



(RITE - CANADA)

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Adapting Classes to an Unusual Situation

We are all aware of the ever changing situation in Eastern Ukraine and especially the city of Donetsk. Our professors' apartment is located in the heart of the city, but the seminary meets in our building in Makeevka. Both Donetsk and Makeevka have been taken over by pro-Russian groups. Tanks have been seen on Makeevka's streets! In spite of this we are still conducting classes, but in a very different way. We are paying our students their regular stipends through this time as well as pay our cooks, etc. It would not be right to cause them financial hardships on top of all of the other difficulties they are facing. Right now we also are housing some refugees that Eugene (pastor of Light of Resurrection) knows. They are from an area of heavy fighting. It is the least that we can do.

First, we had classes up until June using two of our graduates, and video tapes in Russian. In May, Bob and Amy Beasley were there teaching. For June we had to cancel classes because it was not safe for our students to travel to Makeevka. Starting in August we will conduct long distance classes using professors in the U.S. and Canada and two of our graduates — tall Sasha and Pastor Eugene along with Russian videos by R.C. Sproul and Richard Pratt. Sasha and Eugene will teach regular classes and will show the video tapes and discuss them. This will work well as those former students have previously taught and they do a very excellent job.

Second, we will use men from the U.S. and Canada who will teach in real time using a web hosting service by Adobe. The men will be able to see the whole class and be able to field questions all in real time. The

students will watch the men teach on a large screen TV and have the teaching translated just as we do now. It will be somewhat inconvenient for our men to teach due to the time difference, (start at 2 a.m.!) but we have enough men to be able to do this without anyone being overworked.

Third. (and I write this with a smile), this is what we are planning as of today. If things get worse, then we will change our plans. But one thing is for sure, we can use past graduates very effectively in whatever we do. We have graduated some excellent men and they would love to teach. Please let me give you an example of a problem we have already faced. Natasha was going to go out and get a large screen TV for the classes. She was informed that she should not even try to purchase one because it would bring attention to her. They said, "Can you imagine the attention it would bring to you if you were to walk out of a store with a large screen TV" Then she faced the reality that she could not drive to Makeevka anyway because of the check points. If students cannot take public transportation safely, how can she drive there? If necessary, we can set up teaching centers using graduates, or make other changes, but we will continue our mission work.

Lastly, please let me make a plea for additional financial help. Because of the fighting going on in that area, our costs are actually increasing because we need to purchase additional equipment and other unusual expenses. Thanks in advance.

Merle Messer
President RITE-USA

IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 1	Adapting Classes to an Unusual Situation
Page 2	Student Interview
Page 3	How You Can Help

An Interview with Vladimir (Velodia) Prosyanykov

Velodia came to RITE seminary a few years ago but had to drop out for several semesters due to serious illness. He's back now and we are thanking God for his return. Velodia is one of our top students, one who is very engaged in classroom discussions. To attend classes, Velodia must ride a bus nine hours from his hometown in Poltava, Ukraine.

"I was a criminal and a drug addict when I first joined a small Bible study group," Velodia said. He had been reading the Bible for a while before that and believed he was a Christian. He was baptized, but shortly thereafter left the Bible study group and went back to his former life. After about a year, Velodia and his girlfriend went to an Easter celebration in an Orthodox temple. There, he began to pray for the first time in a while.

"I prayed for about twenty minutes," he said, "and people tried to make me to leave. I said to God, 'I like the way I live, but I understand that it is wrong.'" Some time after that Velodia got arrested and was sent to jail for over four years. After a year reading his Bible in prison he was sent to a prison camp where a church existed. "One man kept calling me to go to church with him. Finally I said, 'Ok, I'll go Monday.' Since that Monday in 2004, I have walked with Christ. God has set me free from drugs, smoking, foul language, and other harmful things. But I had a problem! What will I do for a living? I

had never held an honest job! But God was faithful and I went to work at a good job the first day I got out of prison."

Velodia is single and hopes to serve God as a teacher as he grows in Christ. He now works in a prison ministry and preaches each third Sunday there. He also leads a teenage group in his local church and sings in the worship team. Velodia considers himself as sort of an assistant pastor, but doesn't feel called as yet to pastor a church.

When beginning at RITE originally, Velodia first disagreed with Reformed doctrine as he was familiar with another tradition. But in his second year, Velodia "arrived at the understanding that I had come to learn and not to teach." After that, Velodia says that all has been well. He now disagrees with much he had previously learned, particularly when others try to separate the Old Testament from the New. He wants to get deep into the foundational aspects of biblical theology. And, he adds, "By God's mercy, He has kept me in His grace and from serious sin."



Please Remember to Pray

The ways of God are, of course, past finding out. We have no way of knowing His plans for Eastern Ukraine. But we do know that God answers prayer, and so we covet your constant prayers for the region's stability, the safety of our students and employees, and for our ability to launch the planned long-distance learning program, if necessary. We ask God that we be allowed to continue RITE's ministry unabated for many years to come.



RITE Graduating Master's Degree Students

From left standing are Eugene, Nicolai, Elder Bob Beasley, Pastor Eugene, and Vadim.

Seated is Anatoly.

The Eugenes and Nicolai have just completed work toward their master's degrees. Vadim has one more year as does Anatoly.

Ways in which you can help

Set up a 'Mission Circle.' Participate in sending warm clothes to the students and their families and extended families. This alleviates some of the material concerns and worries and frees up some finances for perhaps meat on the table or fruit for the children. You can make hats, mitten, scarves, afghans, slippers, pneumonia prevention vests for the children, sweaters, etc.

Coppers for Donetsk

Please help the students of the Reformed International Theological Seminary (R.I.T.E.) in Donetsk, Ukraine by saving your pennies or small change.

Coppers for Donetsk Program

Start the 'Coppers for Donetsk project in your church, your society, your social group, your community. Pennies add up.

The Coppers for Donetsk Program is working well and we are thankful to God for that. If you need some extra cans for your neighbors and friends and local businesses, please do not hesitate to ask for them. We will be happy to oblige. We hope to have 1000 cans out by the end of the year 2011. This would create a wonderful help for the seminary. We have received cans with \$5.00 in them and also as much as \$80.00! We receive them weekly from all over and from all kinds of businesses and people from all walks of life.



For more information of how to start this project please email theavandixhoorn@rogers.com

Support A Student

It is possible to support a student attending the Reformed International Theological Seminary in Donetsk. The cost per student is very reasonable by Canadian standards, yet it makes an enormous impact in the spiritual lives of these students and their churches in Ukraine. The total cost of operating the seminary in Donetsk includes renting the professors' apartment, renting seminary classroom space, translator's salaries, utilities, student stipends, desk, chairs, library and other miscellaneous expenses. At the present time we have between 80-100 good solid theological library books written in Russian for our students to use.

You can *Support a Student* on several different levels:

Level 1

For \$100 a month, you can fund a student's monthly stipend.

Level 2

For \$120 a month, you can fund a student's monthly stipend and cover their transportation, food and lodging for a month.

Level 3

For \$200 a month, you can fund the entire cost of operating the seminary for a month per student.

Level 4

Any contribution to help with the monthly cost of operating the seminary would be greatly appreciated. You can make either a one-time gift, an occasional gift or regular support for one or more students.

If you would like to participate in the *Support A Student* program, please send your Name, Address, E-mail address to the information listed below

If you would like to donate to RITE-CANADA or participate in the *Support A Student* program, please send your Name, Address, E-mail address, and let us know what level of support to this address:

RITE Canada
C/O Rev. Hank Vanderwoerd
1100 - 40 Ave N
Lethbridge, AB
T1H 6B7

Please make cheques payable to RITE CANADA.

RITE CANADA is a registered charitable organization pursuant to the provisions of the Income Tax Act (Canada) under registration number 85102 4000 R0001.

100% of all contributions go directly to support the seminary in Donetsk, Ukraine .