



Monthly Update

December 2009

EXPECTATIONS

As a child I enjoyed reading the Chronicles of Narnia. Being from the southern hemisphere I never fully understood the terrible feeling the children felt knowing that the White Witch of Narnia made it always winter but never Christmas. We grow up with the expectation that certain things should always go hand in hand. Here people expect snow with winter. But we are yet to see snow this winter which is very unusual. We all have expectations for Christmas holidays. We have expectations for New Year. We have our own expectations in friendships, work situations, service in shops and restaurants. And we feel grieved when our expectations are not met. This is natural. Sometimes it is helpful. I have expectations of my workers and if they constantly fall short it is my job to draw their attention to their responsibilities. But often our expectations are unrealistic, selfish or both. We focus on what we expect from life and those around us rather than what we can give to others.

May I grow to give more and expect less. Ouch – that can be a hard lesson.

UTSIM

I was very happy to see the end of November. Quarantine is now a thing of the past, and the deadline of having an educational licence or be shut down has come and gone with no word from the Head of Education. I wrote her a letter outlining our position – but have heard nothing in return. So for now we keep teaching students. Two new students signed up last week. It seems that people like learning English. My hope and prayer is that they learn a lot more than just English.

One of my teachers meets another adult for a one on one class one evening a week. They speak English for the duration of the lesson and then regularly sit around and chat for another hour in Ukrainian. It is good to be able to share life this way.

We had a good time as an entire staff together last week. We looked at where UTSIM has come from, where are we going and how are we going to get there. This included a financial report and looking at what we need to do to make UTSIM financially viable. It was exciting to see what God has done from humble beginnings – and to be reminded that He is the captain of this ship.

Thank you to the many people who pray for UTSIM. Daily I am reminded of my own human inadequacies – but through Him I can do all that He wants me to do – He is my strength

AN UTSIM REQUEST

This is not something I want to make a habit of – but yep I'm looking for sponsors. We have started a program for underprivileged families where we offer 100% or 50% sponsorship for them to study English with

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WEBSITE

There are lots of *personal stories, anecdotes* and *photos* on Jono's website at www.jonomiller.com

You can interact with Jono and others by commenting on any of the blog posts.

A full archive of all the RPD and Monthly newsletters is also available there if you have missed any before.

Newsletter Subscriptions

This is a monthly email distribution to you. If you prefer to receive more frequent weekly prayer points email me and type RPD in the subject.

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us. We are currently sponsoring 4 students and would like to increase this. I'm looking for people who would like to commit to sponsoring a student for a year of English. Our year is 9 months from September to May. You can sponsor a student for Aus\$30 a month for 9 months. We can provide some details of your student so you can also pray for them. For more details about this program and how to send us money – please email me on jono@jonomiller.com.

LIFE OUTSIDE OF BUSINESS

OLD AGE – BAD BACK

On Thursday I did my back! Whatever that means – all I know is that Thursday night was extremely painful and the following morning also. It is still not right and I had to pull out of squash last night (it is serious for me not to play sport). I am thankful for a tube of extra strength dencorub that I have from Aus. Please pray for my health and for me to be wise in the care of my body. I thank God for the extremely good health I have had all my life thus far.

KIDS

I always enjoy hanging out with kids. Next week I'm taking the older children from the Gollan and Crowe families to Kyiv to watch a Christmas pantomime (this is a very British tradition). I enjoy the time I get to spend with kids. To chat and see the thoughts they are forming as they grow into young men and women. I nearly always feel invigorated and blessed to have spent time with them. I love the quote: "When I grow up, I want to be a kid."

RZHYSHCHIV

We had an afternoon for handicapped children last Saturday. Only two children were able to make it and so we were very top heavy with leaders. But it was worth every minute to see these kids respond to someone giving them time and attention and love. Jeff came and had a chat with everyone about their favourite foods. Apparently Jeff likes everything with ketchup (tomato sauce). Ice-cream and chocolate included. Jeff even spoke Ukrainian and I was quite proud of his effort, (lol).

Here in Ukraine I don't miss the great big commercial build up to Christmas we have in Australia and NZ. I don't miss hearing Christmas carols until you are sick of them. December 25th is actually a work day for me – well the first half. After that I am having Christmas dinner at Ruth and Jon's with seven other people. The biggest 'thing' I miss is Christmas pudding. I'm going to attempt to make one but I can't buy suet here or currants or mixed peel. I realise this is very unimportant. Everyone heave a collective 'sigh' for Jono and get back to work (did I mention I really love Christmas pudding!!).



WHAT YA READIN'?

The Devil is another short story by Leo Tolstoy. This is about temptation. I haven't quite finished the book, but am reminded of the importance of praying "*Lead me not into temptation*". I enjoyed *Putting a Face on Grace* by Richard Blackaby. This is an easy to read book full of practical reminders of how we can live a life of grace. I would encourage everyone saved by grace to read this book. 4/5

I haven't had a lot of time for reading lately. I hope to read a couple of books when we get a couple of weeks off during Christmas and New Year.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

UTSIM vision and unity and teamwork

Sponsorship for students

My bad back and a cough I cannot shake

Kids – thank God for them

Christmas pudding (please)

THANKS

To Deb Crowe for the awesome soups she turns out at home group every week!

Love Jono

Keep Looking Up