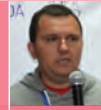


counterparts : Belarus

Artsiom Adamenka describes the Christian Medical Society of Belarus



Artsiom Adamenka is an anaesthetist in Belarus

Tell us a little bit about yourself

I am a 37-year-old anaesthetist working in Gomel, Belarus. I am married and a father of two. I am also the Executive Secretary of the Christian Medical Society of Belarus and a member of a local evangelical church. I became a Christian aged 14 after a neighbour invited me to church. Hearing about God's salvation through the Bible transformed my life and led me to choose medicine as a career to serve others practically.

What is working as a doctor like in Belarus?

Similarly to many European countries, medical education in Belarus focuses on the body, overlooking a person's spirit and a soul. A key vision of the Christian Medical Society in Belarus is to bring the spheres of Christian faith and medical practice together, allowing whole-person medicine that honours God. This is complicated by laws preventing Belarusian doctors from sharing their faith, prayer, or the Bible with patients. We face challenges with certain ethical issues, particularly IVF and conscientious objection to abortion. Doctors in Belarus receive low wages – the traditional salary is 80% of a factory worker as doctors were not seen as producing anything. Many doctors work two or more jobs to make ends meet. This can lead to tiredness, apathy, impaired Christian service, temptation to seek bribes, and increased risk of clinical mistakes. Doctors do not have any legal protection and many have been prosecuted and imprisoned for medical errors. This has led to a culture of non-disclosure and dishonesty in medical documentation.

I've heard there were exciting outreach events in Belarus last year...

2017 was a Jubilee year in Belarus! We celebrated 500 years since both the Reformation and the Bible being translated into Belarusian by Francysk Skaryna, a medical doctor. In my city, the



evangelical churches joined together to hold a series of outreach events including presentations on how the Bible has impacted Belarusian culture, musical concerts, and a Christian drama – all with the aim of sharing Jesus with non-believers.

What events does the Christian Medical Society in Belarus hold?

In addition to local meetings we have an annual Summer Camp called MEDicus. MED stands for Medicine, Evangelia (the gospel), and Druzhba (friendship). It has become increasingly international, providing a safe middle ground for Russian and Ukrainian Christians doctors and students to come together. Our next camp includes a village health mission and takes place 6-11 August 2018 near Odessa, Ukraine. UK CMF members are welcome to join us!

What things would you appreciate prayer for?

Personally, I would appreciate prayer for God's blessing and wisdom in balancing my time between work, family, the Christian Medical Society, and serving at church. Please also pray that Belarusians would think more about the Bible during this year of Jubilee; it was printed for them by a doctor so that they would come to know Jesus as their lord and saviour! ■

Contact fi.mclachlan@cmf.org.uk if you would like more information on the UK CMF Short-Term Vision Trip to the MEDicus camp 2018 in Odessa, Ukraine.