

Update 19 written June 4, 2017

Listen without interrupting Prov. 18

Speak without accusing James 1:19

Give without sparing Prov. 21:26

Promise without forgetting Prov. 13:12

Pray without ceasing Col. 1:19

Enjoy without complaint Phil. 2:14

Answer without arguing Prov. 17:1

Forgive without punishing Col. 3:13

Trust without wavering Cor. 13:7

AGAPE - I returned from Lutsk at 6 am on Tuesday. Going into the trip, I had thought that since I would be visiting for 8 days, the pace would be a bit more reasonable. HA! All we did is cram more into our time :) It took me 2 nights of 10 hours of sleep to feel recovered.

It seems strange to think that I have been visiting this Christian Rehab Center for neck and spinal injuries for already 5 months now; how we have gone from being strangers to friends; how they know how to prevent them; and, have moved from being at a loss as to what to do – to now being able to accurately assess, understand the needs and begin appropriate treatment of pressure ulcers. I am very proud of them.

Beyond wound care, the staff also had questions regarding indwelling catheters, colostomy, feeding tube and tracheostomy care. I also brought along a refresher course on 1st Aid for their summer camps coming up. So one full day was spent 'in class.'

For the ostomy care, I gave the workshop I use at the Christian Medical Conferences for medical students...complete with bags of M&M's for correct answers to the test! The 1st Aid course, I had to just leave with them as we ran out of time. For the other subjects, instead of trying to teach/speak all myself, I decided to use a different method. Last month, I spent several days researching and pulling helpful articles from trust worthy sources. Then I highlighted the most important and sent it off to be translated into Ukrainian. With these in hand, I had each of the staff read a different article and then give an oral summary of it to the others. It was a way to move through a lot of information quickly.

I was happy to hear the Vassia (27 yr. old who had surgery on his pressure wounds) is doing great at home. We went to the hospital to visit Alexi. After such wonderful results with Vassia, I asked to have Alexi seen by the same surgeon. Now 2 weeks out from surgery, he was doing great and looking forward to going home soon. He is totally focused on getting well so that he can get into AGAPE for rehab.

Simply out of a great respect and thankfulness for how she helped Vassia and Alexi, I asked to be able to personally meet the surgeon. Besides, wanting to thank her, I also needed her expertise to help me understand a 3rd patient – a young spina bifida girl who had a pressure ulcer that I wasn't making any headway with. Dr. Oksana agreed to see the patient and afterwards we spoke briefly. I went away thrilled to have had established a relationship with such a skilled and kind surgeon *AND* she agreed to continue do consults with us. What riches from God!

A little trip to the country – As the trees and fields whipped by, I smiled inside. “Here we go again!” Once more I am in a place I've never been, looking for a village bus stop I've never seen to be met by a man I don't know. As it was the day couldn't have gone smoother but it was launched by sheer determination.

I met Nina last month while she was still in the hospital in Lutsk. A pastor's wife in her late 50's, now 2 weeks out from surgery after they found advanced cancer. Our visit was brief but we had the chance to touch on some basics, I left patient education material on colostomies and promised to see her during my next trip to Lutsk.

Since she was my first ostomy patient in this area, I brought supplies with me but then found out she couldn't come. She wasn't doing well and the 45 min. one way trip was more than she could handle. Hmm – what to do? Going by taxi was too expensive; none of the AGAPE drivers were available. So, I had my friends write down the info I needed and the intern going off duty took me to the bus station.

Since everything is in Ukrainian, my tongue and ears don't work as well in this area. But I have a lot of experience traveling by bus in Crimea so I wasn't nervous except for the possibility of not knowing where to get off. As the time got closer, I moved towards the front of the bus and handed the driver my paper where my stop was written. He nodded. Shortly afterwards, however, we pulled into a tiny village bus station. I could see the sign and it didn't match my word on the paper so I stayed on. Then a huge man in a dark blue shirt climbed on the bus, looked around and clamped his burly hand on my shoulder directing me off the bus. To make things easy for me, Nina's husband had driven to the larger neighboring town to meet me at the station.

Nina didn't look nearly as good as she had in the hospital and I couldn't figure out why. Her surgeon has certainly done all the right tests but the constant nausea 8 weeks after surgery is a mystery to all of us. I'm glad I went, if for no other reason than to bring supplies and a gentle hug.

Summer - With our Family Camp around the corner, then 2 more evangelistic camps in July for our special needs families, I won't be going to Lutsk again for a while. They too will have several camps for their people and I was urged to come and help. But, they have medical staff and we don't so I declined. Perhaps, I will return to visit again in the fall.

My hometown (Lebanon, OR) is celebrating their Strawberry Festival this weekend and our strawberries are also starting to come on strong. Yesterday morning I went over to our neighbor and got 26lbs that had just been picked that morning. Kind of over bought but it was out of joy of having such a fantastic chance. Now my freezer is stuffed, which makes for lots of fun opportunities ahead!

The same boiling water that softens the potato
hardens the egg.

It's about what you're made of - not the circumstances.

Family Camp - For the past 6 months, the special needs ministry team has been preparing for our big event that starts on June 14th. History: the church I work with here has had a special needs ministry for 6-7 years now. The church also has a 20+-year relationship with a church in Ohio. Besides them working alongside our church with evangelism through English, about 5 years ago, the Ohio church began helping with the special needs ministry. In short, they sponsor 2 one-week camps each July. 20 moms and 20 kids attend one week and another 20 moms and 20 kids attend the second week.

From the very beginning it was a great success in that relationships were deepened, the gospel was shared and many moms from camp begin attending the weekly Bible Studies that Tanya and others have for them. The problem was that the camp is so good that everyone wants to go every year, leaving no room for new comers. When I heard about this situation, God gave me the desire to do Family Camp.

Family Camp exists:

#1 for all the moms and kids that have been to the evangelistic camp more than 3 times #2 so that Dad and brothers and sisters can come too

#3 for an evangelistic opportunity to those in these families who have not yet heard the gospel.

#4 for spiritual growth for the moms that have heard the gospel – and either need to make a decision about what they have heard/to be baptized &/or to grow on from simply 'being saved.'

#5 to develop relationships with church members

#6 for the church to develop relationships with the special needs families

There was much 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' last year as Tanya told the veteran moms that they could no longer come to the evangelism camps but that they were invited to Family Camp. Many came though and God blessed the camp last year. This year when Tanya called the veteran moms to invite them to Family Camp – despite the additional expense of traveling to the sea, they were all signed up within 2 days.

As great as that is, it also translates into that this summer the evangelistic camps will have 70% brand new folks! I am thrilled because that means we have the chance to share and show the love of Christ to new group of moms and kids.

From now until the 22nd, I would really appreciate your prayers:

* James and Trudi Sang – from Tigard Christian Church, in Portland, OR, will leave Oregon on June 11th to fly to Ukraine and participate in our Family Camp. Please pray for their safe travel, smooth

transition, extra stamina, good health and wisdom. They start their trip back to Oregon on June 22 and quickly turn around to participate in another camp. So they could really use prayer coverage the whole month!

* James & Trudi will arrive late afternoon on June 12th. The next morning we (2 very full cars) start our trip south to camp. It will be a 11- 12-hour drive south to the Azov Sea. Please pray for a round trip of travel safety, no car breakdowns, no police stops and stamina for the drivers. We return to Kiev on June 21st and the Sang's fly out the next day.

* A few families are driving but most will board the train in Kiev on the evening of June 14th arriving the next morning in southern Ukraine. Somehow 100 people (including several in wheelchairs need to disembark the train during it's brief stop. 2 'Greyhound' size buses and a van will be waiting to take them the last 2 ½ hours to camp.

For anyone this is a long trip but for little ones, Autistic, Down's and those in wheelchairs...and their parents...the trip may feel just short of forever. Praying for calmness, patience and stamina for everyone.

* We expect about 150 people and it will be a mix of typical families (30%) and families with children who have special needs (70%). Please pray that God's perfect will be done; that satan would find no foothold; preparation of every heart; wisdom & obedience for the leadership team - especially the pastors and kids club leaders; health & safety and good weather.

Thank you very much! June

1 & 2 Colostomy care 101 class with the medical personal at the AGAPE Center in Lytsk Photo 3 New nurse at AGAPE - Galya - and I doing nail care.

Last 3 photos were taken Friday at the quarterly birthday party for our special needs kids in Brovary (where I live).











