

September 30, 2017.

Peace to you, dear friends! Greetings to you in the precious name of our Savior Jesus Christ.

We are at the end of another month of our service in the sunny country of Moldova. September is the first month of the school year. Both students and teachers are still full of energy and enthusiasm after summer break. They are not yet feeling tired of teaching and studying, which is usually felt from the middle of the semester. This is a month of acquaintance with new students and new teachers. September is a good month in Moldova: Plenty of fruit and vegetables, no hot days and cool nights, beginning of fall.

Let me share with you some of the events of this month that have become particularly remarkable to us.

This month has begun for us with a sad event. As you will recall, in a previous letter I wrote that one of our church members, Anton Provorniy, suddenly went to be with the Lord on August 28th as a result of a car accident in Russia. On **September 3**, Sunday afternoon, a funeral service was held in the Bethany church. More than 400 people have come to honor the memory of Anton and express condolences to the family. This sad event the Lord used to convey the message of his love and the salvation in Christ to those present who do not know God personally, and who never would have come to church, had it not been for this tragic occasion. Many of Anton's coworkers and his father and his brother coworkers were present in the service. There were many pastors and church members from other churches in the city. Many people knew and loved Anton. His departure is a great loss not only for the wife, daughter and his family, but also for the greater Christian family of Chisinau. But that was God's will, and we humbly accept it. Anton's wife, Lille, and his daughter Dasha returned from Russia after Anton's funeral. They feel better. Thank you all for praying for them.

September 8. A pleasant event for us this month was a visit of Mikhail Tsvirinko. No, that wasn't our son Mikhail, who lives in Los Angeles 😊. It was my cousin who lives in Russia, at Krasnodar region. He performs an evangelistic ministry there using various visual aids. The purpose of his arrival in Chisinau was to participate in the conference. It was a pleasant opportunity for us to meet with him after many years of separation.

September is the month of the Harvest celebrations in the churches of evangelical Christian Baptists. I have had the privilege of participating already in three churches celebrating this holiday. On **September 10**, this service was held in the Church of Hope in the village of Chouresku. This is the suburb of Chisinau. This is the third time we have been in this church. Two weeks later, on **September 24**, Nina and I visited Transnistria. This is the territory of Moldova, which in 1992 separated and declared its independence from that country. Much of this almost unrecognized state resembles the Soviet Union. For us, a trip there is like a return to our distant past. Nina and I took part in the services of the two churches - in the morning in the church "New Life" in city of Tiraspol and after lunch at the church "Grace" in city of Bender. The churches are not numerous, between 50 and 80 members, and consist mainly of those who have accepted Christ since the dissolution of the USSR. This is a special category of believers and we are always very pleased to meet them. In each of these services, my participation was to preach the Word of God.

Of course, the central event during the month of September was the 33th Congress of the Union of Baptist Churches of Moldova, which was held from 14 to 16 of September. In connection with this event, Nina and I received a special gift — the arrival of Ivan Vladimirovich and Alina Mileev, who came to Congress as guests of the Pacific Coast Slavic Baptist Association. For us, meeting them has, to some extent, reduced the sense of nostalgia for all those who stayed in America. You always care about something special when you're in another country, meeting someone who's come from your former place of residence and who has the opportunity to communicate with those who cherish your heart and who you miss. It was a blessing for us to fellowship with Ivan and Alina Mileev on Moldovan soil.

The Congress of the Union of Baptist Churches of Moldova runs once every four years. This is a special event in the life of brotherhood. More than 400 delegates attended the convention. There are currently about 400 churches and more than 18000 members in the union. During the Congress, the reports of the Union's leadership, the greetings of the representatives of the partner organizations and the sermons of the speakers were heard, one of which was Ivan Mileev. The new leadership of the Union was elected. Of course, it was all in excellent musical accompaniment. Choral, group, and solo singing, as well as the participation of musical groups, have created a particularly solemn and pleasant atmosphere at the Convention. We are grateful to the Lord for giving us the opportunity to participate in such an important forum. A more detailed description of this event and a photograph can be found in article of Ivan Mileev, posted in the September PCSBA newsletter. You can find this article in English by using the following link:

[Http://pcsba.com/index.php/en/news/our-news/885-33-convention-churches-moldova](http://pcsba.com/index.php/en/news/our-news/885-33-convention-churches-moldova)

A particularly pleasant event for us was a meeting with the Shipuk family on **September 26**. After having performed missionary service in Italy for several years, they are returning to America for some time. Then they plan to continue missionary service in another country, in Spain. Olga grew up in Chisinau. Her mother and a lot of relatives live here. So, before they left for the United States, they stopped for a few days in Chisinau. In their very compressed schedule here, they were able to make time for a brief meeting with us. With Alik Shipuk, we have a lot of links. He finished the Fresno Pacific University, where I worked for many years. He is a member of the House of the Gospel Church in Fresno, of which we are members as well. We supported him when he was a missionary in Chukotka. We supported his and Olya's service in Italy. It was therefore a great pleasure for us to meet with them, to pray together and to bless them for their further life.

In conclusion, the Lord has blessed our lives over the past month abundantly. University work is proceeding well. This is the second semester of my work here, and I feel much more confident than it was in the first semester. Always, while on the way to university (not in a car, but in a trolleybus or a shuttle taxi ☺), I am looking forward the joy of meeting the students in the class. It is a pleasure to serve this young generation of Christians with understanding that these are those who will continue to work in the Lord's vineyard after us.

My time is dedicated not only to teaching at the university, but also to preparing courses for the spring semester. And for the preparations for the Pastoral conference to be held in Riga, Latvia, on

20-21 October. Of course, participation in the service of different churches in Moldova requires time and efforts as well. So, we have a pretty busy life here.

Heartfelt thanks to all those who pray for us. Please continue to do so. Pray for our service, our health. That the Lord should help us be in the blessing of all those we are meeting here.

In turn, we pray for you and wish each of you abundant blessings of God. Let the text of the Scriptures written at 1Peter 4:8 be farewell to you in October: "Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another ..."

With Love and prayer,

Your coworkers in God's Kingdom serving in Moldova,

Vyacheslav and Nina Tsvirinko