

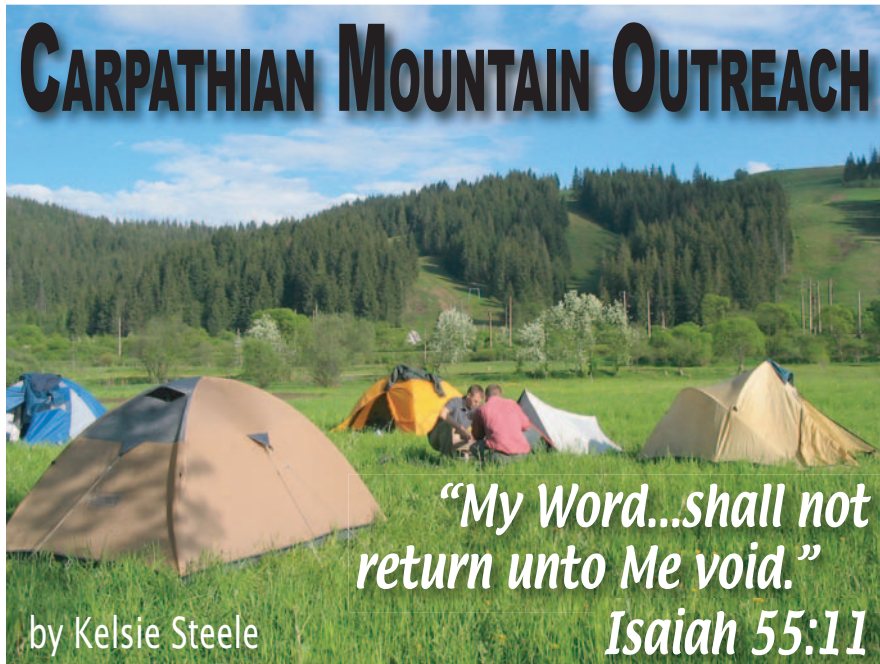
OVERSEAS FIELD REPORT

A publication dedicated to making known the ways in which God is showing Himself strong on the behalf of those who serve Him.

Volume 3, Issue 3

Written by Joshua & Kelsie Steele

May - August 2006



The CMO men camp in an open field in the Carpathian Mountains. For more full color CMO pictures, visit www.euroteamoutreach.org.

I pushed the door inward on creaking hinges and took a timid step forward. The darkness was so great that I could hardly see my hand in front of my face. Stumbling to find a path up the inclining hallway, I was glad when light finally broke over the summit of the carpeted ramp. As my eyes adjusted to the dimness of the room, I made out a sea of heads in front of me, all turned towards a sizeable screen on a stage at the front of the auditorium. "He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our transgressions", the

loud speaker sounded. A woman standing in front of me beckoned to her husband who had followed me through the door. "Come see this," she said, pointing to the intense scene of Christ's death depicted on the screen. Again the gospel anthem rang out in the Ukrainian language, "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son..." Verse after verse resounded throughout the auditorium and over the crowd like so many waves upon the seashore. "...that whosoever believeth in Him should not per-

(continued on page 3)

How YOU Can Pray...

- Pray for God's blessing and protection of the CMO team as we finish out this project.
- Pray that we would continue to be successful in showing The Light of the World film.
- Pray that many Ukrainians would sign up for our Chronological Bible Course.
- Pray that God would give us wisdom as we make plans for next year's outreach.
- Pray that God would continue to bless the health of our team as we minister.

Get updated prayer requests on our website!

www.OFReport.com

CMO Questionnaire

What the guys are saying...



As of this writing, CMO is about three months old. Now that some time has passed, we felt it would be in order to ask the CMO men for their thoughts regarding their

(continued on page 4)

Bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those under the power of darkness, and proving to the world that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

See this section in full color on our website! www.OFReport.com

Our Ministry...



at a glance



Film Showings in the Mountains

We are thrilled to report that God is blessing the showing of *The Light of the World* film far beyond our expectations. As we travel from village to village, distributing invitations to the film and making arrangements for various showings, we have seen the hand of the Lord winning battle after battle on our behalf. This film presents the Gospel very clearly, and at the conclusion of each showing, we preach Christ and invite people to repent and believe on His name. We also offer our Chronological Bible Course. On the whole, we have been received very positively by the people and even by the local city government. When we showed the film in Tukhlya, the village head came to us at the conclusion and expressed his sincere appreciation for what we had done. "You have such an excellent mission," he said. "We would love to have you back in our village anytime."



Chalk Art

Another exciting ministry opportunity which the Lord has opened to us is chalk art. Matthew Ballmann, one of the CMO men, has been ministering the Gospel through chalk art for over seven years. In June, Matthew taught a week long seminar for the team here in L'viv. Most of the CMO men as well as several ETO staff members completed the training, and now we are using chalk art on a regular basis to present the Gospel in open-air venues.



Open-air Preaching

The main benefit of chalk art is that it allows us to gather a crowd to whom we can preach the Gospel. We have seen consistent success in this area as we have preached open-air in L'viv on many occasions. Usually, we set up our easel in the center square of L'viv. Then, one of the men begins to draw while the rest of us just stand back and watch. Other people stop out of curiosity, and soon a crowd is in place, paying close attention to the scene unfolding before them. At this point, another of our men stands up and addresses the crowd. While the artist continues his drawing, the preacher presents the Gospel.



Literature Distribution

At the core of our outreach this summer is a large scale literature campaign. Thus far, over 135,000 Gospel tracts and Bible course invitations have been distributed throughout L'viv and the Carpathian mountains since May 1. Each piece of literature contains an invitation for the recipient to enroll in our Chronological Bible Course. On average, the CMO men spend three of their regular ministry days every week passing out tracts on the street, at open-air ministry functions, and in apartment complexes. Please pray for our team as we continue to develop and print new Gospel literature. We believe that this is a key part of our ministry here in Eastern Europe.



Chronological Bible Course

The foundation of our literature outreach is a distance learning course designed to teach the Bible chronologically. This course is still being developed, but the preliminary lessons are already in print. While brief Gospel presentations contained in tracts can be very effective, we have seen a far greater level of success when a person actually begins to study the Word of God. For this reason, every piece of literature we give out contains an invitation for the recipient to sign up for this course. As of this writing, over 100 people have returned response cards requesting enrollment in the course. For more information on the Chronological Bible Course, please visit our ministry website: www.euroteamoutreach.org.

Overseas Field Report is written and published by missionaries Joshua and Kelsie Steele, currently serving in Ukraine.
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CARPATHIAN MOUNTAIN...

(continued from page 1)

ish, but have everlasting life.”

As the film closed, a man came up on stage and began to preach. “The way to salvation is through belief in Jesus Christ alone! Being religious will not get you to heaven. Salvation is not about going to church or following religious traditions, it’s about believing the words of this book,” he heralded as he held up a small Ukrainian Bible. “*He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life,*” he read from 1 John. The words flowed out quickly and passionately, as if the speaker was afraid of losing his audience during the slightest pause. His Ukrainian was effortless and without flaw. He was tall, handsome, and simply dressed, as if prepared to pass time in the great outdoors. My heart swelled as I heard him implore the crowd to repent and turn to Jesus. That was MY man up there.

Roughly three hundred people were present that day, all of whom received an invitation to study the Bible through our correspondence course. Many of them came forward afterwards to receive additional tracts. In the excited whirl that followed the film showing, the village leader made his way to the front, telling Joshua how grateful he was that we had come, and what a wonderful mission we had. “We hope you’ll come again next year!” he finished.

As the large meeting room cleared of people, Joshua approached the owner in order to pay for the use of the building. None of us were prepared for her non-Ukrainian response, and we gladly consented when she urged that there would be no charge for

the building!

I resumed my seat in the “Beal-mobile”, Jessie’s big yellow van, and arranged my things for the trip back to L’viv with the Beal family. Our team of guys gathered ‘round for a final prayer. Enveloped in rain ponchos and bearing huge camping packs, they made quite a sight in the quaint, Ukrainian village that rarely saw Americans. I smiled as I witnessed Evan’s attempts to repair a tattered poncho with duct tape. The van pulled away leaving the group to tramp through the soaking underbrush and find a campsite for the night. Was it the one they affectionately dubbed “Camp Condensation,” or was that another? They would endure yet another rainy, cold night in the beautiful mountains, and spend the next day spreading Bible study invitations throughout the village.

The response in Tukhlya was very encouraging, especially since it was the kick-off village for the Carpathian Mountain outreach. Since that time our team has gone to 11 additional villages. One village included an encounter with a tipsy protestor. He was quickly ushered to the exit by a captivated audience that was all too eager to be rid of his rude interruptions. The owner of the meeting room literally kicked him out the door! On another occasion, while preaching, Joshua was interrupted by a man who stood up, calling

(continued on page 4)



Clad in their rain gear, the CMO men prepare to distribute invitations to a film showing.



The CMO team hikes into a village after spending the night camped in a field. Each man carries a pack weighing between 30 and 40 pounds.



The CMO team arrives in a new village. Here they are unloading their gear from a hired Soviet van.

CARPATHIAN MOUNTAIN...

(continued from page 3)

out, "you're nothing but a cult, a sect!" (Ukrainians suffer from sect-o-phobia.) Nothing moved, Joshua rebuffed him with fire in his eyes, "There are those who, holding fast to their religious traditions and hollering "sect" from the sidelines, will end up in hell, while those who believe the words of the Bible will go to heaven!" The man doggedly returned to his seat and listened to the rest of the message.

A few weeks ago, Sergiy, a university student who has been studying the Bible with us for

over a year, preached to a large audience for the first time. Our group of guys has been passing out innumerable tracts and doing chalk art productions in the center of L'viv. The Gospel is going forth to thousands of Ukrainians. We are confident that God's Word, like the rain and the snow which fall so often here in Ukraine, making the earth bring forth and bud, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, "shall not return unto me [God] void,

but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11 ♦



Sergiy Chepara (one of our Bible students) preaches the Gospel in the village of Kamyanka.

CMO QUESTIONNAIRE

(continued from page 1)

ministry and experiences here in Ukraine. The following is a recap of their answers.

What were your first impressions of Ukraine?

"No one smiled." - Matt

"Lots of apartments from the Soviet days, fairly industrialized,

and the younger people trying to model Western European/American culture." - Evan

"Crazy transportation, bad weather, cheap food, a society that makes me thank God for all He's given me in America, and most of all a people group that desperately needs God." - Jonathan Rhoades

"It's old, hasn't been well maintained (buildings, roads, landscaping, etc.)." - Jeff

What do you find to be the most different aspect about living in Ukraine compared to America?

"Living day to day. In America, you could stock up on food for a week or two. Here

the bread only keeps for a couple days. Then there's the fact that I've never lived in an apt. before, or without my family for so long."

- Jonathan Rhoades

"Not being able to speak to anybody." - Matt

"The public restrooms...definitely." - Jonathan Steele

"Lack of smiles. Fast walking. Poor roads." - Kurt

"People tend to be much more religious and almost always believe the Bible to be God's Word. Also, there is basically one culture, unlike the melting pot of cultures found in the U.S.A." - Evan

"There seem to be few traffic laws (or even traffic lanes on the road). Walking is also a major form of transportation. Numerous kiosks line the street selling everything. Pornography seems to be an ev-

(continued on page 5)



Matthew Ballmann places a Gospel tract in a PO box in L'viv.

CMO QUESTIONNAIRE

(continued from page 4)

everyday part of their culture and accepted as normal." — *Jeff*

What do you like best about living in Ukraine?

"I like going to the open market. It is fun to observe the people as they interact, and also great to be able to get fresh produce or eggs." — *Jeff*

"Speaking Ukrainian with the locals. It's really cool living in a different culture." — *Jonathan Steele*

"The Carpathians are beautiful." — *Kurt*

"The weather is pretty nice and the public transportation is cool. The young people are also really nice." — *Evan*

"I love the full-time ministry. Being able to devote so much time to spreading God's Word is an incredible opportunity." — *Jonathan Rhoades*

What has been the hardest part for you in living here?

"Adjusting to the daily routine of living alone." — *Jonathan Steele*

"The language barrier." — *Matt*

"Not having my wife here. Nothing else seems hard, only inconvenient." — *Jeff*

"The bathrooms." — *Jonathan Rhoades*

What has been the most exciting ministry opportunity for you so far?

"Sharing the Gospel with some of the people I play basketball with. People are normally much more receptive once you get to know them." — *Evan*

"Chalk talks in the center. I get to be really involved, I get to talk to people through a translator, and I get to draw. This is more personal than handing out a tract."



The entire CMO team - June 2006

— *Matt*

"I love to camp. Camping with the purpose of spreading the Gospel of Christ is incredible." — *Kurt*

"I think the most exciting part is when I lay down at night, totally exhausted from a day given completely to ministry, and realize that I spent another entire day spreading the Gospel." — *Jeff*

"I've never handed out tracts like we've been doing. That's been

the biggest thing so far." — *Jonathan Rhoades*

How would you describe the people of Ukraine and esp. their receptivity?

"It is truly heartbreaking to see such dedication to dead religion that is outwardly so beautiful but totally powerless to save."

— *Kurt*

"Older people are very superstitious and suspicious of new teaching. Younger people are fairly receptive but are content where they are in life." — *Matt*

"They are very hard shelled, but once you get through to them, they are wonderful people." — *Jonathan Steele*

"Even though there has been some opposition, overall, they seem to be very receptive of us and the tracts. Much of

the negative response seems to be their conditioning to think we are a cult." — *Jeff*

"In general, the people seem to have gloomy countenances. But they seem to be more open on a one-on-one basis. They also seem to have more of a sense that they are right and don't need what you have to say." — *Jonathan Rhoades*

(continued on page 6)

CMO QUESTIONNAIRE

(continued from page 5)

What has been your favorite memory so far?

"Going to the local amusement park and riding all the local rides." – *Jonathan Steele*

"Laughing with the guys. Being lectured by Ukrainians when I can't understand a word they are saying." – *Kurt*

"Escaping off the train after being surrounded by pick-pocketing gypsies." – *Evan*

"Racing my son from mailbox to mailbox to deliver the Gospel message and seeing how much he enjoys doing mission work is a memory worth all the cost and difficulties to be here." – *Jeff*

"Riding the trams and marshrut-



People gather in the center of L'viv to watch our "chalk talk."



Matthew Ballmann draws while Joshua preaches the Gospel.

kas (mini-buses)." – *Matt*

Have you encountered any funny language blunders?

"Asked for water ("voda") and they gave me vodka." – *Matt*

"Constantly...and I am frequently laughed at by the ETO staff for my Texas version of Ukrainian." – *Jeff*

"I've discovered that for some reason, Ukrainians have mastered their language, and they don't stick to the phrases I know. How strange..." – *Jonathan Rhoades*

What is the most important lesson God has taught you since being here?

"My need for organization skills." – *Kurt*

"Do what you can, when you can, because time on this earth is short." – *Jonathan Rhoades*

"Realizing that God's work isn't always in big numbers. A lot of times, it's the little things that count." – *Matt*

"Disciplining myself in the small things of life so I can be effective in the big picture." – *Jonathan Steele*

What is your biggest prayer need right now?

"Opportunities for one-on-one witnessing and divine appointments with English speakers." – *Matt*

"That the Ukrainians would continue to be receptive to the Gospel." – *Kurt*

"I have no job and no income, but

still have a household to support. Sometimes I get anxious if I think about it." – *Jeff*

"I don't know what my next step will be when I get back to the States. I am faced with lots of decisions. Pray that God will make his way clear to me." – *Jonathan Rhoades*

How do you think this missions experience will affect your life?

"It's always really cool to live and learn in a different culture/society. It's also great to have opportunities to share the Gospel and also learn from the experience of the other CMO members." – *Evan*

"I'll think about missions in a different way. There are so many ways to minister, not just going out and starting a church right away." – *Matt*

"I think living in a different culture will affect my outlook on life. Ministering here has helped the fire for evangelism become greater." – *Jonathan Steele*

"It was very refreshing to serve God full-time." – *Kurt*

"Very positively. I feel almost like I'm in a training camp and I can't wait to get back and keep doing what I'm doing here." – *Jonathan Rhoades*

To God be the Glory

For continuing updates on the CMO 2006 project, as well as upcoming information about next year's project, be sure to visit our ministry website:

www.EuroTeamOutreach.org