



Chilly Mariupol

by: Amanda Duggin

Dear friends and family,

Greetings from chilly Mariupol. Since my last update, I've unpacked the winter clothes and spread the heavy blankets over the bed. Thankfully, no snow yet, but we know it is soon to come. Unfortunately, we still have no heat and no hot water, which is potentially problematic. We are fairly certain that the necessary pipe repairs have been made because the hot water tap is running (with cold water, of course) and that the source of the problem is the water heating plant. However, we are uncertain as to whether those responsible are just trying to delay turning the water and heat on to save energy (which they can then sell) or if there truly is a problem. If the problem is not solved quickly, I see a water heater in our very near future. After all, in the summer, no hot water is just a missing luxury, but, during a Ukrainian winter, it's a missing necessity.



As far as the heat goes, Matt and I have partly resolved the problem. We had a little extra time before Bible class last week after running some errands, so we stopped by our local "Best Buy". It's certainly not as advanced, but it sells all the appliances that you can buy here. While we were there we bought two heaters--one large one that will heat a room and one small one for Matt's desk (his study is extremely drafty). The other day when we decided to test them out, we "noticed" a problem. Our heaters overload the circuits. They work for a little while without any problem, but then, all of the sudden and without fail, the power shuts off. Matt thinks he can install some circuits that will be able to handle the energy load, *if* we are able to find them.

This week Matt got an unexpected call from our landlady. We assumed that she wanted to come by to get the utility money (she takes care of the bills for us), but she had an "urgent" job for me instead. I am now her personal translator apparently. Somehow through her job she won a one week trip to Paris and she needed me to translate all her documents for her into English, so that she could apply for a French visa. That was simple enough--name and birthdate are pretty easy to translate. When we took the documents to her that night, she rewarded us with hot showers (whoo hoo) and then presented me with ANOTHER document. This one was in UKRAINIAN. I politely told her that I don't know Ukrainian and then she says, "That's okay I'll get it translated into Russian and then you can translate it into English." Unlike the other documents, this was an official Ukrainian document from the city notary. CAN WE SAY DIFFICULT? Matt and I worked together and after a couple hours we managed to complete it. We were very proud of ourselves (and ate ice cream afterwards as our reward). If I'm ever in need of a job, official document translation is going on my resume.

As far as church goes, our Bible classes are going well. Matt taught his first lesson in Leviticus this week. It was quite interesting. He also assigned us new memory work. We have to learn the five sacrifices and each of their purposes. Do you know this? If you don't, I encourage you to do so. If the elderly Christians here can



do so, then I'm certain that we all can.

Also, Matt has just finished preaching a series on First and Second Peter. He went verse by verse through each chapter pulling out the most important points, at least one from each verse. The Christians seemed interested and they were certainly lessons that they could stand to hear and will hopefully apply.

Unfortunately, Teresa is still not attending services. She has returned to her old habit of alcoholism. We pray that she will see the error of her ways and return to the Lord soon. Evgenia also has not been attending like she should. From what we here she is "sick", but we don't know her particular ailment. Hopefully, for her soul's sake, she is sick and not forsaking the assembly. We pray that both of these sisters will return to our services soon.

Cooking has been going well. This week I had my first attempt at fried chicken in Ukraine. Mine was never good in the States, but I figured I had to at least try it here. As Matt says, practice makes pretty good. Anyway, after searching for recipes I found one that I liked, I made it and it was the best ever. Matt said it tasted like it came from a restaurant. Yum yum. I didn't even put honey mustard on it...and I put honey mustard on all chicken. I also made broccoli, chicken, cheese, and rice casserole for the first time this week. It was good as well, just not as cheesy as the recipes at home. No Velveeta here. : (Today I'm going to try to make some corn pudding without cream style corn. We'll see how it goes.



Anyway, that's about all the news for now. I hope that things are going well for everyone at home. Please continue to write. We think of you always. Take care and God bless.

--Amanda