



One Block at a Time . . .

Chris Brown
HH Builder's Team Member

Ten men traveled to Ukraine this past May on a HH Builder's trip. The goal of our trip was to help build a home for a young HopeHouse father, a pastor named Sergei Voytenko, and his wife, Alena, and their two adopted children, Sasha and Ina. Sergei is the pastor of a small rural community church 40 miles outside of Kiev.

We quickly discovered that construction in the Ukraine is done by hand. If you have 12 tons of cement bags, you off load them by hand. 3,000 bricks? . . . No problem, just line up and move them one at a time. Building blocks needed for the second level? Just lift a few hundred over your head. And so we put a house together one block at a time, one wheelbarrow load of gravel at a time, and one mixer full of cement at a time. At the end of the week the house was ready for a roof. *And yet this was about so much more than building a house.*



The Voytenko home, built by HH Building Teams

The HopeHouse father, Sergei, had difficulty believing that a group of lawyers and business men and college professors would travel to the Ukraine and spend their own money to help build a house for a Christian family in need. Under Soviet rule, Christians were actively persecuted for their faith. One could lose his job for being a Christian or worse yet, be thrown in jail. Christians were objects of ridicule and scorn. By us physically going, doing and working side by side - - we helped to lift Sergei up and give him more confidence to spread the Gospel in his community.

As for myself, I've learned that there are always excuses and reasons why not to heed a call. Our individual gifts are different. *I might not be able to preach in Ukrainian, but I can help to provide a home for someone who can.*