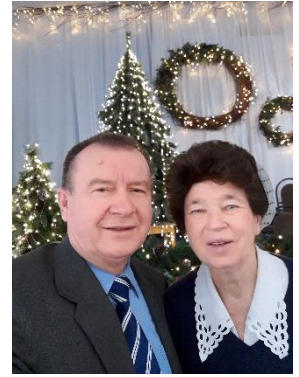


December 31, 2018

Happy New Year!

Peace and grace to you, dear co-workers in the field of God, dear friends and relatives! We warmly welcome you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The month of December ended, and 2018 with it. It passed quickly. This year was filled with various events, both joyful and not so much. We are very grateful to God for allowing us to serve here, in Moldova, during this year. We have experienced many blessings from the Lord during this time. As we enter the new year, we trust in God's grace. We hope that He will give us enough strength, health, and wisdom to continue serving Him in this wonderful land.



The last month of the outgoing year was rich in various events in which we had the opportunity to participate. Let me share some of them with you.



On December 2, Sunday, the last Communion was observed at *Bethany Church*. I was asked to preach the main sermon. A joyous event was the repentance at the end of the service of a young man named Oleg. We first met him when his mother was baptized in October of this year. Then later we talked with him a few times about God, about the Bible and about repentance. For some time he went through a period of inner spiritual struggle. And finally, he took this decisive step towards the Lord. We rejoiced, and the angels rejoiced in heaven as well (Luke 15:10).

December 4, the University held a Christmas concert themed: "Christ for All Nations." All the students and many teachers gathered. Some students were dressed in national clothes of their country. Representatives of about 20 nationalities were present in the hall. Many students performed through singing or musical art, reflecting the culture of their country. This event was a great illustration of the diversity of the University's student body.



On December 11, together with the staff of the University, we gave thanks to God for all the blessings He sent to our family this year. Teachers have such a tradition - to celebrate the birthday of each other. Given that my birthday is in summer, when everyone is on vacation, we decided to arrange a day of gratitude to God at the end of the year. I counted ten important events that took place this year – among them are the publication of my dissertation, the birth of a granddaughter, a trip to America, and other events.



On December 16, Sunday, in the church of *Hope*, in the village of Chorescu, which is located 15 km from Chisinau, a baptism service took place. Three young girls entered into a covenant with the Lord. I was invited to preach the Word of God. The local church, which has about 50 members, took



advantage of this event to invite fellow villagers to the House of Prayer. Half of those present in the hall were non-believers from the village. At the end of the service, two people repented. This is a great joy.



December is the time of exams for students. Students are nervous, teachers are worried. Examinations are not only tests of students' knowledge, but also tests of the teachers' ability to pass on their knowledge to students during the semester.



Traditionally, the fall semester ends with a solemn Christmas service for the whole University community. This year this service took place **on December 21st**. At 12 o'clock in the afternoon all the



students and teachers were gathered in the hall for conferences and other large meetings. The service included beautiful singing from the student choir, the singing of Christmas carols by various worship



groups, and the preaching of the Word of God. At the end of the service, we observed Communion together. After a two-hour service, a festive dinner was offered to all students and staff of the University.





On Sunday, **December 23rd**, we visited Moldova's oldest Baptist church, the *Bethel* church in Chisinau. I was invited to preach the Word of God. If in America December 25th marks the end of the Christmas season, in Moldova this is only the beginning. The service in which we participated opened the series of Christmas services, which will last until January 7, until the day of the celebration of Christmas by the Orthodox Church. Usually the Christmas services are very celebratory

and rich. Service at *Bethel* was no exception. The singing of the choir, the participation of music and singing groups decorated the service.



On December 24, Monday afternoon, in our church, *Bethany*, a special Christmas service for children was held. Children living in the area where the church is located were invited to this service. A record number of parents and children responded to the invitation - about 800 people attended the service.



Moreover, all these people do not belong to the church. The youth prepared a Christmas production. There was a brief sermon. And in conclusion, all the children received Christmas presents.





Children and teachers of the Sunday School of Bethany welcome guests to the Christmas service.

On the day of Christmas, **December 25th**, youth led the service at the *Bethany* church. A youth choir sang. The final sermon was delivered by the leading pastor of the church, Nikolay Vozyan.



On Friday, **December 28th**, a special service for families with children with disabilities was held at the Bethany church. Responsibility for the preparation of this service lay on one of the divisions of our church - "My child is my blessing."



For 11 years, the spouses Elena and Vyacheslav Kirchu have been leading this department and are dedicated to serving these families with kids with special needs. I gave a sermon at this festive service, and the youth showed a Christmas production. In conclusion, all the children present received gifts. In total, the service was attended by about 300 people. Most of them were invited to the service through the city's social security service. It was very touching to see so many children who suffer serious physical ailments.



This girl was very naughty during the service. However, having received a gift, she calmed down and smiled.

According to a long-standing tradition, on the eve of the New Year, ministers of the Baptist churches of Chisinau and its vicinity gather with their wives. This year this meeting took place on the evening of **December 28** in the church of the *Voice of Truth* (pastor Vitaly Pokidko). About 50 people



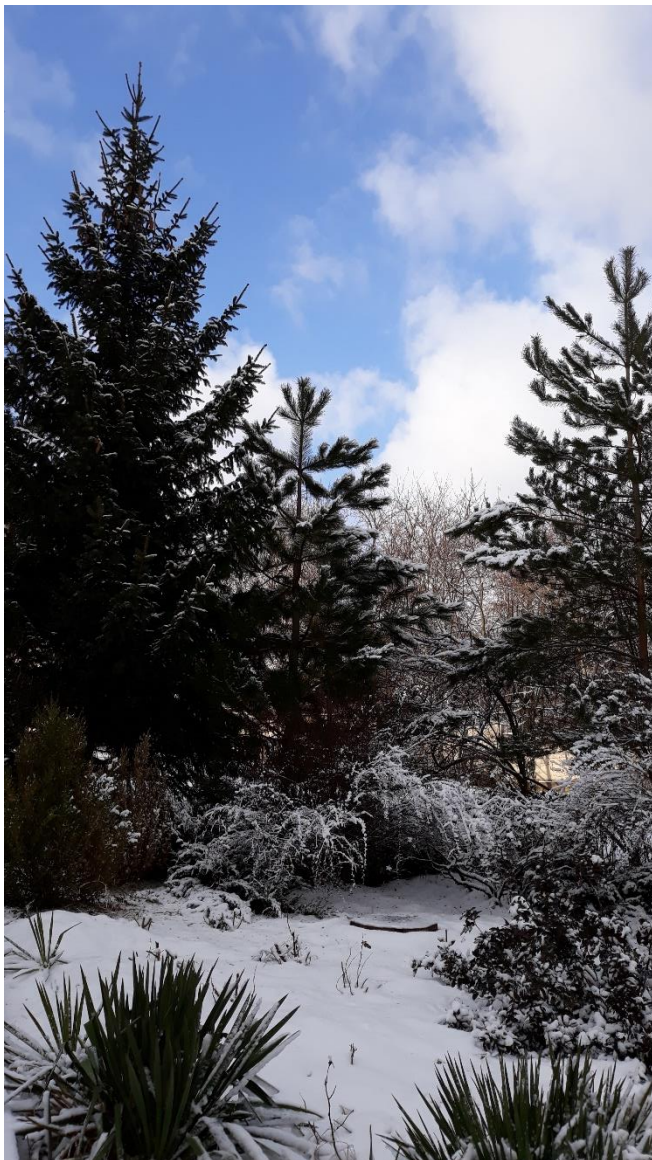
attended this fellowship meeting, which took place in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. For us it was a great blessing to be among the workers of God.



The morning service on the last Sunday of December (**December 30th**) ended with pleasant news. Lead Pastor, Nikolay Vozyan, announced that his daughter, Inna, was engaged to a young man, Oleg, and now they are bride and groom. This news was joyfully received by the church. Oleg is from Moldova, but now lives in the USA.

As you can see, the month of December was filled with many pleasant events in the ministry. Glory to our Lord for giving such ministry opportunities for His children in Moldova.

As we end, we wish you a happy new year in 2019. We do not know what this year will bring us - joy or grief, health or illness, peace or war. But we know one thing - our Lord will not leave us. As we sing in one of the hymns: "I will not forsake you, I will not forget you!" He says to me and to you: "I will keep you in the desert wilderness and in the everyday struggle." The Lord will enter this new year with us and lead us through all life circumstances - pleasant or mournful. Let the words of the Lord, once spoken to Joshua, be an encouragement to us at the beginning of the new year: "***Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.***" (Josh. 1: 9 NASB). With such a hearty mood - with firmness and courage, we will enter into the unknown of the new year, knowing that the Lord is with us everywhere and always. Glory and thanks to Him for this promise!



***Happy New Year!
With the new blessings of God!***

Your co-workers in the field of the Lord,

Vyacheslav and Nina Tsvirinko