



ELECTIONS

Tomorrow is Election Day here in Ukraine. This is the first round of presidential elections. Ukraine shot to world fame five years ago with the Orange Revolution after an attempted poisoning and then vote rigging. There probably won't be much fuss this time round but then many people are rather despondent. There doesn't seem to be anyone to choose who wants to do anything to combat the rampant corruption in this country. Most candidates are considered as much a thief and a bandit as the next one.

What is the right response? It is easy to criticise governments. Back home in NZ and Aus we do that all the time – and we have some of the least corrupt governments in the world. For interest check out [this survey](#). Just this week I read Titus 3:1–2 which says, “Remind the believers to yield to the authority of rulers and government leaders, to obey them, to be ready to do good, to speak no evil about anyone, to live in peace, and to be gentle and polite to all people.”

We should do all we can, we should not be apathetic or ignorant. And we should pray for the rulers of our nations.

UTSIM

What a week in the life of UTSIM! We started back at school on Monday and were told by the director of the school that there is a new law forbidding private companies to operate in government buildings and so we must leave. We asked if it would be ok to stay til the end of the week. The answer was negative – please leave ASAP.

Tuesday morning, I rallied a team of helpers and first of all attempted to get my van off the hill so we could move everything. After a while we gave up on that idea and tried Dan's van. After Bruce came and towed Dan we got to school and moved everything out in less than an hour and dumped it all in Gaven's house – just down the road. The UTSIM staff worked really well organising everything and we ran lessons on Tuesday afternoon. We are escorting the younger students to and from the school and most others seem happy at this stage to be in a different place. We will be there at least til the end of January but then need to make a decision as to where next.

The amazing thing is that in the middle of the turmoil we still have new students signing up although

we have lost a few since 2009. Thanks to everyone who helped and especially all of you who prayed.

Bits and Pieces

Prayer Advance. The church here is starting 2010 with a special focus on prayer. From Jan 17 – 31 we are having a focus on praying for our church family, our outreach endeavours, our town, our vision and our unity. Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays will have special prayer times as well as an encouragement for increased personal prayer. This will culminate in a prayer walk on Jan 31 as we pray for Rzhyschiv. I ask you to pray with us. Pray that this will be something real in my life – in our lives; not just a good idea or a church program.

Routine. It's good to have routine in your life. So often it seems that the unexpected is my routine. However, I'm glad to be teaching again. There are some busy times ahead and some big decisions to make. I enjoy Friday evenings. We started squash again this week. After breaking a racquet back in November we have been out of this routine. Squash is rather new in Ukraine so we bought a way over-priced racquet which broke before we had finished warming up. Thankfully they replaced it for us. I look forward to Friday evening squash with Jon (and remembering how to win again).

Internet. I waited til Saturday night to type this so I could tell you I now have high speed internet at home. But I don't. Jon and I spent all day rigging up antennae and new fan-dangled devices (so I'm not that technical) which are supposed to bring us fast and constant internet. Mine doesn't work. Oh well – we can only hope.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- Ukrainian Presidential Elections
- UTSIM – where we should be
- Prayer Advance
- Healthy routine in all areas of life

THANKS TO

Gaven for lending his house to UTSIM

