



UKRAINE MISSIONS NEWS

John L. Kachelman, Jr.

February 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

- Ukraine's crisis as reported by our brethren in Krasnoarmeisk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kramatorsk, Ternopil, Stary Lisets, Skvyra and Krivy Rig



"One more girl was baptised today and God adds her to His family! Her name is Sveta, She is 23! This is friend of Ann. God inspired us in the bad time in our region! Thank you for your prayers!"

Rodnaev Sasha, Krasnoarmeisk

CONTACT INFORMATION

John L. Kachelman, Jr.
Ukraine Missions
College church of Christ
2934 East Moore Street
Searcy, Arkansas 72143
Cell: 901-626-4538
john@kachelman.com

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT OF THE WORK HERE, IN THE EASTERN PART OF UKRAINE. IT IS NOT EASY TIME FOR US NOW BUT WE PUT OUR EFFORTS TO BE BETTER CHRISTIAN PEOPLE, BETTER CITIZENS, HELP MORE, CRITICIZE LESS, SHOW COURAGE AND FAITH IN OUR FUTURE! GOD IS WITH US, OUR SPIRIT IS STRONG, HEART IS OPEN AND WE ARE READY FOR BETTER FUTURE."

These words come from our brother Vladimir in Kramatorsk, Ukraine. Kramatorsk is in the Oblast Donetsk and on February 10 Russian missiles rained down upon that city. Vlad's report contains references to that day of evil and its horrific consequences.

February was a very busy week in our efforts. In fact it was exhausting. It seems we were constantly involved in some action associated with helping our brethren in Ukraine—either picking up, packing, sorting, loading, or running the exhausting gauntlet of documents and endless queries regarding the logistics and approvals.

Thanks to our fantastic volunteer base the shortest month of the year was so far the most productive month of the past twelve months! Here is what was accomplished in the brief 28 days of February 2015...

- ✓ **Six 40HC container were loaded** (these are 40 feet long, 8 feet wide, 9.5 feet high)
- ✓ **176,194 pounds were picked up by hand, packed into the container and shipped** to our brethren to distribute to the wounded, orphaned, widowed, elderly, and needy.
- ✓ **\$936,506.00 total value** of items that had been donated and shipped in the Lord's Name
- ✓ **50,000 pounds of dry food mixes** were included in this month's shipments and that container was loaded in British Columbia, Canada and sent to the Lord's People in Ivano-Frankivsk for distribution to those displaced by Russia's evil invasion and occupation

These incredible totals would not be possible without the support from all involved. THANK YOU for everything you do in these efforts. As you read the reports below you will see the significant impact that your labors are making for the Lord.

Be reminded of this text when you feel exhausted...*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."*

—John L. Kachelman, Jr.

"At this time, our brother in Christ and BVBIU graduate, Maksim Gaykov was injured. He stayed in Gorlovka together with his family and continued serving the Lord there with many other Christians. When he was on his way home, a bomb exploded several feet away from him. The injury was not life threatening, and we have already sent money to pay for his medical treatment. Splinter of a bomb hurt the soft tissue of his leg. Unfortunately, there are thousands of such injuries and deaths among the civilians. We ask you to continue praying for peace in Ukraine."

JERRY MAX MORGAN'S OBSERVATIONS ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO UKRAINE

John, For several months I have used the comparison of Ukraine and the church at Jerusalem: Great receptivity to the Gospel, unparalleled persecution, scattering, and planting of new congregations. Now I see it one step further by remembering how God demanded that Israel provide cities of refuge from the avenger of blood (Not a bad name for Putin). In my reports I point out God demanded that 13% of the cities be set aside for this ministry. The parallel can be made between the Church and Israel and how grand it would be if the Church set aside 13% of their assets for the care of these refugees.

The "Cities of Refuge": in Numbers 35:6-7 God told Moses to command the children of Israel to give the tribe of Levi 48 cities...6 of which would be cities of refuge.

For the last two weeks, I worked in a "city of refuge" Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.

I was there to preach, help with building repairs and to provide food for the orphans (Ukraine has been unable to provide food for the orphans because of the destruction Russia has brought upon their government).

Refugees from the region of Donetsk (where Donna and I worked in 1994-1995) have fled to Ivano-Frankivsk seeking refuge. While there they sought out the Church and have become song leaders, teachers, and some are training to preach.

Each Lord's Day the Church prepares "survival bags" for the refugees. This ministry has so touched the entire city that the wife of a Russian Orthodox Priest has been coming to the Church for Bible studies and staying to help pass out food for the refugees.

Our Judsonia team has shipped out 8 containers to Ukraine this year (January-February), valued at over \$1,000,000.00. Will you help us send more by giving items for the containers? Or provide money for shipping costs? Can we depend on you? Can God depend on you?

For Christ and the Children, Jerry Max Morgan

IVAN SKOLEBA REPORTS FROM IVANO-FRANKIVSK!

Greetings, dear brothers and sisters!

February was a very busy and stressful month for us. Many people ask Church to help them with food and clothes. They tell us their horror stories. These personal stories at times seem incredible when we hear how people would hide in their basements without food and water because they were not allowed to leave the warzone. You can see fear and despair, discouragement and pain, in their eyes. We try to listen to everything they have to say and to help them as much as we can.

Four recent refugees started coming to our worship services. One of them by the name of Oksana is a Catholic priest's wife. Her husband is now in the warzone. Also Leonid Krzhanovsky's wife and daughter came to us (Leonid is a preacher). And it was here in Ivano-Frankivsk that Natasha gave birth to

THE CHURCH IN IVANO-FRANKIVSK RESPONDING TO THE CRISIS



"Thanks to humanitarian aid from America that we have given away in villages and small towns throughout the Region, those country folks collected potatoes and onions and gave to the Church in Ivano-Frankivsk because they know our reputation to help anyone. It was these donations that allowed us to help refugees and some was left for Church members as well."



her daughter Eva. They have started attending our assembly. People are very thankful to brothers and sisters from America for help and prayers. This last Sunday we gave away sixty food packages that included grains, sugar, onions two kilos each and a bucket of potatoes.

There is interesting part of this story on how Church is helping refugees from warzones. Thanks to humanitarian aid from America that we have given away in villages and small towns throughout the Region, those country folks collected potatoes and onions and gave to the Church in Ivano-Frankivsk because they know our reputation to help anyone. It was these donations that allowed us to help refugees and some was left for Church members as well. Thanks to Kathy for the rice, which we used to help many people.

Brother Jerry Morgan from Piggott, Arkansas America visited with us and taught classes on Christian Family. Everybody liked the lessons.

Another great joy it is to announce that brother Volodya Didukh's father came to Church! This was the first time he attended since Volodya became a member of the Church. Volodya was very happy and thanked God for answering his prayers. Thank you for praying for Volodya's father as well.

By this situation we can see that the Lord can change lives of people in amazing ways, and that the Gospel of the Lord is so powerful.

Volodya is working hard in Stary Lisets in the room that was given to him for Bible studies. Volodya put in new doors and now he needs some furniture.

All brothers and sisters try to be active in Church when they see refugees. The presence of these refugees who have lost everything they own cause us to understand how unstable life is and that our life situation can change instantly. Praise be to the Lord for His Church that He ordained for the saved!

We continue teaching and preaching on Sundays and Wednesdays. Attendance on Wednesday is 12-16 people; on Sundays - 25-32 people are in assembly.

We have our prayer meeting on Friday – we pray at homes in groups and fellowship.

Our family is doing well, thanks to God and thanks to you, brothers and sisters, for prayers and help. Of course, religious fanatics continue mocking and intimidating us. But now that we are registered we are not pressured as bad. We know that God is in control and we pray constantly asking Him for peace in this country and in the whole world so that WW 3 will not break out.

We love you and thank God for being a part of His family.

In Christian love, Ivan and Svetlana
С люб. Иван и Светлана

VOLODYA SENDS NEWS OF HIS WORK FOR THE LORD!

Greetings, dear brothers and sisters, faithful Christians! I greet you from Ivano-Frankivsk and send you greetings on behalf of the local church of Christ and my family. I thank God and you for support, prayers and care for us. It encourages and inspires me in times of confrontation and the

FROM KRAMATORSK

"When I say to my husband Good night or Good-bye to the brethren I mean it, because I don't know if we see each other again."

"February 10th people were going and doing their regular things but at 12:30 p.m. they were killed, 17 of them never came home: 33 year old mother was taking her son from kindergarten, mother is dead, her son is in the intensive care now, a man about 45 years old was lying dead in the middle of the street, another people ended their life next to the windows of the people who lives on the first floor. One mother who brought her children to school said that they wanted to go to a better place, to distract their mind of this horrible thing and do not look at dead bodies by their windows..."

uncertainty of this country's future. Thank you that you have not abandoned us but have supported us in unity of spirit in your prayers.

I would like to share with the events that I lived through last month. First of all, I would like to state that a ceasefire between this country and DPR/LPR (note from JK: These are the abbreviations of the Russian forces fighting the war in Donetsk and Lugansk—**Donetsk Peoples Republic** and **Lugansk People's Republic**) is currently in effect. And even though it is not carried out on a full scale and there are battles for certain cities and holdout points that still continue but people have quieted down some. I do not know what the new month will bring but I know and understand that if God allows such things they have to have a place in history.

This month I have gotten to know better medical personnel of the local out-patient department. I collected aid for the hospital and decided to stop and talk to them about God. I happened to get there before lunch. The medical personnel were very thankful and invited me to have lunch with them upon receiving humanitarian aid. My first thought was to decline because I did not want to push myself on those people. But then I understood that unofficial surroundings at the table would present a great opportunity to talk to people about God. We talked, and people began thanking God for the aid that I delivered to them. We had good time together and talked about good deeds and how God treats them. I enjoyed that day very much because Lord's Name was glorified and people praised Him.

I also made friends with a young guy, Vasyl. He is a driver for the out-patient department. It happened so that he is the only young person in that department plus he is a driver (I used to work at a vehicle service station where I repaired cars). That is why we found out we had a lot in common so it was easy for us to connect. I hope we will become friends eventually and will spend more time together.

Mayor of the village helped us to distribute lots of clothes and humanitarian aid that you collect for us to needy people and families. It is a great work, and people were appreciative and touched to see that Ukraine is not forgotten but is supported at such difficult time. We are grateful to you for collecting and shipping humanitarian aid for us. God will bless you for it.

There is another piece of news from Stary Lysets, but this one is not very good. It happened somehow that there was a fire last month. Someone set a recreation complex on fire. There was a café, sauna and hotel there. Somehow all of that caught on fire. Local people say that some jealous men did that. But God is the only One who knows what really happened. It might seem to be a minor event but local people talked about it all month long as they were concerned and frightened by the event. I, in my turn, tried to communicate to them the idea that God will not allow the guilty one to go unpunished, those who trespass upon things not belonging to them.

Church in Ivano-Frankivsk set up a Food Distribution Center this month. We bought food and decided to help needy refugees and families that live below poverty as much as we could. Some people from Stary Lysets came to the Center. I was very pleased and even more inspired to work in God's vineyard. Internally displace women that started visiting our assemblies (I wrote about them before) continue studying Scriptures and learning more about God. We hope it will help them make the right decision and make covenant with God.

THE CHURCH AT WORK



Brother Jerry Morgan visited with us. When Jerry's interpreter, sister Ann from Kremenchug, called and informed us about Jerry's plan to visit us, it made our day as it was wonderful news to us. Such visits and time spent with brethren give us inspiration and spiritual charge. Brother Jerry taught a series of lessons on Family. It is important to us because we have many young unmarried people in our assembly that need to know how to plan their married life in the right and wise way so that everything they do would glorify God. We would like to thank brother Jerry for his lessons and support. Such events greatly encourage us and help us understand Church as true spiritual family.

You know that my father is not a Christian in the full meaning of the word. He was baptized as a baby (just as many of us were) in the Orthodox Church. All these years that I have been in Lord's Church he was opposed to God's Word and did not want to even listen to me. But now the time has come when he started listening. When Jerry came I invited my father to evening Bible classes and to my great surprise he agreed!!! I am very happy that the Lord softens his heart. It is very important to me so, please, pray to God asking Him to continue working with my father and to give me wisdom and strength to be the light He wants to see in me, to help me talk to my father about God and not only to him but all those who seek God. Please, pray that God will help me do it timely and wisely.

And, as usual, this month was very busy as we continued with distribution of humanitarian aid that we receive from you. We gave away a lot of medical supplies and clothes from the things that you sent us. We expect another container to come this week. That is why we will have to spend a few days working in the warehouse to prepare it for the unloading of the coming container. We are very thankful to you for this work and support, for collecting humanitarian aid for us. May the Lord continue blessing this work of yours and give you hundredfold for it.

Thank you for prayers and unity with you that we enjoy. Please, continue praying for my work and preaching of the Gospel. Please, ask God to give me strength and boldness to be His worker where I am. Because the more I associate with people the more I realize that there is still so much for me learn to be able to preach the Word of God wisely and timely, when people are open to listen. And I do realize that my work brings forth fruit in the Kingdom of our Father, which is a great encouragement to me.

Thank you for everything! In Christian love, Your brother Volodya

ANDREW ZHURAVLYOV FROM SKVYRA SENDS NEWS OF HIS WORK FOR THE LORD!

Hello dear brothers,

I want to express heartfelt thanks to all who wrote to me during this month, encouraging and supporting me. I am also grateful for all of your prayers for us.

1. Situation in Gorlovka

The first part of the month (until February 15) was especially terrible for Gorlovka and all the Christians who stayed there. The shootings and shelling of the town were almost never ceasing. Most of the people had to

THE SITUATION IN GORLOVKA



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stay at the basements and bomb-shelters all that time. On February 15, our brother in Christ, Maksim Gaykov (BVBIU graduate) was wounded. He is still at the hospital. Other Christians suffered as well. Their apartments are without windows. Thank God these Christians were not wounded. Statistics shows that 50% of buildings and apartments were damaged because of military actions. The cease-fire mode is on right now. Those who stayed in Gorlovka often hear sounds of explosions in Avdiyivka and Debaltsevo areas. I talk to Christians in Gorlovka every day to encourage them in this difficult time.

Even though it got quieter in town, there are some other problems. Last month, the government of Ukraine enforced a permit system to enter or exit ATO areas (Note: "ATO" areas are areas where "Anti-Terrorist Operations are in process and is where warzones are set up). Since the system is not perfect, only very few out of many thousands people were able to get those permits. Others became hostages of the situation, not being able to leave ATO areas to receive social payments. It is vital because banks do not work in Gorlovka, and people cannot receive any money there. There is also shortage of food and medical supplies; therefore, the prices on these items are very high. Our elderly brothers and sisters in Christ who stayed there are in a difficult situation yet again. I thank God that during all the shootings and shelling the building of BVBIU and the Church is still intact and undamaged. We hope that the situation in town will return to law-abiding norms, and we will get our building back. We continue praying for it.

2. Ministry in Kyiv and Skvyra

I continue teaching weekly Bible classes in Skvyra and preach there on Sundays when I do not travel to Kyiv. At the beginning of the month, Mitskutis family came to visit us. As I have mentioned earlier, they live in a near-by town, Bila Tserkva. It was a real celebration to see one another and to enjoy this fellowship. Their visit encouraged the church in Skvyra greatly.

Every time when I come to Kyiv, I teach a Bible class on Christian Leadership at Shevchenkivska church of Christ and preach there. Christians of that congregation are proud that one of their members studies at BVBIU. They hope that Yuriy will get all the necessary knowledge and skill at the institute. They are looking forward to his return from Ternopil, hoping he will serve as a preacher in their congregation.

There was yet another special moment. Oksana Heohdzhayeva was in Kyiv on that weekend. She did not tell us about that to make a surprise. And it really was that way. My wife Veronika and I could not believe our eyes, when we saw Oksana at the Sunday service in Shevchenkivska church of Christ. Of course, we had long conversations, sharing the news and reminiscing of the time when we served the Lord together in Gorlovka. Such moments fill our hearts with joy and happiness and we forget all the difficulties for a while.

3. Institute

In this month, I taught two classes at the institute: Romans to the second-year students and Minor Prophets (part 1) to the second-year students. I have taught Romans before, but it was my first time to teach Minor Prophets. I had very little time to get ready for the course. So in order to provide the quality teaching I had to work hard on it all this month. Thank God, the students passed the final test on Minor Prophet on Wednesday,

**THE CHURCH OF
CHRIST ASSEMBLES
IN
IVANO-FRANKIVSK**



and their results prove that they have learned the material quite well. I am encouraged by the work with the BVBIU students. Talking to Dennis Sopelnik, I have mentioned that I will help teaching any other course if necessary.

We thank God for you in our prayers. Thank you for supporting my work for the Lord's cause.

In Christ, Andrew Zhuravlyov

**DENNIS SOPELNIK REVIEWS THE PREACHER TRAINING
EFFORTS IN TERNOPIL, UKRAINE!**

Hello dear brothers,

And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind... (Romans 1:28)

As you know, February was a busy month in the life of our country. There was a treaty signed in Minsk, according to which both sides have to cease fire and move the heavy artillery away from the conflict areas. Ukraine kept its part of the treaty, but the insurgents of so-called republics continue shooting and making the situation in the area even worse. At this time, our brother in Christ and BVBIU graduate, Maksim Gaykov was injured. He stayed in Gorlovka together with his family and continued serving the Lord there with many other Christians. When he was on his way home, a bomb exploded several feet away from him. The injury was not life threatening, and we have already sent money to pay for his medical treatment. Splinter of a bomb hurt the soft tissue of his leg. Unfortunately, there are thousands of such injuries and deaths among the civilians. We ask you to continue praying for peace in Ukraine.

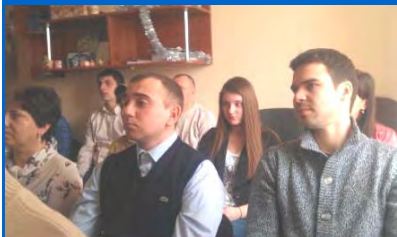
Bear Valley Bible Institute in Ukraine

The classes at the institute continue to take place. In February, Denton Landon and Ralph and Cindy Williams visited us. We are grateful for their ministry and work at the institute. Denton taught Isaiah to the first-year students; Ralph taught Paul's epistles 1-2 Timothy and Titus to the second-year students. Ukrainian teachers continue teaching via Skype. The classes go according to the schedule, and students get everything that we have in the program in full extent. We are looking forward to the arrival of our brothers Johnny Mack Young and Garth Hilton in March. Then we will have a week of evangelizing campaign and a Spring Break. Studying 1-2 Peter and Jude, we often noticed the key word "suffering." It is a very familiar topic for many of us. Last year and the beginning of this year brought many changes and difficulties in our lives, but we continue praising the Lord and want to spread the good news about the Savior. *We have nine men and one young lady studying in the program.*

Institute Church of Christ

There are more people now who know about the Church in Ternopil. Last month, we had four visitors who attended Sunday services and asked questions. A young lady Masha attends our services regularly. We try to be very open and friendly congregation, teaching the sound doctrine nevertheless. We have been renting that building for seven months now, and only now people started coming and learning about us. We are making

IVANO-FRANKIVSK CHRISTIANS WORSHIP



our way around. After our friends Tebels moved to Canada, Bogdan and I preach on Sundays and teach Bible classes in the middle of the week. We try to involve all brethren at Sunday service. Each of them participates in worship. We have youth group meetings on Tuesdays and Bible school for kids on Saturdays.

On February 14, Cindy Williams taught a Bible class for ladies on "Following Christ." Oksana interpreted for Cindy and led singing. Vera had a workshop on making souvenir candles for the ladies. It was a very memorable and encouraging day for our sisters in Christ. On February 24 (Tuesday), our sisters prepared for men a special event full of games, quizzes and fellowship. We enjoyed that time we spent together.

There are about 20-22 people attending our congregation. Mostly these are students and their families; there are also some local Christians and visitors.

We plan to have a major evangelizing campaign in March, giving the brochures on the streets, and having personal Bible studies with people. We continue praying for God's work in Ternopil.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support of the institute, church and our students. If you have any questions or comments, please write to me; I am always open to work together.

Your brother and coworker for the Lord's cause,
Dennis Sopelnik, Director BVBIU

**"There are more people now who know about the
Church in Ternopil."**

**"Thank you for prayers and unity with you that we enjoy.
Please, continue praying for my work and
preaching of the Gospel."**

VLAD SENDS NEWS ABOUT CONDITIONS IN KRAMATORSK!

Greetings dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Thank you for your prayers and support of the work here, in the Eastern part of Ukraine. It is not easy time for us now but we put our efforts to be better Christian people, better citizens, help more, criticize less, show courage and faith in our future! God is with us, our spirit is strong, heart is open and we are ready for better future.

We are blessed in some ways, because many Bible verses, many of our own words and deeds have the new meaning for us today! Like one Christian lady said: "When I say to my husband "Good night" or "Good -bye" to the brethren I mean it, because I don't know if we see each other again."

February the 10th people were going somewhere doing their regular things but at 12:30 p.m. they were killed, 17 of them never came back home: 33 year old mother was taking her son from kindergarten, mother is dead, her son is in the intensive care now, a man about 45 years old was lying

THE ATTITUDE FOMENTING EVIL'S PRESENCE IN UKRAINE

The Russian invasion & occupation of Ukraine's sovereign soil is fueled by evil as reported in the media..."...our common war against the enemies of Russia, against the expansionism of the West...Motivation is essential for volunteers who leave. We only help Orthodox believers who know they are fighting for great Russia," (Patriotism, adventure lure Russian volunteers to Ukraine conflict, Marina Koreneva, AFP)

"A brother in our church had been drafted and he was in eastern Ukraine for a couple months. He had many opportunities to speak with local people as well as some captives. He said about a half of those captives were Russian soldiers! He was horrified to know how ignorant those people are. They have no access to any other source of information other than Russian TV and Russian newspapers. He said those people had bought into so many lies about Ukraine spread by Russian TV that it's virtually impossible to reason with them."

dead in the middle of the street, another people ended their life next to the windows of the people who lives on the first floor. One mother who brought her children this day to ABC school said that they wanted to go to a better place, to distract their mind of this horrible thing and do not look at dead bodies by their windows...

Please, continue to pray for Ukraine!

The situation church of Christ in Kramatorsk

We continue keeping this Bible study schedule:

- ✓ Tuesday—6:00 1 Corinthians 11
- ✓ Thursday—the book of Ezekiel 19
- ✓ Saturday—3:00 youth group

Some families showed desire to bring their children to ABC school, but the event of February the 10th (bombing Kramatorsk) scared people to death. But anyhow we still have some students due to this outreach.

Our brother, Taras Danilenko from Donetsk is living at the church building, he is a student and since he is an orphan he was getting the support from the government, but not now. So he is fully supported by the Church now. Thank you brothers for the help.

Several times help was sent to Victor Nakalyugniy, brother from Avdeevka. He stayed couple of weeks in Konstantinovka Church flat but now he left for Kiev. Some people have left the town because of the events of 10th of February.

Also, in January my father passed away. We rejoice as he was baptized before he got really sick and his obedient faith brought me a great relief.

Here are some points of actions we did:

- ✓ We had a great fellowshiping time in Svayatogorsk. About 120 people went to this beautiful place to strengthen their spirit and be united in songs and prayers. Thanks to those who made this possible!
- ✓ Visited school, universities, trying to invite students to church.
- ✓ Two churches joined in skype during Bible classes, Dnepropetrovsk and Donetsk.
- ✓ As always we were encouraged by the sermons and lessons of our brothers. Thank you for your faithfulness and cheer spirit.

The situation at church of Christ in Konstantinovka

Anatoly, our brother in Christ passed away last Thursday. He was 53 years old. Please keep his family in your prayers. He has four teenage children and a wife who does not take good care of them sadly she is addicted to alcohol. We invited all of them to the Church

Here are some things we did in Konstantinovka this month:

- ✓ About 300 school items plus church booklets were distributed among students who came from different places to Konstantinovka. We work with local volunteer organization who help us with list of people who needed help.
- ✓ Helping people who came to Kramatorsk from different places because of the war situation. Handing out help both at the church building and visiting people at their homes.
- ✓ More than 200 diapers plus church booklets were distributed among the families with small children in Kramatorsk.

"This month I have gotten to know better medical personnel...I collected aid for the hospital and decided to stop and talk to them about God...They were very thankful and invited me to have lunch with them...My first thought was to decline because I did not want to push myself on those people. But then I understood that unofficial surroundings at the table would present a great opportunity to talk to people about God. We talked, and people began thanking God for the aid...I enjoyed that day very much because Lord's Name was glorified and people praised Him."

- ✓ Celebrated ABC Bible School 10th anniversary. About 150 people came.
- Konstantinovka Church is doing well, the schedule is the same:
- ✓ Wednesday—10:00 - 13:00 Bible class, fellowshiping, visiting.
- ✓ Sunday—9:00 Bible class; 10:00 worship.

In Christ , Vladimir, Oksana Paziy

NEWS FROM NORTHEAST OF KYIV!

You can read the news media, listen to reports, read the internet new headlines and watch YouTube videos but still lack the personal news from brethren in Ukraine. Below is an email from a friend with whom I have been in contact with for 3-4 years. He is from a city in northeast Ukraine. We have shipped four containers into that area. This is the location where I met with a small group who were disenchanted with all organized religions and had wandered from group to group trying to find one that followed only the New Testament pattern. In that Oblast was Alex who was associated with a denominational group but was also searching for only New Testament doctrines. I received the below from Alex. He gives insight that helps you frame the current situation in Ukraine.

From: Alex

Sent: Friday, February 27, 2015 3:37 AM

To: john@kachelman.com

Dear brother John, Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus!

Thank you for your prompt reply. Yes, the situation in eastern Ukraine is very tense, to say the least. However, I can tell you with confidence that if Russia withdrew its troops from eastern Ukraine and quit providing local militants with heavy weapons, this war would be over in a few weeks. Russian propaganda has been trying to convince the world that a civil war is going in Ukraine. The fact is that there is NO civil war in Ukraine. What we have here is the so called hybrid war that Russia is waging against Ukraine.

Yes, there are some pro-Russian citizens (basically ethnic Russians) in south Ukraine, but they are definitely in the minority. There are more of them in eastern Ukraine, but there are also many Ukrainian patriots there. Right now Ukrainian patriots there are just afraid to openly speak about their views because they will be tortured and killed.

A brother in our church had been drafted and he was in eastern Ukraine for a couple months. He had many opportunities to speak with local people as well as some captives. He said about a half of those captives were Russian soldiers! And most of local militants were criminals or hobos that had been hired to fight for money. He was horrified to know how ignorant those people are. They have no access to any other source of information other than Russian TV and Russian newspapers. Some of those people actually believed they were fighting against Americans that wanted to possess eastern Ukraine. It's no joke. He said those people had bought into so many lies about Ukraine spread by Russian TV that it's virtually impossible to reason with them because they had been inoculated against the truth by the Russian propaganda.

I don't know why, but for some reason Putin has some pathological hatred for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. And he wants to destroy us as a

"Refugees from the region of Donetsk have fled to Ivano-Frankivsk seeking refuge. While there they sought out the Church and have become song leaders, teachers, and some are training to preach.

Each Lord's Day the Church prepares "survival bags" for the refugees. This ministry has so touched the entire city that the wife of the Russian Orthodox Priest has been coming to the Church for Bible studies and staying to help pass our food for the refugees.

Our Judsonia team has shipped out 8 containers to Ukraine this year (January-February), valued at over \$1,000,000.00. Will you help us send more by giving items for the containers? Or provide money for shipping costs? Can we depend on... YOU? Can God depend on... YOU?

nation. He doesn't really need our land. He wants Ukraine to be under his total control. He can't stand the idea of Ukraine becoming a prosperous, independent country. He wants us to be part of the Russian empire. Unfortunately, there are some Ukrainian citizens that have been really brainwashed by Russian propaganda. But some of those folks have been disillusioned already. Others, I believe, will be soon disillusioned too.

However, we thank God that in north Ukraine we can enjoy peace and the freedom of religion. In the Oblast here, this war has united those following Christian principles. Different ones come together at the central city square on Sundays and we all pray to God for peace in eastern Ukraine. I know that in many other cities in Ukraine many churches do the same thing. And we ask our brothers and sisters in Christ in the whole world to join us. Our only hope is in the Lord.

I quit associating with the denomination structure after discussion with you. In fact, I was quite disappointed with them.

At this time Ukraine is flooded with refugees from the Donbas region. There are quite a few of them here. Our congregation is working with children that fled from the war zone. Some of these children came from orphanages; others have lost their parents after heavy shelling. It's not easy to work with these children. They have been through a lot and they know what we do not know—the terrors of war. Many of these kids need emotional or psychological rehabilitation. We tell them about Christ and do Bible lessons with them. We want to do Bible camps for them this summer. And this is what I would like to discuss with you in more detail in my next email. Perhaps you could give us a piece of advice.

In Christ, Alex



The church of Christ in Ivano-Frankivsk—February 2015

"I greet you from Ivano-Frankivsk and send you greetings on behalf of the local church of Christ and my family. I thank God and you for support, prayers and care for us. It encourages and inspires me in times of confrontation and the uncertainty of this country's future. Thank you that you have not abandoned us but have supported us in unity of spirit in your prayers."