

Praying Through the Month

*Mark and Donna McDonnel
Kiev, Ukraine (on home assignment in Katy, Texas)
for April 2008*

UPDATE

Thank you so much for praying, dear friends!

As each day speeds by now and as we often look to each other and ask 'What day is it today?', we are thankful that this fullness of life means incredible time spent with God's people. How blessed we are!

Three times now we've had the privilege to be part of a supporting church's missions conference. How amazing! Over the course of several days we have the blessing of talking to and interacting with so many people who are desiring to be part of and grow in what God is doing "across the street and around the world" – to borrow our Dallas church's theme – wow!

Mark and I have been thankful for a couple of deeper conversations with my father this past month. We were able to speak on a more personal level for the first time. Thank you for continuing to persevere with us in prayer.

As the school year winds down (read that 'lots of activities!'), we are so thankful for your prayers for our children. It has been a great year and they have learned so much.

Oksana and Yulia both had healthy baby girls – thank you for praying! And more exciting news: we've reached more than 90% of our support. With the dollar weakening each week and news of the U.S. economy becoming uncertain, we've reminded ourselves time and again that the Lord would provide for the work he's called us to. Thank you for your faithfulness in praying for this need.

Mark keeps encouraging me to put in a plug for our blog, so here's that address again:
<http://mcdonnel.wordpress.com> Hope you enjoy!

We are thankful for your prayers on our behalf. It means a lot to know you are standing with us and sharing in our ministry in this important way. We are truly blessed.

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FOR PRAYER

1. Pray for Mary as she returns to the orthodontist today. Pray for a good report and a workable long-term plan for her teeth as we return to Ukraine this summer.
2. Pray for wisdom for Ryedel, who has been pastoring a Spanish-speaking church plant in Kiev while working a full-time job. His employer is giving him, along with a promotion, an opportunity to work indefinitely in Brazil. Rita and Ryedel are praying for wisdom in this possible move.
3. Pray for Vasya as he leads the music ministry at our church in Kiev. Pray for wisdom, peace, and grace in this large responsibility. Pray also for wisdom in balancing ministry and family time.
4. Pray for wisdom as we seek to get information about and prepare Anna for applying for college this fall. There is still a lot to do. She will graduate from high school next year.
5. Pray for our teammates Eric and Beth Yodis as they work in a church plant in the city of Donetsk. Pray for open hearts as they go door to door witnessing in their neighborhood and inviting people to study the Bible. Pray also for Beth as she prepares for a new ministry using her cooking skills.
6. Pray for Mark as he preaches today at Grace Bible Church in Bellville, Texas.
7. Please continue to pray for church leaders in Ukraine to develop and communicate a vision for proper family time. It is often considered virtuous in the Ukrainian church to spend a great deal of time in ministry, to the point of having a serious imbalance with ordinary home/parenting responsibilities. It is considered normal to be away from home until after 10 p.m. every night. *Pray for men in ministry to see the need for, plan for, and make daily choices for a good balance between family time and time in ministry.*
8. Pray specifically for Alexander, Vasily, Andrei, Sasha, and Dima in light of #7. Some of these families are seriously struggling because of this imbalance.
9. Pray for Ira as she manages all that's required of her in her new job. Ira has a young son and this is a big transition for her and her family.
10. Pray for Anna to gain confidence in her driving. Pray that she can finish her driving and observation requirements before the end of this month.
11. Please continue to pray for "Katya" to sort out truth from deception as she untangles a complicated family relationship. Pray that she would know her own heart, that she would humble her heart, and that she would seek to glorify the Lord as she sorts things out.
12. Pray for our teammates Jason and Kerri Gupta. Pray for Jason as he teaches at the seminary, that he will communicate effectively and will manage all that's required of him. Pray for them both to gain confidence and fluency in Russian.
13. Pray for Donna's father's salvation. We have had some more opportunities to speak with him on a more personal level recently, but pray that we can talk specifically about his sin and need for salvation.
14. Pray for Sasha and the handicapped ministry at our church in Kiev. He says things are going well. Pray for financial support for ministries now and for camp in the summer.

15. Pray for Anatoly, the president of the seminary, that he would be able to rest in the Lord in the midst of difficult financial and political circumstances. Pray for wisdom and peace, as well as for physical health.
16. Pray for Eduard, a graduate who is now teaching at the seminary. Pray for him to continue to develop as a teacher and that he would exhibit a strong love for Christ in his teaching.
17. Pray for our planning for and the logistics of Anna staying on in the U.S. this summer to work and gain driving experience. She would return to Ukraine by herself later in the summer.
18. Pray for Vova and Lena, a graduate who is studying further in Belgium, to get the training they need, and that their desire to impact Ukraine and Belarus with the gospel will continue to grow.
19. Please continue to pray for our teammate John White as he serves at Donetsk Christian University. Pray for peace and joy as he teaches and works in the administration. Pray also for the Lord's financial provision at DCU. It has been difficult to pay salaries and utilities; the last many months have seen the school experience some real crisis situations, even with electricity and water service.
20. Pray for our meeting with a new church today. We are thankful for their willingness to talk with us about our ministry.
21. Pray for another graduate, Sasha, who is seeking his place in full-time ministry. Pray for wisdom and guidance as he seeks the Lord's will for his life.
22. Pray for Alexander for wisdom and perseverance as he pastors a growing church plant with many people being saved from difficult backgrounds. Pray also that he will be able to balance ministry and family time.
23. Pray for Lord to provide Alexander with a solid group of men who will work with him as a ministry team in this church plant.
24. Pray that we can apply for Anna's driver's license early. The first time we asked we were told she couldn't. We would like her to get as much experience as she can before she returns to Kiev.
25. Pray about the tense political situation between Ukraine and Russia, which wants to dominate Ukraine and keep it from turning west. Pray that in the conflict, the church will still have the freedom to preach and live the gospel.
26. Pray for Donna's father's salvation. Pray that we can talk specifically about his sin and need for salvation.
27. Pray for Mark and Donna as they drive to visit a supporting church in Mobile, Alabama today. Pray for safe travel and good communication with this faithful church.
28. Pray for our new teammate Amanda Cook as she raises her support and prepares to come to Ukraine this year. She is still working full time.
29. Pray that we would keep our focus on the Lord as a family. Pray that we would be disciplined in the things we ought, and that we would be gracious and patient with each other, especially in the busy two months ahead.
30. Pray for wisdom about schooling Mary and Abigail this coming fall in Ukraine. We would like to start Abigail in Ukrainian school, and are looking for a situation where Mary get some of her schooling in Ukrainian or Russian, but in a setting involving other children (not tutoring). Pray especially for the logistics of this; we would normally need to be having conversations with Abigail's school now, but we cannot do this long distance.