

## Ministry stories 2019

### Yakiv Stankevych, Verkhne Vysotske, Carpathian Mountains, Ukraine (138)

#### Greetings!

We want to share a story with you about a foundation and development of Sunday School in Verhne Vysotske village. This little village is located at the feet of Carpathian mountains, not far from where Striy river starts. Here we can see cows, horses and sheep grazing on the slopes of the mountains. The time seems to go in slow motion, and the rhythm of life in the village is frozen due to the lack of significant changes over the past decade. In winter, it snows pretty often here, and the temperatures sometimes drops to about minus 30 degrees Celsius. In such cases little children don't go out to the streets, and some stay home for almost all winter period. Once, a little girl was asked what season of the year she liked most, and she said without hesitation that it was winter, since there is no need to pasture livestock and work on hayfields during that period.



WEBSITE

For the first time we hosted a camp for local children in 2016. They were children from the HART Child Sponsor project, from the village of Verkhne Vysotske and from the Matkiv village. The kids also invited their brothers and sisters and friends to the camp. Since that time, over 60 children have been coming to our camp every year.



After the first camp, held in 2016, the kids were invited to a Sunday school classes beginning in September the same year. About 10 children started to visit the Sunday school and later, at the end of spring, there were about 20 of them. In September 2017, over 30 children started to attend Sunday school classes. In 2018, we divided the large group of children into two



small groups: for younger kids (5-7 years old) and for older kids (8-13 years old). Aside from spending a lot of time with children playing various interactive games, we also teach them to make cookies and fry sausages, which they like a lot.

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At first, the kids were not familiar with the concept of God, Church, sin and salvation. Some of them knew the prayer "Our Heavenly Father" because they had been taught it in Catholic or Orthodox church but that was it. Now they know many biblical stories, sing songs, memorize Bible verses and read the junior Bible. The kids really like it in the Sunday School.



We also hold Christmas and Easter festive parties each year where the kids from Sunday school are usually actively involved. They prepare for it in advance: learn poetrries, songs and invite their parents to the event so that they could watch their children doing drama performances, participate in some games or contests and, of course, listen to the Word of God.

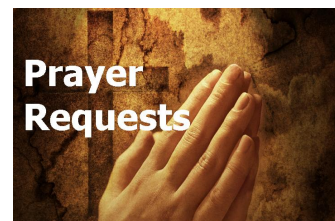


Thanks to the grace of God and the HART project, in villages where only traditional churches (Orthodox and Catholic) are commonly recognized and where there is not a single Protestant church, the Sunday School where any children can hear the Gospel and study the Word of God is actively functioning for almost four years now.



### PRAYER REQUESTS:

- May God bless you for your involvement in our ministry. It is extremely important;
- Please, pray for God's guidance and wisdom in carrying out our ministry;
- Ask God to open the hearts of the kids we work with and bring them to Jesus.



HART is dedicated to alleviating poverty and injustice in Eastern Europe. We work alongside local churches and ministries and give them the tools to build a better world for themselves, their communities, and their countries.

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