



The Gross Family to Moldova



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God has given us a wonderful start to 2015, and we look forward to His working in our life and the lives of those here in Moldova.

At the end of November, Moldova held a very critical election. Would Moldova vote for the pro-European parties or one of the socialist, pro-Russian parties? The majority of people in Moldova speak of their days under the Soviet Union as the "good 'ole days." The elections were close, but the pro-European parties won. With the unrest in Ukraine, many people here in Moldova questioned how the election results would affect peace here. We thank the Lord that thus far, we have peace. Some violent plots by radical activists were found out by police before they were carried out. **Please pray the peace would continue.**

At the beginning of December we finally moved downstairs. We love having a kitchen with hot, running water, a separate room for the kids to sleep in, and all those rooms heated. All we have left to finish downstairs is the toilet room and bathroom.

Part of December was spent trying to apply for necessary documents. We finally succeeded in receiving Ana's Moldovan birth certificate, renewing our passports, and applying to renew our Moldovan residency permits. **Please pray for us to receive our permits.**

In December, the Hughes and we spent a couple days to plan out 2015. The Lord worked in and through those couple days in unexpected ways. Having another couple to work with has shown us how iron can sharpen iron. We thank the Lord for the Hughes and how God has recently been working in our own lives to make us more like Christ. **Please pray for us that we will continue to be conformed to the image of Christ.**

We ask that this year, you join us in praying for fruit. Last year seed was planted and watered. We are seeing growth in people's knowledge of God's Word and of salvation. We patiently seek fruit, though. Please join us in lifting up the following:

Varvara, our neighbor who is over 70 years old and strong Orthodox, refused to let me talk to her at any length about the Bible when we first arrived here last year. As we have helped her, shown our gratitude for the fruit and vegetables she shares with us from her garden, and refused payment from her as an example of salvation being a free gift from God, she has opened up more than ever before. January 7th was the Orthodox Christmas, based on the old calendar. I was able to spend almost 2 hours talking with her after we went over to sing some Christmas carols to her (we went over on Dec. 24th with the Hughes to sing carols, but she would not let us since it was not the Orthodox Christmas). She knows every jot and tittle of the Orthodox traditions and lives of their "saints" but so little of what the Bible actually says. On their Christmas, though, we had a very good talk together about salvation and Christ's work to save us. She believes one must do many good works to get to heaven. Now that she is older, she cannot do the number of good works that she used to and this concerns her. "It is very hard to get to heaven," she told me. According to her, only God knows who will make it to heaven or not. I shared with her that God does know and has made it known to us, too, in the Bible. Refusing to even look at our Bible, she said she only would read the Orthodox Bible... so I bought one from an Orthodox priest in town. **Please pray for Varvara to allow me to use their Bible to read to her and that she will trust in Christ's finished work rather than the futility of her good works.**

Maria continues to ask us questions and be very open. Due to the holidays and being really busy, she has not been able to start into reading the Gospel of John yet. **Please continue praying for her.**

Jacob and I visited Victor again last week. He has been reading in the Bible we gave him. **Please pray that this would continue.**

We finished studying through the Gospel of Luke with Nadia and are now into Acts. Her 10 year old grandson,

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Claudiu, has been regularly joining us, following along in the Bible. As Jacob pointed out, we came to minister to Nadia, but God knows what influence the studies may end up having on his life, too. The study in Luke made clear the Gospel to her and we pray that the study in Acts will make clear to her what the church is and what God's plan is through the church. **Please continue praying for Nadia and for her to see the contrast between the church found in the Bible and what is practiced by the Orthodox church.**

We had previously mentioned Jeanette, the Filipino woman who is temporarily here in Moldova. After meeting her, she came every Sunday morning until she returned to Germany with her husband for vacation. She trusted Christ as Savior in 2005 and has been without a pastor or church for most of the time since due to her husband's working abroad. When Jacob and I met with her before we had the Lord's Supper, she told us she was not baptized yet but really wants to be. Jacob and I have found a place to hold the baptism after her return to Moldova in February. **Please pray for her husband to have a soft heart towards the Gospel and for the plans for Jeanette's baptism.**

After talking to one of the men who had worked on our house this fall about Christ and giving him a Bible, I gave him an open invitation to contact me. Recently, he called me to find out how we were doing. **Please pray for Oleg as we may be getting together this Sunday afternoon with both he and his wife.**

Jacob and I would like to witness to people at the markets in our town and give out the Gospel of John and our contact info. We spoke with the managers of both markets and were told that we would need to talk to the mayor. **Please pray for the door to be open to us doing so.**

Thank you all for your faithful prayers and support for us and the work here in Soroca.