

News from the Lighthouse of Hope

The *Маяк Надії* Newsletter

Rivne, Ukraine
November, 2016



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

We are so thankful that you support us with prayers, we can feel that and are so happy when God answers!

There are some updates about our ministry.

Prayer walk

Misha and our new partner in ministry Sasha Ibulayev have started to prayer walk couple times a week. They usually do it in the early morning, walking and praying for someone who might be interested in talking about God, or who needs prayed for. They pray sometimes near the popular local store where they sell vodka (alcohol) to people before they go to work. Misha and Sasha offer them tea and a chance to talk.

One day Misha was very close to that alcohol store when one young guy came closer to find out what he was doing. He prayed for him immediately. The conversation turned in such a way that the guy (his name is Vova, told him the whole story of his life and that he is addicted to alcohol. But he would like to change his life and go to the Christian rehab center. Because we do not have a Christian rehab centre here in Rivne, Misha decided to drive him to the one which is near Kyiv. But while Misha was at home to grab some things for him, Vova disappeared.

The next day Misha went praying along with Sasha Ibulayev and that man Vova found them at the same place. This time he had a strong desire to go to the rehab center for the rehabilitation. So after all preparations were made, the guys drove Vova right to the rehab center near Kyiv.



Misha, Sasha and Vova



Misha, the father of Vova and Vova

He has been there for three weeks now. This situation is an answer to prayer and Vova is the fruit of prayer walking and relying on God. It is interesting that his parents call Misha, asking questions especially why he and Sasha were doing this to for their son. The guys were invited by them to their house so we pray that this meeting will take place where Misha and Sasha will have an opportunity to share the Gospel with the parents too.

Bible study group

We continue to meet with people for Bible study group. The people ask questions, learn verses from the Scripture by heart. We pray that God will be changing people's hearts and that they will be open more and more.



Sasha next to alcohol store



Sasha and Misha offer tea



Praying at the cementary

Help needed

Recently God showed us where we could be useful and help needy people. We read about one man, Volodya, who is 45 years old and has been paralyzed for



ten years after a terrible accident. For several years he hasn't been outdoors at all. He has no family, his aunt who is 85 years old takes care of him. One girl, a volunteer, asked for help after she visited them. Misha visited him once, and could see the conditions they live in and found out what the problem is with Volodya and how we could help. I am happy that Ukrainians are so open hearted and sensitive to people's grief. It always unites people of different ages and social status. Misha's mother was willing to help them to see some doctors. Misha was able to share the Gospel with those people and would like to help with some physical



work. We pray for this poor man and his aunt and really would like to be useful somehow and help. *(Matthew 5:42 Give to the one asking you, and do not turn away from one who wants to borrow from you.)*

Rehab center

We have prayed for a long time for our Christian friend Valera and his heart for serving people who are addicted to drugs and alcohol. We were praying for how we might participate in this ministry as well. One of the reasons we were thinking about it is that Misha was truly touched after our trip to one of such centers for the addicted. Misha meets many such people and is able to communicate with them. So we kept meeting with Valera and his wife Natasha to pray together for that. This year the guys began to look for an appropriate house. And after a couple months of searching we have finally found a good one not far from where Misha used to pray! It is near one alcohol shop.

So now we can say that we have started to be involved in one more ministry on a part time basis. Our hearts burn more to help young families and needy people. We would like to support Valera whom God really calls to that kind of ministry.

There are already three men who live there, two of which would like to stay there to help in this ministry. Below is Valera's testimony and a couple words how he feels about this ministry:

"My name is Valera. I was born and raised in Kiev in an ordinary family. My parents worked hard, and I was brought up, as it happens, on the street. As a child I started to play football and played so well I even had some prospects. But in order to remain in the sport, I had to make a choice

- would I diligently learn in the special football class or would I engage in a regular class, and live as I want?

I chose the latter – so called "freedom". The consequences of the choice came very quickly. For 12 years I was registered by police as a juvenile offender. I was fascinated by the life of a criminal. I was stealing, drinking alcohol, and smoking. And I did not stop. I liked the new experiences and sensations so my life depended on drugs. At first just cannabis, and before very long, the first injection and I became a slave to drugs.

During two years I had been seduced by sin in a beautiful wrapper: clubs, bars, criminal "romance" ... And then - lies and theft to my loved ones. Drug dens, scandals, fights, illness and tears were normal for me. Eventually, I was disappointed in everything: in my choice, in my own beliefs and in life itself. I realized that I was deceived. In pursuit of a beautiful life, and "freedom" I had lost everything. During this time, I buried relationships with a lot of friends and acquaintances, as well as their elderly parents. I was completely broken, lonely and in need. I left behind 2 prison terms and nearly half of my life lived in vain. Instead of happiness - a huge constant emptiness. I realized that it's all - a dead end. I had nothing to live for. There is no meaning in life, no purpose, no joy, no peace. This is what I found inside a beautiful wrapping of sin.

That is how God found me. I met with faithful people who told me about Christ and sent me to Christian rehabilitation. All my attempts that I made before, to break with drug addiction gave me only an illusion of freedom, and again I returned to drugs. But this time things changed.

The Rehab centre was my happiest time in life. God began to rebuild my shattered life. I saw that there was a completely different life, where people are really happy and can enjoy life without drugs and alcohol. At the rehab centre I saw genuine love and a sincere desire of people to help me. I made new friends. And most importantly, I met Christ. This encounter changed everything in my life. That for which I lived and what I wanted before, had lost all its value. God has given me new goals, new desires, new feelings. This is the second birth! I enthusiastically read the Bible, although I did not like to read. Prayer became a necessary part of life. I'm really a happy person because of His grace and love for me. He gave me a big family - the church. And he gave me a beloved and loving wife and child. God restored my destroyed health. I am truly grateful to God for everything!

Now my whole life and my time belongs to God. I decided to devote my life to the same people like me. After rehabilitation, I realized that my calling is to serve the people who are addicted. We started one rehab centre, then another. The ministry grew. For five years I was the head of the rehabilitation ministry at Kiev which included six rehab centers. Through this ministry a lot of people came to God and what is especially valuable to me is that some of them were my friends, with whom I grew up.

In 2013, my wife and I moved to Rivne to help start a new church.

Events in Ukraine have opened new opportunities for spreading the Gospel. Since 2014 I go to the war zone and serve as a military chaplain. But my heart still burns with the desire to serve dependent people, and God always sends these people my way. Our family and friends prayed to God and He has given the opportunity to open a rehab center for men in the Rivne region.



We ask you to support us in prayer. Pray for:

- the ministry team;*
- the people that God will lead to rehabilitation;*
- finances for ministry.*

Valera and Mitch Pierce

We are in need of prayer support and believe that God has called us and leads us in the service of addicted people. Pedchenko Valera and Natasha”



Sasha, the man who is a mentor for rehabs, and Misha



Misha and other guys from the rehab center

*We are so thankful for everyone who supports us! May God shows His glory in your lives!
In Christ, Lena and Misha Petrochenko*