



Letter # 17

April 2005

# Manna Messenger

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## Our Family's Schedule

### April 15-17

Mike and student, Tolik, will be speaking at a regional youth leaders' conference in Ivano-Frankovsk, a city in the Western Ukraine mountains.

### May 21

Lena, our translator/assistant, will be getting married to Vova, a seminary student at our church. Sammie will be a flower girl.

### May 22-27

Mike and the seminary staff will be interviewing new students and choosing 10 new youth ministry students to begin their studies.

### June 5-17

Mike will be taking his next 2 Masters courses in Lithuania from BIOLA professors. He will then fly to the States for the summer.

### June 7-August 22

Our family will be in SD. We are staying "home" in Belle Fourche this summer as much as possible.

### Do you get our email newsletters?

We send email updates regularly about what is going on in our lives. If you would like to receive these emails, please let us know by writing to us at:  
mikemannafamily@yahoo.com

## Triple Overtime

from Judy

The high school boys from Kiev Christian Academy (our kids' school) played the championship game of our league last week against Kiev International School (KIS, the embassy school). Our guys have a great team, and we have beaten KIS rather handily both times that we have played them this year. However, in the championship game our guys were 12 points behind in the 3rd quarter. They had an incredible burst and were tied by the beginning of the 4th. Then it was back and forth constantly, one team scoring after the other. The game ended in a tie. It was back and forth again in the first overtime period ... the second overtime ... and the third! I can't begin to de-

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Victor and Oksana (our written translator) are the proud parents of Vlad Victorovich Prose. Little "Vladik" arrived on March 3rd (2 weeks overdue) weighing in at 9 lbs 14 oz.! Oksana had a Cesarean birth and due to hospital rules did not see Vlad for 2 full days. Victor didn't get to visit Oksana or see his son for the first time until they got out of the hospital. Vlad was already a week old. BUT they are now home as a family and doing well!

## YM 331: Ministry to Troubled Youth from Mike

The last two weeks of January, I had a wonderful time teaching all 18 of my students together in a class--both residential and modular. This was the first time I had taught this material "Ministering to Troubled Youth" and it was literally eaten up by my students. My notes were sent to me as usual from the youth ministry professors at Boyce College in Louisville, KY. I spent December organizing the notes and changing them to be relevant to Ukraine as best I could. And then our translating team of Lena and Oksana did their magic to create a really wonderful curriculum.

Our discussions were lively during the 40 hours of class time. I remember when we got to the discussion about Anorexia and Bulimia. This has not been largely discussed in Ukraine, so no one is writing very much about it. But many of us feel that there is probably a serious problem here because of the cultural stress for young girls to be extremely thin. One of my students lightened the mood with a joke saying that he didn't think there was much of a problem with

Anorexia in Ukraine. "You see, Mike, you have the Barbie doll with her perfect dimensions in the States, but here in Ukraine we have the Matroshka doll as our model." (The Russian pear-shaped, wooden doll that contains matching dolls of decreasing sizes). We all laughed.

It was great to see the students talking at lunch about what we had been discussing in class. I know that many of the other seminary students were listening carefully to these lunch-time discussions. God really used this class.

The day after this class ended, Tolik (one of my students) and I got on a plane for Louisville to speak at the International Center for Youth Ministry annual conference. We encouraged youth leaders to be involved with international youth ministry training. We need more teachers overseas. I surprised myself in my ability to translate for Tolik. I translated for him in several classes and all normal conversations.

Tolik could not believe the freedom we experience in America on the streets and in our churches. He often said, "Because of the Orange Revolution, our country might be able to experience this freedom in the near future. But as for

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### Triple Overtime – continued

scribe the dynamics of the triple overtime, so I won't even try! Each overtime contained plenty of scoring action and was tied in the last seconds. In the third overtime, the other team managed to get 4 points ahead with only 10 seconds to go, but there was still plenty of ball game left!

Our David sank a 3-pointer with 6 seconds to go. They took the ball out and we fouled them with 2 seconds left in the game. The opposing player made his first free throw (giving them a 2-pt. lead) and missed his second shot. Our Rees rebounded and threw the ball across the court to David on the 3 point line. David shot...and swish! But it was literally a half second too late. What a game!

I share this story with you, not so much to tell you about the game as to tell about the feelings we experienced afterwards. I realize that we don't often write about the kids' school, and it is such an important part of our lives--such a GOOD part. The kid's teachers, fellow students, and other parents have been very positive influences in each of our lives.

I dealt with feelings of disappointment over the loss, personally wanting a win for our boys as a reward for their incredible sportsmanship that is a reflection of their character. Our boys make up a godly team.

Truly. You can look at each starter (the starters were never taken out of this game) and say without a doubt, "That boy *loves* the Lord." Each is an unquestioned leader in our school. And they are first spiritual leaders. On the court, just as in the halls at school, they are beautiful to watch. They have emanated an attitude of encouragement and acceptance, even after interesting calls from inexperienced Ukrainian refs.

Our KCA boys have established relationships with the embassy school boys, going to

### YM 331: Ministry To Troubled Youth Class - continued

our churches, that is where WE can make a difference." We also visited my brother, Jeff, and his family in Columbus, OH, before we came back with suitcases loaded with American goods for Judy and the kids.

For the last month I have been teaching my residential students YM 203: "Curriculum Development for Youth." At times, I do not feel qualified to teach what I am teaching, but then I remember Who has brought us here. I am only a tool in the Lord's hand. My job is to

teach my students, love them, and encourage them. Prayerfully my students will develop teaching curriculums for their culture using principles from God's word that are universal.

Next month, I will travel with Tolik to his region of Ukraine to do a youth ministry seminar. But I informed him that I will teach this conference on only one condition - that he teach with me. This will be the first time that I co-teach with one of my students, but it won't be the last. Our goal is that our students will be training their own people.

We are truly blessed to minister alongside the families that have raised such strong, godly boys. This speaks volumes for the missionary community in Kiev. Mike commented, "I always thought that when we became missionaries, we would give up everything to do with our American family culture. Yet here we are, sitting on the sidelines of a basketball (soccer or baseball) game watching our kids play, cheering our team on amidst an amazing group of students and parents!" How we thank the Lord for Kiev Christian Academy! KCA does an incredible job of supporting us as missionaries. It is a quality education for our children that goes far beyond textbooks.

While writing these words, my heart has been filled with thanks to those of you who are financially supporting us here in Ukraine. That support extends to our children, and you are giving them a great gift. You are helping us to lay a foundation that is rooted in the Lord. Each of our children is currently emanating a strong love for Him, even looking ahead with eagerness toward using their lives for Him. You have been such a blessing to us. We pray often for the Lord's direction and provision in your lives. May He bless you richly. Thank you for *everything!*



Audrey and Mandie in their Kiev Christian Academy basketball uniforms. The high school BB teams again traveled to Budapest, Hungary, in February where they played in a tournament against Christian schools from Hungary, Romania, and Austria. We also hosted a tournament here in Kiev and invited Hinkson Academy from Moscow. Both tournaments were an opportunity to develop relationships with other missionary kids, as well as to play some good BB!



Some of Mike's students at our apartment singing the "Orange Revolution" theme song.