

September 30, 2018



Peace to you and grace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, dear co-workers in the field of the Lord, relatives and friends! Once again, we warmly welcome you from sunny Moldova!

September is when autumn comes into its own. The days are much shorter. The nights are getting cooler, and the leaves begin to change color. It's a wonderful season.

On Sunday, **September 2**, as is the norm on the first Sunday of the month, communion was performed during the morning service at our church, *Bethany*. I participated in this service by preaching the Word of God. The number of people in the church sanctuary increased significantly compared with previous months—the summer was over, many returned from trips, both from missionary and vacation trips. Life enters the normal working routine.



On Saturday, **September 8**, the regular prayer meeting of the pastors of the Chisinau region took place. Pastors gathered in the church, *The Voice of Truth*, in which Vitaly Pokidko is a pastor. They prayed for various needs—for pastors, for churches to be focused on serving people and exerting influence in society, and for families. Valery Alexandrovich Geletsky, formerly the Bishop of the Union of Baptists of Moldova, and now the Vice-Speaker of Parliament of Moldova, joined us

for the conclusion of the meeting. He shared about the situation in the country regarding vaccinations for children. In the past few weeks, many cases of measles have occurred. It turned out that not all children have the appropriate vaccinations. Many of these children are from

Christian families. This led the government to turn against the Baptists as allegedly preaching against taking vaccines. We prayed that the Lord would change this.

On Sunday, **September 9th**, Nina and I visited the church in city of Grigoriopol, which is located in Transnistria. On this day, there was a double feast at the church—the Feast of Harvest and Baptism. I was invited to participate in that service by preaching the Word of God. This was our first visit to this church, which has a special history. There was a time when there were many members of German descent in it. The life of the church was active and dynamic. Then came the



opportunity for many Germans to immigrate to Germany. This led to the fact that the church has decreased significantly. Then a very gifted brother took over the pastoral ministry. The church has grown significantly again. But he immigrated to America. This also led to a weakening of church life and a reduction in membership.



At present, brother Andrei Zaitsev, who is 40 years old, performs pastoral ministry. He has a wife and three children, one of whom is adopted. The life of the church has once again become active. It now has about 70 members. Along with the oral testimony of Christ to people in the city, the congregation performs social service — it feeds children from disadvantaged families on a daily basis and conducts classes with them after school. Sunday services are held

in the building, which is a hangar of metal profiled sheets, built with the help of those church members who immigrated to Germany. In the summer this building is hot, and in the winter it is cold—the temperature is seasonal.

The first part of the service was dedicated to the harvest holiday. A sermon dedicated to this holiday was told by the visiting speaker, the presbyter of the church in one of the neighboring villages. The second part of the service was dedicated to baptism. I was asked to give a sermon on this subject and to instruct four believers who were to be baptized that day.

For the implementation of the act of baptism a temporary swimming pool was installed in the courtyard of the church property. Considering that it was cold the night before, they warmed up the water in the pool all night. Baptism was performed by the presbyter Andrei Zaitsev. For Nina and I, it was a great blessing



to be witnesses and participants in such an important event. Considering that this church is small and that it is located in a territory where almost the same laws apply to believers as in Russia, the baptism of four new members is a very important event. Of the four baptized, only a young girl was from a family of believing parents. All the others had previously lived a worldly life and did not know about the Lord. Now they are saved by Him.

Children watched with interest as baptism was performed. We hope that the time will come when they too will make a covenant with the Lord through holy water baptism.



After performing the act of baptism a prayer of blessing over the baptized was performed.



On Monday, **September 10**, at the university where I teach, a meeting of the University Senate was held. The Senate consists of the administration and teachers of the University, as well as several students representing the student body of the University. During the meeting, information was provided on the number of full-time

students in this term — 165 people. Information was also shared about student performance in each of the majors, and a few changes in leadership were announced, including a new master's program offered by the TCMI institution. Special attention was paid to the fact that the visit of the accreditation commission in November is approaching and that we all need to be ready for this.



Student life consists not only of classes in the classroom, but also includes periodic duty in the kitchen. Peeling potatoes, onions, carrots and others is the business of students. Preparation and cleaning of the dining room, washing dishes— this is also work for students.

On Saturday, **September 22**, the wedding of two university graduates took place, Andrey and Nadezhda. They finished their studies in June of this year and now they got married. Studying at the university was a double blessing for them—they got an education and met their life partner here. The wedding took place outdoors in the picturesque place of



Vodelui Vod, near Chisinau. The ceremony was officiated by one of the university lecturers, pastor, deputy Bishop of the Union of Baptists of Moldova, Sergey Germanov.



On Sunday, **September 23**, Nina and I visited Transnistria again. This time we were visiting the *Church of Grace* in the city of Benderi. The pastor of this church, Peter Pavlovich Korotash, simultaneously serves as a regional presbyter among the Baptist churches of Transnistria. Although last year we were already in this church at the Harvest Festival, Brother Korotash again invited me to visit

his community and take part in the Harvest service this year. The service was held in a free atmosphere. Everyone from children to white-haired old men and women had an opportunity to participate in the program. What caught my eye was the fact that there were significantly fewer people in the hall than last year at the Harvest festival. And also the fact that there were significantly more women than men present. After the service, Peter Pavlovich explained to me

that the reason for this was the migration of the population. Many are leaving in search of work and better living conditions either in Russia or in Western Europe.

After the end of the service and the festive dinner, we stopped at a family-type orphanage in this city. It has become our tradition to visit this house when we are in Benderi or Tiraspol. Both children and their parents welcome us. Of course, we do not come empty-handed. However, they are pleased not so much with our gifts, as with an opportunity to fellowship with us. For the parents, it is an



*Three girls from different families now live together like sisters*

opportunity to share their experiences and concerns and pray with us. For the children, it is an opportunity to sit on the lap of a grandfather and grandmother from Chisinau. And for us it is a pleasant opportunity to show love for these little children, who so remind us of our grandchildren in America.



*This 5-year-old girl really didn't want grandfather and grandmother to leave.*

The big event for believers in Chisinau this month was the celebration of the 110th anniversary of the *Bethel Church*. For four days, there were services dedicated to this event. Preachers and musical groups of different churches of the city, and guests from other cities participated in these services. On Friday night, **September 28**, I had the opportunity to participate in this festive service by preaching the Word of God. That evening the choir and pastor, Andrei Malanchuk, from the church of Balti, participated in the service.



Historical accounts about those who labored at Bethel during these many years were part of the program of each service. These accounts clearly demonstrated how rich the history of this church was. Many bright personalities were involved in the life of this congregation. Among them were talented preachers, evangelists, choir directors and musicians. There were those who, during the years of persecution, underwent many trials and tribulations for the name of the Lord. Prison sentences, exiles, and even death were the fate of a number of workers in the field of God, who were members of this church in their time. Among them were both men and women.

The *Church of Bethel* is not only the oldest church of all Moldova's sister churches, but it also is a large "mother church." Many new churches in Chisinau and beyond were organized by those who



were once members of this congregation. For this reason, and also because of immigration, the number of members in the *Bethel* church today is not so large—more than 400 members. For Nina and I, it was a privilege to participate in this solemn service.



Another student wedding took place this month. On Saturday, **September 29**, Alexander, who had already completed his studies at the university, married Aidai, who is still studying. The wedding ceremony, which was led by the university student pastor, Georgy Mikhailov, took place in our church, *Bethany*.

September and October are the period of the year when the harvest festival is celebrated in churches. In the *Bethany Church*, it took place on Sunday, **September 30th**.







One young family asked for the prayer of the blessing of their newborn son to be included in the harvest service program. The Scripture says that children are a gift from God, like all other gifts we receive from Him. Therefore, it is appropriate to offer a prayer of gratitude for newborn children on Harvest Day. 😊

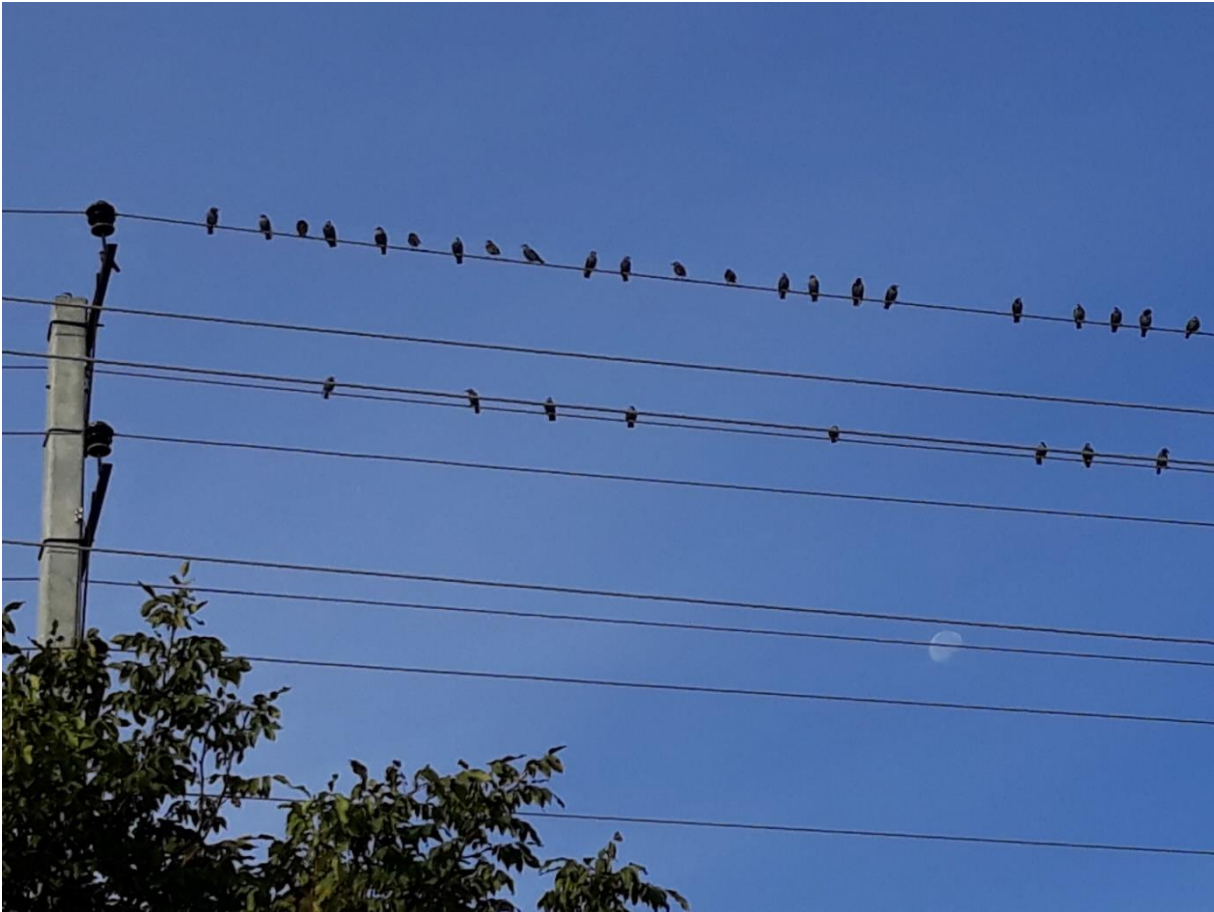
We sincerely thank you for your prayers. We really need them.

May God bless all of you richly! Let the following passage of Scripture be an encouragement to you: **“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.”** (1 John 3: 2). Thank God for this promise given to us!

With love and prayer,

Your co-workers in the field of the Lord,

*Vyacheslav and Nina Tsvirinko*



Birds are preparing to fly to warm countries for the winter.



And these are autumn flowers of Chisinau.