

## *PRAYING THROUGH THE MONTH*

Mark and Donna McDonnel  
Kiev, Ukraine - September 2008

### *UPDATE*

So much to report on!

We have our car back! It took some work at the shop and a lot more time, but it is operational and legal, so we are breathing a sigh of relief; grocery shopping is back to being a mundane weekly thing!

There is still no progress on the wallpaper or plaster front. It's tempting to just wait until next summer as it is such a messy project, but we'll keep plugging away for now. Who knows what the Lord has in store!

Thank you for praying for Lena and Lenny. She is finally getting more sleep and everyone is doing well. Thank you also for praying for the wedding. Everything went so well and John and Stella are settling in to their new life together. And the train trip was memorable in that it was so uneventful. We got to travel in new train cars and they were equipped with air conditioning – what a blessing!

Erin and Morgan's time at their camp went well and we saw them off at the airport after a full summer here in Ukraine. Thank you for praying for them.

Things on the school front with the girls could not be going better! We are so thankful. The teachers are positive and friendly, hopeful of success, and helpful. We've been able to get their uniforms and supplies in order and feel (almost!) ready for the first day of school. Both girls are positive, nervous, and excited about this new adventure. Thank you so much for praying.

Mark preached this morning at church and it was a powerful, powerful word from the Lord. We worship God because he is worthy, we tell people about the Lord because he is worthy, and we honor him in our daily lives because he is worthy – everything is for his name's sake.

We are reminded daily that even in the little things, we must keep our eyes on the Lord. I was glad to be reminded by a pastor whose program I occasionally listen to via the internet that God is going to use every little thing to keep my heart tuned to him. So whether it's crumbling walls and torn wallpaper, trials with hot water, unexpected visitors, waiting six more weeks to get school settled, and discouraging news about dear friends, God is still on his throne and worthy of praise. What a mighty God we serve!

Thank you so much for your prayers for us and for the work we are a part of here in Ukraine! We know your prayers make a big difference.

Mark and Donna McDonnel

## ***PRAYING THROUGH THE MONTH***

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### ***FOR PRAYER***

1. Monday - Pray for our whole family today to be looking to the Lord, to be full of peace and joy, and ready to serve. It is going to be a busy, busy day and a busy, busy couple of weeks as we get our footing in school, for Anna and Benjamin, for Mary and Abby on their new adventure, and for Mark as his semester more fully gets going.
  2. Tuesday – Pray for Mary as she starts her first real day at school today (her class had a picnic Monday). Pray for good relationships with the kids in her class and with the various teachers she'll have. Pray for miraculous understanding of all that is said to her, for miraculous ability to respond, and for miraculous growth in everything Ukrainian.
  3. Wednesday - Pray for Abigail as she gets familiar with the people and things in her new life at school. Pray also for understanding, ability to speak, and for an open heart for whatever the Lord has for her in this.
  4. Thursday – Pray for Benjamin as he gets used to life in high school. Pray that he would be open to all that the Lord has for him at this new level in school. Pray for a servant's heart toward things in his daily life at home. Pray also for him to grow in his faith.
  5. Friday - Pray for Anna as she starts off her senior year. Pray that she would be bold where she needs to be, for wisdom as she continues her college search, and for fantastic relationships with kids at school such that this year is a treasured memory. Pray also that she would be wise in what kinds of activities she decides to take on, and that she would value a relationship with the Lord more than anything else (her words).
  6. Saturday - Pray for Mark and Donna as they shepherd the kids through all of the changes they'll be meeting this year in school. Pray for great wisdom, grace, and freedom in all of the languages involved. Pray for peace and joy in our home so the enemy would have no room for a foothold during this busy time.
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7. Sunday – Pray for grace and peace as we start a new week. Pray that we would start the week refreshed and ready for all that the Lord has for us this week.
  8. Pray for Anya and Bogdan in their ministry to orphan teens. Pray for wisdom, grace, and physical rest. (See last page of this document for an expanded note about the Semiletko family).
  9. Pray for Tengiz, a student at the seminary from the Republic of Georgia. He is concerned about his family, his friends, and his country, which was recently invaded by Russia.
  10. Pray for a young woman whose marriage has fallen apart. Pray for her physical safety, for godly counsel, spiritual support, and wisdom about what the Lord would have her do in facing the extreme difficulties in her life.
  11. Pray for another young couple as they rebuild their marriage after a severe trial. Pray that he would seek the Lord even when he's disillusioned with God and spiritual things, and that she would respond with grace, peace, and joy.
  12. Pray for Donna's father's salvation. Pray that he would be convicted of sin and would seek the Lord. Pray for the Lord to bring people into his life who would challenge him and speak truth to him.
  13. Pray for our teammates John and Stella to get all of their documents, etc. in order for a trip to the U.S. in October. Stella will become a WorldVenture missionary. Pray also for John and Stella to build solid foundations in their new life together (they were married last month).
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14. Sunday – Pray for the Lord’s financial provision for the seminary, both for operating costs and for completion of the construction of much needed additional classrooms and offices.
  15. Pray for our pastor here in Kiev that he would have great wisdom, grace, and discernment as he shepherds our congregation. Pray also for his physical health, for his marriage, and for his family.
  16. Pray for Sasha and Lydia in their work in a new church plant. There are 15 people meeting weekly for worship. Pray for Sasha to have wisdom and supernatural discernment as he leads in this vital work. Pray also for a meeting place; they are meeting in someone’s apartment right now.
  17. Please continue to pray for "Sasha" to repent of anger and bitterness. He knows he is bitter. Pray for a godly man to consistently speak truth to him.
  18. 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 be diligent to deal with these hurts; she has let a lot of time go by and it will be difficult to go back to this after so long.*
  19. Pray for the Tereshenko family as they work to get their house built. Pray that the Lord would provide the finances to finish the needed work. Pray for Sergei’s ministry at the seminary and Natasha as she cares for their son Matviy.
  20. Pray for the Khmiz family as they work to get their house built. Pray that the Lord would provide the finances to finish the needed work. Pray for Ruslan’s ministry at the seminary and Luda as she cares for their children at home.
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21. Sunday – Pray for a couple we know where the wife cannot see her disrespect toward her husband, nor the damage it causes in their family. Pray for her husband to see and repent of his unloving responses to this ongoing disrespect. Pray that the Lord would bring people into their lives to speak truth to each of these friends.
  22. Pray for a young couple to work through bitterness, anger, and hurt. Pray for complete reconciliation and restoration, and that the resulting joy and peace would be very evident.
  23. Pray for Donna’s brother Darrell to be convicted of sin and to submit to fellowship with believers who will build him up and sharpen him as iron sharpens iron; today is his birthday.
  24. Please continue to pray for church leaders in Ukraine to develop and communicate a vision for healthy family time. It is common to have a serious imbalance between ministry and ordinary home/parenting responsibilities. 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.
  25. Pray specifically for Alexander, Andrei, Sasha, Dima, Vasya, Kolya, and Vanya in regard to #24.
  26. Pray for our WorldVenture teammates Eric and Beth Yodis as they travel out of country today. Pray for safe travel, as well as for peace, joy, and physical health.
  27. Please continue to pray for Donna's father's salvation. Pray that he would be convicted of sin and would seek the Lord. Pray for the Lord to bring people into his life who would challenge him and speak truth to him.
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28. Sunday – Pray for Mary and Abby’s endurance in school. Pray for good relationships with their classmates and their teachers, and for miraculous growth in their understanding, ability to speak, and ability to write in Ukrainian.
  29. Pray for the Lord’s provision for the salaries of those working at the seminary.
  30. Pray for Anatoly as he does all that is needed of him in his role as president of the seminary. Pray for wisdom, discernment, and great grace. Pray also for his health.

## *CONTEXT/INFORMATION/HAPPENINGS*

### *A Conversation With My Friend Anya*

There are a lot of orphans in Ukraine, but it sometimes sounds odd to hear that term used so often because it's not something many Americans are familiar with. A child is placed in an orphanage here when a parent dies, when a parent is in prison, when parents aren't able to care for their children, or some combination of the three.

Often, an orphanage is a place where some 200 children – ages 0-16 – live and go to school and are under the care of 5-10 adults. The care is so limited (state funding, general poor societal attitudes towards orphans, a dysfunctional system) that the kids are considered 'covered' if they're alive and not too terribly sick. They gain few or no life skills, there is no parenting; they are just in institutional survival mode.

Anya worked briefly for me several years ago and we quickly became friends. She and her husband were asked to consider becoming house parents in a private home for orphan teens. They would be parenting six to eight 16-year-old girls (boys were under the supervision of a young man at a different house) for two years at a time. During the two years, they teach the kids life skills – cooking, cleaning, keeping house, managing money - study skills, work skills, and much more. The mission was headed up by two individuals who managed the fund-raising, logistical concerns, etc.

To make a long story short, now boys and girls are all together under one roof (14 this year) and Anya and Bogdan are parents to them all (as well as to their own little boy who is now 5). There is no other family-style ministry of this kind in Ukraine. This is the first family these kids have ever known as many were placed in the orphanage from infancy or early childhood. When they arrive, often, they don't even know how to do something so common as to make tea. When they leave, Anya and Bogdan do what parents do: help the kids find jobs, find places to live, get further schooling lined up, and so on.

In the four years since they began this ministry, most of the kids have gone on to lead 'normal' lives, getting married, having families, and functioning well in society. Almost all of them become believers through Bogdan and Anya's ministry to them. And Anya and Bogdan, who are in their late 20s, now have three grandchildren! During the holidays this last year, 40 kids 'came home' for Christmas.

Although it's a line once or twice a month on the prayer sheet, I wanted to introduce you to and thank you for praying for Anya and Bogdan and their kids.

We're wanting to give you as many ways of getting in touch with us/finding out what's going on with us as we can. Please let us know how we can do this better. For your information, here is how you can contact us (in all of the various ways available so far!):

#### *U.S. mailing address:*

Mark and Donna McDonnel  
24555 Roesner Road  
Katy, Texas 77494

#### *Ukraine mailing address:*

Mark and Donna McDonnel  
75 Gorlovskaya  
Kiev, 02091  
UKRAINE

E-mail: [Jmmcdonnel@aol.com](mailto:Jmmcdonnel@aol.com)

Blog: <http://mcdonnel.wordpress.com>

Skype:

Mark: [mark.mcdonnel](https://www.skype.com/user/mark.mcdonnel)

Donna: [donna.mcdonnel](https://www.skype.com/user/donna.mcdonnel)

Home phone: 011-38-044-572-2256 (where 38 is the country code and 044 is the city code)

We are 8 hours ahead of Central Daylight Time.

Several of us are now on facebook, too, so look us up if you're into that sort of thing!