukrainian by birth, she was born in the eastern part of

the country, which has long been heavily influenced by Russia. She grew up speaking Russian, not Ukrainian. With the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Ukraine six years ago, she was scorned by Russians as a Ukrainian, while at the same time, being accused by Ukrainians of disloyalty and purged from her job.

She has said before that our church (which includes people from one end of the former Soviet Union to the other, and from a variety of spiritual backgrounds) is like family to her. On her birthday, which was in November, she said to Sherry, "Thank you so much for what you do as pastor and pastor's wife here. You don't know what it means to have this church here, especially when you have no family and few friends in this country. Every Sunday, coming here is a bit of a holiday for me, but especially on my birthday."

Professing herself to be a Christian, Olena requested to be baptized. As she counseled with one of our ladies, it became clear that she had never truly understood the Gospel or accepted Christ's provision for her salvation. But that changed on February 9, when she was born again! Afterward, she said that if she had died 30 minutes earlier, she would have gone to hell. Instead, she has a new birthday!

Oxana came to our church in April and testified that she had put her faith in Christ after receiving and reading a gospel tract. While speaking with her this month, she surprised us by discounting her previous "conversion" and instead admitting that she really HAD gotten saved after reading a tract, but not the one



that she had first mentioned. Instead, she dates her salvation to July of last year, three months after she began assembling with us, when she trusted Christ after reading one of our church's gospel tracts! It is wonderful to see the Lord open blind and deceived eyes!

In addition to these local happenings, we were also excited this month to hear from a pastor's wife in Australia. A Russian lady, who is a new believer with limited English abilities, is attending one of their Sunday School classes each week with her young children, with the hope that she can understand the Bible in that context, rather than in their main church service. She writes,
My internet searching to find a Russian Bible-believing pastor or missionary, brought your name up on my computer screen. Some further googling led me to your church's webpage... It was undoubtedly a "God moment".

Although our website is not flashy or as well-developed as we would wish, we rejoice and praise the Lord that He takes our talents, few and small though they may be, and can use them for His glory. He is not limited by our limitations!

We close this letter by announcing the arrival last night of our first grandchild, Camden John Hyden. We ask you to pray that Camden would have godly parents, and godly grandparents as we enter this new season of life!



Serving our Saviour,

*Dan, Sherry, Symphony, Lacey,
Shastya, Gabriel, Emma, & Kelsie*