



Baptist church

FIMIAMIAM

life full of purpose

THE MAIN THING IS NOT TO KEEP SILENT AND FAIL TO ACT

*“ In the same way, let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your works
and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:16

Imagine that you bought a computer but the program only that works is Microsoft Word. Or you grow potatoes but only use them to make mashed potatoes. Or you have a car but can't drive it. Occasionally you go to the car and just turn the wheel and wipe off the dust... somewhat.

The examples described above ironically illustrate that we can have all the necessary resources and not use them valuably, thereby inconveniencing only ourselves. This comparison isn't accidental - this situation often happens in churches.

Recently Fimiam Church conducted a survey in our area. One of the questions was, «In your opinion, what could local churches do for the people of our city?» The answers were all similar. Most people said, “The church is by itself. Yet we are supposed to help the church.” Unfortunately, our society is inclined to such beliefs.

Then why friends did God create the church? And can it affect people by helping them?

Probably no one would deny the fact that society is progressively declining each year. Charity and kindness are not the standards of life, but are isolated cases.

The vast majority of human hearts are insensible to all but self and personal well-being. It is a sad fact.

However, simultaneously there is another fact that we Christians can use to our benefit. These same people can see and hear. They are sensitive to the perception of information. So the church has a great opportunity to call, to teach, to help, and to convince. Just do not be silent! God does not give us the right to remain silent!

God gives us many ways in which we can influence people. This might be done by hosting evangelistic camps, providing shelter to homeless people, teaching Christian seminars, giving practical aid to the needy or even doing all of those things. Each church chooses individually. The main thing is to do something. Who, if not Christians guided by the Word of God, can best introduce people to the basics of morality and spirituality? After all, we have the Teacher who never makes a mistake and will work with us.

The main thing that everyone should understand is that this task is not only for pastors or leaders of the church. Christ called each of us to good deeds that glorify our heavenly Father.

Probably every believer who reads the Bible knows the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). The Lord taught us to care for our neighbors and love them regardless of their gratitude or their absence. So who is our neighbor? Brothers and sisters in the church or people around us?

Let's consider this and be good Samaritans.

Valeria Gerasimovich

PRAYER MINISTRY

Prayer is like the breath of the church

Worship is very important in the life of a Christian because God created man for His glory. Prayer is the foundation of church life. It is like breathing. It is above emotion, music, and even ministry.

Prayer ministry is the foundation of Fimiam Church because it is the joy of communication with the Lord. Today Fimiam Church is encouraged by the formation of prayer groups. Prayer sheets are distributed in various ministries and we organize evenings of prayer and regular fasting. There is a general prayer meetings and a church staff prayer meetings.

Prayer is a part of my life

I was a Christian when I studied at school, but I always lacked something. I studied with several other people from our church, but unfortunately we did not have pure and simple communication. I understood that something had to change. But I did not know what that was exactly...

Then one sister suggested that it would be a good idea to organize a prayer group at my school. At first, I rejected that offer and thought it was not the right time. But God worked on my heart and after some time I understood that this was indeed what should happen! It was Saturday, but I did not wait until Monday. I brought this suggestion up with my classmates. After some time we began to gather for a morning prayer. We gathered in the school hallways because God did not have a special place for it.

The school was filled with our prayers every day before classes from Monday to Saturday. My heart rejoiced when I saw that people gave up their time, sleep and even health to come to pray. Our group consisted of eight people. We prayed not only for our personal issues, but also for the needs of other students, our teachers, our principal and church ministries. I rejoiced and praised God when phone calls came from people asking us to pray for them.

And we prayed...

God said to me after a while, «Nastya, it is time to go to the king (the school principal) and talk about prayer ministry in his school!» I, like Moses, refused and said, «Not me!? But the Lord insisted and constantly reminded me about it. I realized that I should be an instrument in God's hands and I surrendered. It was not easy and it seemed impossible. But all things are possible with God! It was time to talk with the «king,» so with great emotion, trembling and prayer, I went...and I was very impressed by this conversation. The principal made one statement which nearly made me cry. He said, «Nastia, I am ready in any way to keep your prayer group and will do everything possible to make sure it does not decline!» Is it possible that he could say that??? I believe that God was preparing our principal for this conversation, because «... he is Lord of lords and King of kings» (Revelation 17:14).

The school year came to an end, I finished eleventh grade, and one question arose - would this continue next year? I prayed throughout the summer for a person who would claim responsibility for it. And the Lord showed me again that His work is not useless and cannot just disappear. To my surprise, God moved the heart of a person from whom I never expected this and she continued the prayer ministry at the school.

Now I understand why God gave us the prayer ministry at school. There are at the least 3 reasons:

1. Community: I said earlier that I was not the only believer at school. There were other believers but we did not have strong relationships. By praying together for different needs and sharing our blessings, we developed friendships and became one big family.

2. Evangelism: Many students and teachers saw that we were praying and sometimes they could even hear our prayers. In such a way, we witnessed to them about Jesus.

3. Self-discipline: This ministry taught us that we must learn to communication with God from early morning

Prayer was just a ministry for me at that time, but now it is part of my life.

I cannot start my day without it. God showed me the great value of prayer. It is a direct connection line with God!

Nastya Zhovkla



Prayer of three

We find many passages about prayer in the Holy Bible: «Pray without ceasing...», «Thank God...», «Identify your request in prayer...» So with two other sisters, we decided to unite in prayer to support one another and those who need it. Prayer is a great power, so we bring to God the needs of our churches and ourselves, the needs of people who have not accepted Jesus as their personal Savior, and the needs of brothers and sisters who need prayer support. We gather together every Saturday to talk to God. We are very glad to see the answers to the requests and to experience the blessings of God. Even when the Lord answers «no», we thank Him and understand that we are safe when we are in the center of God's will.

Yana Tsukaliuk



Prayer in the university

Our prayer group formed two years ago when several students were not prepared for their classes and decided to pray that they would not be asked about the material. And it worked! The lecturer did not notice that some students were unprepared. It was a real miracle, because in our university we study in groups of 10-14 students and during the 1 hour and 20 minute lecture the professor may call on each student several times. This situation encouraged us to pray every day and ask God to help us with our studies and to thank Him for blessings.

As you can see, it all started for our own benefit. Soon our prayer group consisted of six girls and only one was a church member. The others were believers but not church members. But God started His work in our hearts. Once someone brought a disc with sermons and on that disc was a sermon about prayer. When I was listening to that sermon it seemed to me that God cried out to me because every word was about me. I did not sleep whole the night - I was very ashamed! I wanted to hide from God because I understood that I had been exploiting Him by asking something and not even thanking Him for it. When everyone listened to this sermon, we decided to be incense for our Savior in our university. We began to wake each other for morning Bible reading and prayer. Also, we gathered together after classes and shared our blessings and God's presence in our lives.

Now our prayer group consists of twelve girls - eight girls are already members of churches and two girls who have not found churches yet are studying in our ?Antioch? bible school and visit home groups and youth meetings at ?51st Parallel.?

We thank God that He gives us a chance to mend our ways, blesses us in trials, hears us everywhere and anytime, answers our prayers, uses His children in the lives of people who have not thought of Him yet and loves us with His perfect and holy love!

Alina Rozhniuk

SPIRITUAL PROJECT 2010-2011

LIVE BY THE WILL OF GOD

Have you ever asked yourself the question, "What do I consider to be the biggest loss in my life?" Think. Of course the answers will be different. What about the time spent in vain, not used for God's purposes? There is nothing more precious than time. We have to learn how to manage our time.

In November of 2010, Fimiam Church began the project "Live by the Will of God." The project aims to foster the spiritual growth of the church as a whole and as individual members.

The project foresees:

- **Regularly maintaining** a journal which is designed specifically for members of the church. In the journal there is a place assigned to record thoughts that are given by the Lord when studying the scripture and throughout the day. Also on each page there is a place for a business blog where one can write personal notes and daily plans. We also suggest that people use the journal during home groups and Sunday services to take notes and record conclusions.

- **Reading the Bible according to a schedule.** A one-year Bible reading calendar was provided in which the church can learn all the events described in the Word of God in chronological order. The journal provides the chapters to read each day.

- **Thematic preaching.** Weekly themes for church services, home groups, meetings for children and teen ministries, and youth club are provided in the journal.

- **Fasting and prayer.** In the journal, there is an assigned page to record personal prayer needs and prayers that have been answered. Also there is a given direction of prayer for the church which changes for each day of the week. For example, every Sunday we pray for services, every Monday we pray for Ukraine and our government, etc. Every other Wednesday is fasting and prayer. Fasting is announced during Sunday worship.

- **Acquaintance.** On almost every page of the journal there are names and photos of church members who have birthdays. This is to help us get to know all members of our church and, most importantly, to remind us to pray for them.

Thanks to this project, "Live by the Will of God," every church member can become more responsible in the scope of personal leadership: planning our day, paying more attention to personal communication with God, and serving our own needs. Apart from that, our spiritual life will be rich, interesting and consistent.

We further wish to introduce similar projects that would enhance the unity and spiritual growth of the church.

Valeria Gerasimovich

"... As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God."

1 Peter 4:2

"Thanks to the journal I began to study the events of the Bible in chronological order. Earlier I did not pay attention to this. Besides that, the journal encourages me each day to read God's Word and to write down thoughts that the Lord gives me. I send sincere wishes to all: read the Bible, write in your journal and look for the kingdom of God."

Natalia Savchuk



"Bible journal encourages me to read my Bible systematically - I read the Word of God every day. When I read Bible, keeping in mind that the whole church reads the same portion of Scripture, I feel unique unity with my church family."

Sergiy Shurma

"Everyone who uses the journal has a great opportunity to be in unity with the church through consistent study of the Word of God. Usually people have questions about what they read and these questions can be discussed in home groups and Bible study courses which take place through the church. Since the whole church is reading the same passages, everyone will know what you mean. I would really like this every year."

Yura Mikhalchuk



"The journal helps me organize and discipline my life and helps me give attention to my family's personal and spiritual needs. Besides that it saves space in your bag or purse. There is no need to carry notebooks, diaries and prayer sheets."

Yura Karplyuk



"Since I now read the Bible in chronological order, I began to study the Old Testament more thoroughly. I find it very interesting. Besides that, the journal gives me discipline. I started to memorize more verses from Scripture and I try to apply them in my life."

Svetlana Barabosko



"Since I am now in the rehabilitation center, I did not have the money to buy the journal. So when they brought it to us as a gift, it was really a great blessing. In fact, to all the girls the journal is a very useful thing. I really like that it has everyone's birthday in it. The other girls at the center and I pray for these people every day and even buy calendars for them. It is also really good that each member's phone number is there. If someone is in need, people can call and encourage them."

Natalia Scooby



SERVING ALCOHOL AND DRUG ADDICTS



In 2000, Fimiam Church began serving men with drug and alcohol addictions by opening a rehabilitation center called "Transformation." Two years later, a women's center was also opened. In all my years of work, about 30 women and 150 men have successfully completed rehabilitation and are members of our church or other evangelical churches. People who were formerly addicts are now members of churches and employed at hospitals for drug addicts and prisons where they preach the gospel and testify of Christ. Many men and women come to the rehabilitation centers after receiving treatment in the hospitals for drug addicts or after being in prison. They hear about liberation and see people who were formerly addicted to drugs.

Since 2007, Fimiam Church works with people who are HIV positive. They are given physical materials, spiritual support, and also financial assistance for testing and treatment related to HIV infection.

Of course, this work is not easy. Serving people with addictions in the rehabilitation center is a means to be able to teach them to live in a new, Christ-like way. It requires a special approach to each person. Various difficult situations happen often: problems with law enforcement, conflicts in relationships, difficulty finding lodging, lack of space for new people in the rehabilitation centers, and financial challenges. However, the leaders of the rehabilitation centers sincerely believe that they do this for the Lord and that He will lead them through all the tests of life.



DO NOT BE AFRAID TO BE DIFFERENT...

Vitaliy: I was afraid to be addicted to drugs and believed that the only way I would stop using drugs was to move from the town where most of my friends were drug addicts. I moved to the Tambov region of Russia where I met Marina. She came with her boyfriend to earn money for their wedding. But when we met, we realized that we were made for each other. We returned to Molodogvardiysk and started thinking about getting married. I immediately told Marina that I have a drug problem. But this wasn't a barrier for her. After some time she had the desire to try drugs. I tried to refuse her and to convince her that it was dangerous. But she told me that she would only do it once. That's what everyone says. Later, we got married and drugs were another member of our family.

Marina: After injecting drugs for a while I understood that I was addicted. I tried to quit so I decided to receive treatment in the hospital for drug addicts. It helped, but not for long. We thought maybe having a child would change everything and after a while I became pregnant. During my pregnancy I didn't use drugs because I was afraid

to harm the baby. When Julia was born we celebrated with a dose. Since I didn't have a job, we needed money so we sold drugs. This lasted for 4 years and I don't know now long it would have continued if I wasn't arrested...

Vitaliy: I was waiting at home for my wife to return. I started to get nervous because she was gone for a long time. When Marina came home she said she was arrested and was released under the condition that she could not leave town. This was her second arrest and I knew nothing good would come from her court trial.

Marina: I remember the day of my court trial. I went there with my husband and I was sure we would return home together. But there was a sentence, "Five years in prison!" I would not believe it! The thought flashed into my head, "I cannot go to jail, it's not for me! I love life, not games!" Until the very last minute I hoped a miracle would happen and they would let me go. When I looked at Vitaliy, I had nothing to say and no tears in my eyes... I was silent. I was brought to the prison in Lugansk. I spent a

year in a dirty, crowded cell. I soon found out that my mother-in-law took our daughter Julia and that Vitaliy went somewhere else. I asked everyone and no one knew where he was. I thought I had lost my daughter and my husband.

Vitaliy: After Marina's arrest, I continued to inject drugs until Christians told me about a rehabilitation center where people can become free from drugs. I thought I had nothing to lose so why not try and I went to Lutsk for rehabilitation. To be honest, I was skeptical. But when I came, I saw people I knew from my town. They were full of joy and a desire to live. I thought, "If their lives can change, why can't the same happen to me?" After two months in rehabilitation I repented. Clearly aware of God's work in my life and His strength to free me from addiction, I decided to tell my wife about it and I wrote her a letter.

Marina: My mother was the only person who came to visit me. But I was only waiting for Vitaliy. One day my mother brought me a letter in which he wrote about how life is good with God and how the Lord

can change our lives. I remember getting angry. I started crying and tore up the letter. I thought, "He feels good there and here I eat live bugs!" For a whole year I didn't see grass or trees. I was pale and weighed only 101 pounds. I was mad at the whole world. And here someone was trying to tell me about God! Then I was transferred to a very old prison where they would cut prisoners' hair and beat them for no reason. And there was a limit on water – we were given one liter per day to use as we chose for drinking or washing. We bought water from each other. When it rained it was like a holiday for us. We would lay out bowls and gather water and use it to wash our clothes. I cannot describe with words what I had to survive there. After a while, Vitaliy came to visit with my daughter. That's when I first saw that Vitaliy had God in him. I watched him closely to see how he acted. He didn't smoke, he didn't curse, he was polite and understanding. He also told me that he was reading the Bible.

Vitaliy: I was looking forward to see my wife, which would require three days of travel, but I didn't think that seeing her would be a challenge for me. I brought her some products and when they were checking my bag they took the bottle of juice and put it to the side. The next day officers came into the room and accused me of putting drugs into the juice. I told them I don't do things like that, but they did not believe me and I was arrested. I remember them telling me to let my daughter drink the juice if there were really no drugs

in it. However I was afraid and thought, "Who knows what they could have put in there?"

Marina: The officers came to me with a proposal: "If the juice is clean, then let your daughter drink from it." I agreed, knowing my husband had a new lifestyle. I firmly believed the juice was clean. After 10 days of examination, the results came back - the juice had no drugs in it. Vitaliy was released. Now I understand that God tested his faith. After this I began to pray and attend Christian meetings.

Vitaliy: I continued to pray for Marina and asked the Lord to work in her life.

Marina: I had water, cigarettes, tea, and candy. According to the secular view, I had everything for a happy life in a prison. But something inside of me told me that this wasn't the life for me...that I need a quite different one. Maybe that's why everyone was so shocked when they found out that I want to be baptized. I remember the day of my baptism. Everyone was laughing at me and those who I thought were my friends were silent. Imprisonment requires physical labor. At the time, I worked in the kitchen as a cook. I had everything – butter, cheese, sour cream, cookies. And I felt that I was higher than the others. My heart was filled with supremacy and pride. But the Holy Spirit did not give me peace! One day I asked God, "Lord, what is it that You want me to do?" And God answered me through the Scripture. I read about how Jesus washed His disciples'

feet. I understood that I must lower myself to give God room to grow in me. I went to the kitchen sink, the dirtiest place, and started to work. There were leftovers, dirty dishes, heavy bowls with water that need to be carried... I did not care. However the other girls were interested to find out what controls me. So even though I was in prison I had the chance to tell people about God.

Vitaliy: I know there is nothing impossible for God. Knowing that my wife should serve a term of more than one year, I began to pray for her early release, of course if it was God's will. Having consulted our pastors and other people, we wrote a request to the president for her pardon.

Marina: The head officer at the prison called me out and said that the response to the pardon request was positive. I had two hours to get my stuff ready and leave. I cannot even describe the emotions that filled my heart! I just screamed, "This is God! How can you not see His greatness and mercy?" My husband, myself, and our daughter Julia we are united for New Years. Later I went to the rehabilitation center in Lutsk. We took our daughter and now stay here to live, thanks to the Lord. My husband and I are members of Fimiam Church. God miraculously changed my life. For me, true happiness is a family standing on their knees in prayer and knowing that we are chosen and saved by God.

Vitaliy and Marina Kotlyarov



Fear of something new often limits our possibilities and paralyzes our actions so that we are not open to the change which our hearts so badly need! Very often we are afraid to take the first step to go against the generally secular norms. We are afraid "to become believers" because it is very frightening for us to be different...

Fortunately, the story of this family has developed differently.

From the mouths of average people in our city you can often hear the words, "Fimiam is a church for drug addicts and alcoholics." And thank God! Is it not God's blessing when people with crippled lives, with broken lives and broken families, people who have no hope for a promising future, who were burying themselves alive, people that our "humane" society has simply not accepted...when people are transformed?! God changes thinking, corrects priorities, creates a new set of values and, consequently, heals hearts and restores lives. The main and the only condition is to believe that only Jesus Christ can do these incredible things. You just cannot stay indifferent when you see this awesome work of God!

Valeria Gerasimovich



YOUTH MINISTRY

Attention! It is fashionable! Winter - Summer 2010-2011

Youth ministry in Fimiam Church has existed as long as the church itself, as the church was formed on the basis of the youth club. This ministry is called "51 Parallel." Probably the question arises, "Why such a strange name?" It's very simple. Lutsk, the city where we live, is located exactly in this geographical latitude - the 51st parallel. And so, in order to reach the young people of our city (our parallel), the Word of God in Christ is the aim of this ministry.

Even when it is winter outdoors, and maybe it is snowing right now, we will think of summer...

On the beach of the beautiful lake which is near our city, starting in the month of June and throughout summer, you can see a small camp town located on the lawn in the middle of the forest. Echoes can be heard here from early morning until late at night. A delicious scent of food cooking reaches out to you from the largest tent which holds the kitchen. You can listen to good music. Someone is floating a boat, someone is fishing, guys are playing volleyball, girls are making something interesting with stones and beads...did you guess? Yes, I want to tell you about summer youth camps.

Camp time is a truly blessed time for Fimiam Church. The whole church comes alive: we prepare menus, programs, and games; take inventory; design courses; determine transportation; find territory...and all of this is for the one, most important mission - to gather young people for God's Kingdom. We invite boys and girls on the streets, in schools after prevention lessons, in universities, and after we play soccer with them in a Christian youth club. Youth who are believers invite their unsaved friends.

Each summer about 50 young people have the opportunity to hear the Gospel and make the most important decision of their life because of the camps.

You might ask, "Why camps?" There are substantial and compelling reasons:

- If the unbeliever came to worship services at the church regularly during the year, it would be 96 hours per year (48 weeks x 2 hours = 96 hours per year). Youth camp gathers together for 112 hours in the Christian community in one week.

- Camps build friendships and close relationships with youth through a family atmosphere of simplicity, love and acceptance.

- Camps are excellent opportunities for unbelievers to see the practical Christian life in various circumstances.

- When friendships are built with youth, their hearts are open to accept the gospel and repent.

- There are opportunities to continue in the lives of youth after camp through our youth club and home groups.

- Personally, camps involve a practical and effective ministry and this ignites a personal testimony. When I see a young life which is changing every day, and faith born alive in their hearts, my heart fills with joy.

The camp program is prepared in advance and is very interesting and rich. We try to give due consideration to active physical recreation - the morning begins

with warm-up exercises, we have many sports games, and we use the lake with its warm water during the day. The spiritual part deserves no less attention. Twice a day we gather to reflect on themes from the Word of God applied to our current lives, and each time we invite interesting guests to share their views of Scripture. Evenings are for communication, songs and competitions around the fire.

We put the greatest emphasis on personal relationships, because young people can forget the sermon in a week and the names of camp friends in six months, but the friendly atmosphere they will never forget! Until the end of their lives they will remember that at camp they were well accepted. We cannot compete with the world in regard to shows, concerts, etc, but we have something much stronger...we have the love of Christ and His acceptance of everyone. Because this other people will know that we are the disciples of Jesus and this is a great testimony.

With God's blessing, our church is growing annually as 5-10 young people come to Christ is through youth camps. By the way, I myself am partly the fruit of the camp ministry. After the youth camp, I made a firm and final decision to be a disciple of Christ and follow Him.

Today, the culture of our youth is changing very fast with one change after another. Musical tastes are changing, fashion, hairstyles... The methods which our church uses today to reach young people may lose their relevance in several years. But the main thing, which is our attitude to the basics of the Bible and our orders and objectives, will not change. Therefore, love youth! Then select the programs and methods to help you in your area and culture of the church to build close relationships and give youth that which is most valuable - the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Youth pastor
Olexander Tkachuk**

Fimiam Church has held summer camps, which last 3-7 days, for 13 years. These camps were and remain evangelistic. In addition to youth camp, we hold camps for children and adults with disabilities, families, men, and teens. Many people have accepted the Gospel and trusted their life to Jesus in each camp and this is the greatest blessing to the ministers of the church!



TEEN MINISTRY

Adolescence is a very difficult period in the life of every person. Childhood ends and everything that seemed so simple and clear becomes complicated for one reason or another. Adolescents themselves and their relatives cannot understand that very often. Personally, I accepted Christ at that age and my friends were examples for me because they had decided to dedicate their lives to God earlier. I am very grateful to God that He found me at the age of 13 and kept me from everything offered in the world. It often happens that churches have special ministries for children, but teens are left without attention. And it is so important that someone pay attention to them and have interaction with them at this age. If the church forgets about these younger boys and

girls, they will seek support elsewhere, where they are usually offered nothing good either for their life on earth or for eternity. Therefore, our church prayed a lot about teen ministry and God gave us the answer. We found a responsible person and formed a team of leaders. And someone found a program through which teens of our area have been effectively reached for over 3 years already. We managed to build an effective bridge between children's and youth ministry called «The Rock.»

Oksana Myronyuk

"The Rock" teen club is very important to me. Basically, I've learned about Jesus Christ and His sacrifice and have grown spiritually. I really appreciate the leaders. I always feel their support, love, kindness, and sincerity. I have been attending the youth club for a long time now, but I still cannot forget about "The Rock" meetings. I can say that the grain which is sown by our leaders grows.
Olya Lutsyuk

The leaders of teen ministry helped me get to know Jesus Christ. Seeing love in their eyes, I wanted to change. I was able to find true friends and become a friend for someone else. This ministry has made a big impact in my life because now I am a child of God and have a living relationship with God.
Inna Shumyuk



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children's ministry at Fimiam Church started more than 15 years ago with a small number of children in Sunday school. We can see God's blessings in the way that the ministry continues and grows because Christ Himself said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16). Currently, children's club "Smile" is active at our church and is open

for girls and boys six to eleven years of age. "Smile" club is a lot of fun and is very interesting! The leaders try to create a kind atmosphere of fellowship during club meetings and seek to become real friends with the children! During Bible lessons, teachers use illustrations and visual materials to tell stories from Scripture and explain how to practically apply Biblical truths.

The teachers in children's club dream to see every child getting to know the One about Whom they hear at the lessons, the One about Whom they sing songs - the Creator of all the universe. How pleasant it is to see the fruit of your ministry in the lives of those young people who used to attend Sunday school and now are committed to serving God with their gifts and talents!



"Fimiam Church used to rent a room in the hostel where they would hold Sunday services and Sunday school classes. I live in this hostel. One time after going for a walk with my friends, I didn't have anything to do and I saw other children going somewhere. I followed the children and found myself in a Sunday school that I started to attend. It was very interesting and I regularly attended Sunday school for a couple of years. But suddenly my best friend made me choose between her and Sunday school. Of course, I chose my friend and I went away from church. But there was a time when our friendship ended and I was left alone and I started to attend Fimiam Church again. At that time, I was invited to attend "The Rock," a club for teens, and God started to work in my heart. I repented at the camp for teens in 2009. Now I help with the teen ministry so that they, just as I did, can learn about Christ and give Him their lives!

Inna Shumyk



I found a REAL Friend!



"Childhood - it's the time of life when every child wants to have real friends. I never had any. When I was a little child my mom and dad used to spend the majority of

their time working - I was left at home by myself. This loneliness was very hard for me. I really wanted to have at least one real friend who could listen to me, tell me what to do, help me, and protect me in certain situations. But instead I only had discouragement and despair in my

heart. I could never believe that there would be a time when I would find not an earthly friend, but a HEAVENLY One... My neighbor often invited me to the Sunday school at Fimiam Church that she attended, but I always found many reasons to refuse. One time I agreed to go. When we came there, I was very surprised because everything was different from the Orthodox church that I used to attend. It was just a big room in the hostel with no candles or icons. At first I couldn't understand what was happening around me because everyone was freely talking and laughing with each other. I realized that I had never had sincere fellowship with anyone. With time I understood that these people worship and love God with all their hearts. Children were never bored during the

Sunday school lessons. They were full of joy as they played interesting games, read the Bible, learned Bible stories, worshiped God, sang, had fellowship, and learned to pray. I saw changes in my peers lives and understood that this is the place that I can find a real Friend - Jesus Christ - Who knows all my heart, my pains and worries and Who can listen and comfort. Since that time I have decided to give my life to God because with Him my life gained meaning!

When I started to attend Sunday school at Fimiam Church, my mom was not very happy about it. But as she attended the church over time, she also accepted Christ as her Lord and she lives with Him now and I am very grateful to God!"

Oksana Vehera

FAMILY MINISTRY



«Star» Little school

«Star» Little school, which aims to prepare preschoolers for school by using Christian principles in the schooling program, is functioning at Fimiam Church. Children study mathematics, reading, writing, English, logic, crafts and, most importantly, Bible studies in the classes of Christian ethics. They learn how to pray before classes and before meals. During the first year of Little school we had only one class, but currently we have four classes with forty-eight preschoolers. It is important

that the teachers work not only with the preschoolers but also with their parents. The majority of children do not visit our church and often are from poor and broken families. Our teachers visit «Star» preschoolers at home and parents' meetings are conducted several times a year. During these meetings, teachers always share a Bible story. «Star» school also likes to celebrate holidays, including First Bell (for the first class of the year), Christmas, and family holiday, which is celebrated out-

doors in nature. The Last Bell holiday is celebrated during a church service in which children and their parents participate. Parents are invited to family club, which takes place every month, and children are invited to our children's club, «Smile.» Some parents recently began to visit our church and their children became members of Sunday school classes. We are witnesses of what God is doing in their lives, and we especially enjoy being part of God's work among them!



I'm serving children just the way I was served before

Once I saw my classmate reading a Bible and I was curious what it was. My classmate invited me to attend Sunday school at Fimiam Church with him so that I could learn more about this book. Of course, I liked it very much and started to attend every week, almost never skipping. Even when I was sick and had to skip I still memorized Bible verses at home. I attended Sunday school for a couple of years until I was 12 years old. Fimiam Church did not have a club for teens and I stopped attending church. But since I live in the same region as Fimiam Church, I often met people from the church who invited me over and over again to attend Sunday services. In my memories, I often had pictures of the times when I used to attend Sunday school. I knew many truths from the Scriptures. In particular I knew that I could have salvation freely, not earning it by doing good works. But I didn't do anything to get closer to God. It was very hard for me to communicate with people at church whom I knew and who remembered me. I took the step to reconcile with my Creator at the youth camp in 2007...

When the time came for me to serve at church, I chose to serve children without a doubt. It had been my dream since the time I started to attend Sunday school. Now this dream came true and I am really grateful to God! Now I am very happy that I can serve the Lord, sharing about Him with children so that when they grow up they can choose a life that glorifies their Creator!

Nastya Zhovkva



DISABILITY MINISTRY

Look around among millions of indifferent people there are some who really need our attention and support. They can not live without our help! They are near at hand. Being limited in their physical abilities does not mean that they are limited in their emotions, desires and feelings. Life continues?



One of the largest ministries of Fimiam Church is the ministry to people with disabilities. A team of ministers and volunteers try to bring them the Good News about Christ and help them in physical rehabilitation.

"We, the disability team and people with disabilities, recently completed the Bible study "Experiencing God." The depth of God's Word was opened before us, we got to know Him better, we were strengthened in faith and grew in love to Him, and we started to realize what He is doing around us in the church and in the world and how we can join Him in His work.

Noone has seen God, but everyone can see His body – His church (1 Corinthians 12:27). Every person who does not



personally know Christ and His life and resurrection is spiritually dead. Those who are born again understand their inability to live without God. When we live in His body, we see our spiritual disability. But when the Head of the Body, Christ, leads us, the world sees His mighty deeds in our actions. We do God's work when we live not for ourselves but for others. God teaches us to

show love with our deeds and not just our words.

Before I came to Christ, the ministry for people with drug and alcohol addictions was a great proof of God's work through Fimiam Church. I realized that neither will power nor hard efforts could change the lives of addicts. I had never before heard



of "former drug addicts." The ministry that most powerfully and practically touched my life is the disability ministry. During several years I have witnessed the daily devotion of the disability team which has encouraged me to devote my whole life to God. Ministers give all their hearts to people such as me who suffer different physical disabilities and this changes my heart and I begin to see how great God is! This fills my heart with worship.

Today, when I think of the influence of Fimiam Church on my life, I compare it with the influence of medicine on my body. Some medicine kills germs, some relieves pain, and some helps to overcome disease. In the same way, God heals my soul through His church. My heart used to be full of wounds caused by my sins. In Fi-



miam Church, God gave me a family where we all are united in His love and covenant relationship. It is true not only in my life, but in the lives of others who, in spite of their disability, received the grace of God, salvation, purification, freedom from bondage, eternal life and resurrection in Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Tetyana Panasyuk

"My life was changed in this church and I became part of a family. They support me, pray for me and help in various situations. Christians showed me a new life and shared their hope. I am thankful that I can come to church services and home groups and worship God together with my brothers and sisters."



Kolya Dyrda



"Church changed my life completely. Brothers and sisters reached their hand of help in every situation I needed at any time there was a need. They helped me financially and provided me with underpads and diapers. They support me

with prayers. I receive help in every area of my life. I am glad and thank God for Fimiam Church, where God found me. I find great support in fellowship, Bible study groups, and home groups. I praise God for this and want to share with everyone what He has done for me."

Vira Matyuk

"God brought me back to life. I came to God through the disability ministry. I found support in the physical rehabilitation center - TRUE friends who can help 24/7. The rehabilitation center became my home, my church, my family."



Artem Bondar



"I came to God through the church. I have constant communication with Christians. God's love and care for me is shown through the church. The disability ministry is a huge blessing to me because I can grow spiritually and be strengthened physically. Fimiam Church is live and active. It encourages me to serve others."

Kolya Prokopchuk

Secondary school «Treasure of Wisdom»

After watching what is happening in our public schools, hearing stories of our own children and children from other families, and attending parent meetings, I began to realize that our city needs a Christian school that would help parents in educating their children in the Christian spirit. I understand that it is not an easy endeavor to start, but after praying and taking specific steps in the direction of realizing this idea, I believe that it is possible.

Statistics show that only 1% of all schools in Ukraine are private, because schooling is free for every child in our country. In our city of more than 200,000 citizens, there is not a single private school. We do not just want to be the first to organize a private school in Lutsk. We have other reasons:

First reason – Personal motive. Even though our country considers itself to be Christian, our school programs are atheistic. Children are taught things that we Christian parents are against. For example, Bible stories are called myths in textbooks. They are explained in the way that authors have understood them, but they are often very distorted. And teachers teach in this way. Teachers do not show good examples to students with their lives. The principal of the school can smoke with other teachers near the school while students stand nearby and do the same. What kind of an example is this?

Second reason – Desire to show our society that churches can bring up the next generation of people. The church can take over the realm of education. The church is not just about church life. It impacts the life of society and it can raise up people with new values, vision and mentality.

Third reason – Desire to continue what we have started in the aspect of education. «Star» little school functions in Fimiam Church and parents have a desire to give their children further education with the same Christian values.

How do we see our school? The school will be situated in our church facility, so all utility expenses will be paid by the church. Parents

would surely cover some expenses for the schooling of their children in order to pay for teachers salaries and some materials, but I think we also need some help from sponsors. We will have a dining hall, a gym, and a sports playground outside the church.

«Treasure of Wisdom» is a school with in-depth study of foreign languages, particularly English. A special focus will be placed on Christian ethics. Every class will have no more than fifteen children. First we will start with one or two primary classes, with the plan to grow each year.

«Treasure of Wisdom» will be a unique educational establishment. It will have a flexible and individual system of education for children with special needs on the basis of secondary education. Our desire is to have children with disabilities study at our school and feel valuable by providing them with all of the necessary equipment for their schooling, including school materials, an elevator, and accessible toilets. It does not mean that our school will be a specialized school, but we have the desire to have at least one child with special needs in each class.

At the moment, we have been given permission for such a school by the Educational Department of Lutsk. The principal of the school has been chosen and the statute of the school is confirmed. The next step is getting a license, which will give us the right to start the school. In order to receive this license we have an urgent issue - to finish construction of the church and have school classrooms ready for the educational year along with all of the necessary equipment (classroom furniture, textbooks and other materials).

Maybe many people do not believe to see that his project will be realized because it is a large and expensive field of work, but we are not afraid and we go forward. We believe that this year we will start «Treasure of Wisdom» school at the beginning of the educational year.

We dearly ask you, precious readers, to support us with your prayers, so that we can see the hand of God and His guidance in the schooling process.

Pavlo Myronyuk, pastor of Fimiam Church

CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH

HOW WAS IT IN THE BEGINNING?

The history of Fimiam Church begins in 1995. In 1999, the church leadership team began looking for a permanent place to conduct church services. The location for church services changed eight times, including a hostel, educational establishments and many other locations. In 2004, Fimiam Church received around 2.5 acres of land.



Church service at hostel

FIRST STEP



Construction of a temporary building

In 2005, the construction of a temporary building began because it became necessary for church life. The offices were built with the help of our own resources along with the resources of our brothers and sisters abroad. But there were not enough finances to build a sanctuary for church services. Nevertheless, God takes care of His children in marvelous ways. Friends from abroad offered the necessary sum of money and the sanctuary was built. It strengthened the church in the understanding of God's will regarding construction of our own church.



NEXT STEPS OF FAITH

The church sold two vans in order to lay the foundation. It was a courageous step of faith. Members of the church began to serve with their personal vehicles.



Foundation pit

Currently we witness God's goodness in the way that God not only returned the vans, but also tripled the number of church vehicles. Plus the construction continues.



Laying the foundation

"Covenant" camp for adults, 2010



CONSTRUCTION OF A STOREHOUSE

With the help of friends abroad, the construction of a storehouse for the disability ministry took place on the church property. This building serves the needs of people with disabilities in our city. There is also a wheelchair repair shop and storage of church and disability ministry appliances in this building.



WHAT IS HAPPENING TODAY

At the moment we have a central heating system in the whole church, inner jobs are being conducted in order to complete the construction, and systems for electricity and air conditioning are in the process of installation. Supply lines are connected and sanitary engineering is connected. The facade, exterior work, and landscaping are planned to be completed in the spring.

God has His own plans and people to fulfill His will. During such work as construction of walls, building of storehouses, and installation of the roof and windows, many Christians at Fimiam Church showed their love by physically working at the construction site. Brothers came and helped construction workers in any way they could. Our church members took a step of faith and agreed to offer their month salary in order to gather the necessary sum of money for purchasing construction materials for the inner work of the sanctuary. Church members continue taking part in financial support for the construction of the church sanctuary.



OUR VISION

Currently we make all effort to finish the sanctuary in order to be able to conduct Sunday church services in the new building. We want our church to be open for the people of our district and our whole city. That is why, in addition to everything that we do in our church, we plan to have a Christian kindergarten, a family center, and a secondary school. Near the temporary church building, we are

also constructing a children's playground and a sports playground, because we have the desire to develop a sports ministry for youth. Ministers try to do their best in order to achieve the main goal, which is reaching the hearts of people for Christ. We believe that God will provide and will complete this process since it is all for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Valeria Gerasimovich



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