



REV. KENNETH SEARS

Home church: Mohn's Hill E.C.

Birthdate: November 24

Ken Sears was raised in an Irish Catholic family, the oldest of five children, and lived most of his childhood in the wider New York City area. As of this writing (July 2019) Ken's parents and two of his brothers live in Texas, where his father retired from an executive position at J.C. Penney headquarters.

Ken received Christ by faith in July 1977 at the age of 19. Later, in his mid-twenties, Ken became involved with the E.C. Church after befriending the pastor of the Whiting, NJ congregation, the late Alan Hipkiss. Rev.

Hipkiss mentored Ken and encouraged him to consider pastoral ministry. Ken attended Evangelical School of Theology from 1987-1990. After graduation, he served as assistant pastor at Mohn's Hill E.C. Church.

Very early in his Christian life Ken sensed a compelling pull toward Christian service in Europe; the interest was first sparked by talking with a missionary from France. In 1989 he participated in a summer mission project in Ireland, which solidified the certainty that he was to serve in Europe. After much prayer and consultation, Ken finally saw clear leading from the Lord to serve in Ukraine. Having concluded his support-raising and pre-field training, Ken left in February 1995 to serve in the city of Zaporozhye ("Zaporizhzhya" in Ukrainian) under European Christian Mission.

Ken teaches at Zaporizhzhya Bible Seminary, which was being launched by missionaries from Greater Europe Mission at just around the time Ken was gearing up to go to Ukraine. He teaches a range of courses on theology, principles of Bible interpretation, specific biblical books, OT Hebrew, and English. In his nearly 25 years at the school (during which the school's name has changed a few times!) Ken has held various administrative positions as well, including Director of Admissions, but gradually the Ukrainian faculty, mostly ZBS graduates, have taken over the leadership. Ken's preferred official title is "just Ken."

The other main area of Ken's Ukrainian ministry is the church where he serves as one of the preacher-elders. The church's senior pastor is Ken's oldest Ukrainian friend Vova Gorbenko, who is also Academic Dean at the seminary. Ken is very involved in the many ministries and overall leadership of the church, including important mentoring/discipleship relationships. His work at the seminary likewise includes this vital aspect of Christian service.

At this point (2019) Ken hopes to continue serving officially as a supported missionary into his mid-sixties. When the time eventually comes to go on “pension,” he intends, God willing, to continue living as much as possible in Ukraine. As of this writing, Ukraine’s geopolitical situation is dangerous and precarious. With those he serves and loves in Ukraine, Ken takes it day by day, walking “by faith, not by sight.”