

“And now, may the God of peace...produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, all that is pleasing to him...To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Hebrews 13:20-21 NLT

HELPING OTHERS GROW

“There is a sense that everybody in the Christian community is thinking of camping,” remarked CEO of Christian Camping International, Ukraine (CCI/Ukraine), Vladimir Shevchenko. “Wherever you go, camping is a popular idea and we are privileged to give leadership to this movement.”

Alexander N, a member of the “Following Christ” movement, who was attending a CCI leadership seminar, commented about CCI/Ukraine: “These people always surprise me with their huge experience and desire to learn. CCI is constantly developing and helping others grow as well.”

A Camp Circle of Friends leader attending the CCI Experiential Learning Seminar, which consists of a game designed to teach integrity within the team, said: “I caught myself thinking that I can cheat my neighbor in this activity. The next moment I got scared thinking, ‘if I can cheat now, I am also cheating in real life.’”

“Guys, let’s be honest. We have really been greedy and cheating one another,” remarked a participant from Camp Shalom. “No wonder we did not achieve our goals at camp.”



Daria, a camp leader attending the class, said: “Now we will go home and assess our Bible lessons from the Four Realms of Experience perspective. Every word, every exercise, every assignment in this seminar was very practical. It was immediately obvious how to apply it.”

Natalia C. recently attended our seminar for Camp Program Coordinators. “I did not know how to properly plan the camp program as a team or how to run the program at camp. One person would plan the program and then we kept changing it. Here we were taught to spend a day with the whole team creating the program. We learned the four roles of the creative



process. We learned the rules a team must follow and the consequences of not following the rules. This seminar was very useful and edifying for me. Our camp will be more interesting for the campers and less stressful for the staff.”

Christian camping has changed over the 26 years that KVI has been active in the former Soviet Union (FSU). From being almost non-existent in 1991, Christian camping has become widespread and fruitful. From only communist owned and operated campsites in 1991, today there are hundreds of small and large church, as well as privately owned Christian camps. From no trained Christian camp leaders in 1991, today there are thousands of camp leaders with training. Many camps do their own staff training just as our camps in the west do.

And so has KVI’s role in leadership development changed over the years. In the early years we took teams of experienced camp leaders from Canada and the USA with us to teach the basics of Christian camping. After a few years we took a select few professional camping and educational instructors to help us develop the nationals into professional

instructors whose expertise is in demand.

In the past, KVI initiated all the conferences, seminars and workshops. Today the nationals initiate, organize and lead the training events and invite our CCI/ Ukraine team as instructors. Why this change? When the camp directors and program leaders began to train their own staff, they were confident in their own expertise. After a few years, their training became “in house” and their camps stagnated. When they realized their need for more training, they began to organize training events and invited our staff to do the teaching.

This puts new demands on our staff. They must upgrade their own education and camping experience in order to know what is relevant and needed. They are regularly talking with and listening to camp leaders. Their summer schedule is filled with visiting camps. They attend professional seminars and take online courses. We are thankful for their thirst for learning. You can meet our staff on our website www.kvicanada.org. Click on Prayer Partner News, scroll down and click on Nov/Dec2016.

SCHEDULE OF TRAINING EVENTS

at which our staff are invited to teach:

March 2 – 9	Camping Seminar for a Denomination
March 18 – 25	Camping Seminar in Kazakhstan
March 19	Training for the CCI Leadership Team
March 26	Staff Development Workshop in Russia
March 30	Open access to CCI Knowledge Base
March 30 – April 1	Grain of Wheat Regional Seminar - Kremenchug
March 31 – April 1	Living Movement Youth Conference – Lviv
April 3 – 7	Teaching Camp Program Course at the Theological Baptist Seminary, Lviv
April 8 – 11	Advanced Instructor Training Course – Kiev
April 21 – 23	Camping Seminar for Mennonite Churches – Molochansk
April 30 – May 2	Camping Seminar for New Life Church Union – Kiev
May 6 – 9	CCI/Ukraine Camp Days Conference
May 15 – 18	Micah Global Eastern European Gathering – Moldova
June 9 – 12	Staff Development and Experience Economy Workshop
Date TBA	Staff Training Workshops (STW) in Transcaucasus
Date TBA	Staff Training Workshop in Undisclosed country

CHRISTMAS CAMPS

We are thankful for every camp director who has the faith and courage to arrange and direct a follow-up camp at Christmas. Ludmila S., director of Camp Peniel, reports: "We taught the campers to sing Christmas carols. On the last day all groups went downtown to the supermarket, parks, bus stops and cafes singing carols and wishing people a Merry Christmas. All were very happy."



Andrew had never been to a Christian camp. In his entire search for God, he had never met a person who could help him. At His Story Christmas Camp he learned all about the birth of Jesus. He discovered it through finding the historical facts in the Bible and reliving them in the Christmas drama. Andrew, being an actor, fit right in. "The camp atmosphere was wonderful," said Andrew. "I finally found the people who could help me. It was nice to see the changes that were taking place in the minds of the teenagers. I am more and more convinced that God loves and blesses all of us. God for me is love and gives me the strength to love others regardless of their actions." Today Andrew is part of the Light Side Teen ministry team in the New Life Church.

Camp Another Dimension decided to organize one-day camps once a month in their church in Kiev. This format proved very effective for engaging teenage campers in the church youth activities. Before long

the teenagers became part of the team operating the monthly day camps. The camps are also bringing new people into the church.

Camp Enjoy organized a five day Christmas camp for the poorest in their city, Kriviy Rig. God put the desire into the hearts of a family to sponsor the camp so the camp was free for the campers. What a great Christmas gift! The theme of the camp was You Are Special. The goal of the camp was to build character and a sense of worth as God's creation into every child.

Two brothers – one year apart – attended. One came one day, the other the next. Their counselor noticed and asked why they attended alternately. "My brother and I have only one pair of winter shoes so we take turns," was the answer.

Kristina, age 8, a sister to six siblings being raised by a single mother, came to this winter camp in shoes that were falling apart. A camp staff took Kristina to the store to buy shoes. On the way the staff person asked what size she wears. "Size 32", was the reply, "but please buy size 34 so I can wear them for two years."

At the end of camp the staff took all campers to two places they had never been before – the circus and MacDonald's where each enjoyed their first "Happy Meal". Their faces radiated with joy.



The camp staff decided to continue to help these poorest of the poor so they meet with these children every week for character building Bible study and to help with their physical needs.

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO PRAY



ORPHAN CAMPS

KVI together with Music Mission Ukraine Canada (MMUC) will be operating two camp sessions, June 16-27 and June 28 –July 7, in Ukraine. Most orphans will be coming from the war zone. 73 orphans ages 13-17 in each session will be unconditionally loved 24 hours daily by 34 staff. God is providing an experienced staff team to care for the emotional, physical, social, mental and spiritual needs of these love-starved teens, preparing them to leave the orphanage at age 18. They will learn to cook their own suppers, clean their tents, canoe, fish and many other activities. They will have daily Bible Study, memorize verses, and learn to sing like the angels.

Ask God to provide permission from the orphanage directors for every eligible orphan to attend camp. Ask God to fill every staff with His love to love each orphan unconditionally all the time.



WELCOME, BUT NOT WELCOME

Many camp leaders, commissioned by their churches, operate camps in the former Soviet Union (FSU) countries where Christian activities are a criminal offense, punishable by up to five years in prison. A camp director who operated

four camp sessions in 2016 wrote: "It took many dreams, creative ideas and prayer to carry out the camps. Police are given official orders to enter the camps and arrest the leaders." To avoid this, some directors change the location of their camp every week. Others take their campers to a neighboring country to run their camps. People living in countries where Christian activities are restricted, are hungry for the gospel and for fellowship, especially in the areas where the persecution is so severe that there is no opportunity to attend church.

Our prayers help to keep God's hedge of protection around the camps and give staff the faith and courage to take the risks of operating the camps. Names of countries, people and places are withheld for security reasons.



KAZAKHSTAN

Individual camp leaders from Kazakhstan have been attending our STW in another country and recently have asked us to do an STW in Kazakhstan this spring. KVI helped start a camp in northern Kazakhstan in 1991. Its founder told us recently that the camp is still in operation and serves over 1,000 campers every summer. Three of our staff have been invited to the Annual Baptist Youth Conference, March 23-25 to teach advanced courses for camp leaders. At the same time, our staff will become acquainted with the camping people and their needs to determine what to do next. Pray for Oksana M as she heads up this mission. The dynamics in Kazakhstan are complex. Ask for insight, discernment and wisdom for decision-making.

PEACE IN UKRAINE

War between Russia and Ukraine is raging again. People are dying daily. People are fleeing for their lives or hoveled in their basements hoping missiles will not land in their homes. A camp in the war zone is home to 200 adults and children since three years ago. They are without heating. These displaced people are waiting for the war to end so they can return to their homes...what is left of them.

Praise God for all the people in Ukraine, who at great risk (some do get killed) and with great sacrifices, are supplying food and clothing to these displaced people. Andrei, a driver delivering humanitarian aid, wrote in his Facebook page "All is well. We are home in Druzhkovka. Thanks for your prayers. 'Thank you, Lord!' It is so scary to drive when both sides are shooting missiles overhead."

Our prayers are very important to the displaced. Nothing is impossible for God!

KIEV STAFF TEAM



Alexey S, project manager of our staff team in Kiev, is thankful to God for giving them the opportunity to serve over 200 camp leaders in January and February. Almost every week new camp leaders come for training and problem solving. His request is for you to ask God to give each of them, Vladimir, Oksana M., Oksana L., Viktoria, Elena, Pavel and Alexey, strength and wisdom to adequately respond to all the needs of the camp leaders coming to them for help.

He asks us to pray for the planning and preparation process for the May 6-9 All-Ukraine Camp Conference, the STW. It will have a whole new format. Pray that every camp will choose to send at least one staff person.

Alexey also encourages us to continue to pray, asking God to grant Ukraine peace.

BOYS CAMP VERTICAL

When we started Camp Vertical to train teenage boys ages 13-17 to become godly men, we were very aware that we were going into battle against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12. That battle is not winnable without our Lord and Saviour leading. Boys, their parents, church and camp leaders are using every excuse not to send boys to Vertical. Attendance in 2016 was only 17 boys when it could have been 72.

March, April and May are camper recruiting months. Please join us in prayer, asking God to plant the vision for Vertical into the hearts and minds of parents, pastors, youth and camp leaders to send their boys to Vertical. Thank God for our Vertical staff, Pavel, Viktor and Stas, and ask Him to equip them with everything good for doing His will. Hebrews 13:21.



FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO GIVE



Two of the 156 camp leaders who attended the CCI Conference where Vladimir was teaching in February were campers at KVI's first camp in Belorechensk. God called them at an early age and 25 years later they are leading camps in a country that suppresses Christianity. For that reason we cannot publish their pictures or names. These two leaders are no exception; there are hundreds more like them.

The huge Christian youth camping movement across the FSU is God's doing with the faithful prayers and generous donations of KVI supporters. Thank you for being part of this fruitful ministry.

Our 2017 Schedule of Training Events shows that KVI's ministry has more than doubled from 2016. And more invitations come every week. We have hired two additional instructors to help manage the workload. Donations need to increase significantly to fulfill our commitments and even to consider new invitations. Your help produces eternal fruit.

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The KVI Newsletter is written and edited by Dave & Elfrieda Loewen. We distribute it by email and post mail and on our website www.kvicanada.org If you want to receive the Prayer Partner or would like to change method by which you are receiving it, email kingdomventures@msn.com or call **204-224-4175** or post mail: **Kingdom Ventures Inc. PO Box 38144, East St. Paul MB R2E 1H3**