

UKRAINE UPDATE #14:

"FRAMING THE PERSONAL ASPECTS OF UKRAINE'S CRISIS"

From western Ukraine... "Many 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."

From northeastern Ukraine... "Right now in the Chernigov area there are about 20,000 refugees from the Donbas region. These refugees receive very little help from the government. There are several churches here trying to help some of these people. We also work with a special program meant to help about a hundred children that fled from the war zone."

From an American visiting Ivano-Frankivsk... "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 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."

Associated Press... "AP looks at the war zone of Ukraine's recent fight against Russian-backed separatists, where the UN estimates some 1.7 million children have suffered through lack of proper shelter, nutrition, medicine or schooling. (March 13)"

UPDATING THE REPORT...ON CONTAINER SHIPMENTS...

On December 8, 2014 Kathy Cadden and her crew loaded a container of miscellaneous relief supplies out of OPERATION UKRAINE in Columbus, MS. That container held 662 pieces for a total weight shipped of 18,450 pounds valued in USD as \$134,865.00. It cost us \$7,175.00 for transportation. That container arrived in Ivano-Frankivsk Tuesday and was cleared "on the wheels" by Ukraine Customs in Ivano-Frankivsk on March 11. The term "cleared on the wheels" is most significant as it shows Ivan and the brethren were able to work with local authorities and get everything done so that distribution could begin as soon as the commodities were unloaded.



"Hi John, Unloading did happen and I've sent you pics of it. Some of them are not good quality as I used my phone and I haven't mastered it yet. Wish I had manual for it. Ivan took some pics as well. Everything went well. There was no customs officer or broker anywhere around so I guess they did clear it "on wheels." I didn't get to work to hard as the majority of stuff was heavy and guys unloaded them. It was good working with Christians to unload this container sent by compassion from so far away!"

Every container we have shipped in response to the Ukraine Crisis (a total of **FORTY-SIX** from August 27, 2014 to March 12, 2015) has arrived and cleared Ukraine Customs without any problems. Several (like the one

discussed above) were cleared by Ukraine Customs before the seal was broken—such illustrates the dire need and critical urgency that is strangling Ukraine at this time!

We are scheduled to load a container out of Judsonia, AR on Wednesday March 18 and Wednesday March 25! This will bring our total of containers shipped to help relieve the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, caused by Russia's evil invasion and occupation, to FORTY-EIGHT in just seven months! *And each of these has been funded by the private sector—the United States government has not spent one-cent in the relief efforts for Ukraine!!*

WE LOAD A CONTAINER 18 MARCH FOR IVANO-FRANKIVSK, UKRAINE!

Среда, 11 марта 2015, 21:35 -05:00 от "John L Kachelman, Jr" <john@kachelman.com>:

Hi Ivan, We have a container ready to ship that will have items for the Lord's People to give to those in need and especially to those displaced by Russia's aggression. I have some hospital baby cribs that Mike Lawson sent for Yarmanche. I also have a labor and delivery bed and infant exam table and scales. Mike Lawson wants to help the children's hospital at Yarmanche. Will it be OK to load these items on the container next Wednesday? I'll have more family buckets as well.

From: Иван Сколеба
To: "John L Kachelman, Jr"

Hi John!

You have listed some very necessary things for the hospital in Yarmanche. Also, if there are cleaning and hygiene items send please. We have a great need for these items for those refugees from the east and Crimea. Thank you brothers and sisters for your kind hearts!

From: John L Kachelman, Jr
To: "Иван Сколеба"; Татьяна Зозулина

OK brother, I will load these things for Yarmanche!

Слава Україні! Героям слава!

John



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

Olga's story... I, Olga Oleksandrivna, was born in 1943 in the Zhytomyr Region, in the picturesque village of Denesh at the time when our army was fighting against invaders. Shells would fly over our house and explode behind our yard. My Mom didn't think I would make it. I was very small, as small as a glove. War, destruction, famine, no food to eat - I overcame everything and survived.

I married a guy from the Ivano-Frankivsk Region who took me to the East of our Motherland to the town of Stakhanov, Lugansk Region. We had our son and three daughters there.

Miners's salaries were low as they were deceived all the time. My husband worked in mines. He received 3 Miner's Glory decorations. When my husband's mining team got together, they would discuss their work, talk about the way their bosses wronged them and paid them way too little. My husband died at 50 and I was 42 then.

But I didn't lose my heart because all my life I loved my Country and my people, which helped me to learn to overcome difficulties.

I moved from Stakhanov to Donetsk Region, the village of Cherkaske, Slovyansk District, in 2001. My older daughter Tanya and her family went there to look for a better life and I went with them to help them, to survive, to toil land and harvest crops. We planted an orchid, trees and flowers. We repaired the house and started building a new one. I had a bad dream in 2013 that was ominous. We lived with heavy hearts but wouldn't give up. My dream came true the following year - war began.

I was thankful to our Lord God that shells avoided our area. My other daughter Olya and her family came to live with us when Stakhanov was shelled.

It is so sad that people who were born and grew up in Ukraine believed strangers and took the path of fighting against their own brethren.

I have 6 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. I visit them and stay where I needed most of all. I'd like to help my children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and people of Ukraine to survive at this horrible time.

Situation in the East is very unstable. There are a lot of good people there as well. It was hard for me to say "good-bye" to them as they asked me to stay. But there were also those that could have killed.

I'm not a good narrator that's why I'm making it short.

I walk on the path on my life where the Lord God leads me. It's a very difficult path as it's aimed at Truth, Light, it is the path that makes our grandchildren and great-grandchildren happy and leads us to a better future.

Kostyuk Family's story...

The IDP family Kostyuk from Lugansk,

- Kostyuk Valentina Yevstahiyvna, 1963 - mother
- Kostyuk Mykhailo Dmitrovych, 1960 - father
- Kostyuk Tetiana Mykhailivna, 1986 - daughter
- Kostyuk Oleksander Mykhailovych, 1991 - son

I was born in the village of Gvizardets, Gorodenka District, Ivano-Frankivsk Region. My husband was born in the village of Kutyshche, Tlumach District, Ivano-Frankivsk Region. Our daughter was born in Ivano-Frankivsk and son in the town of Lysichansk, Lugansk Region. Upon graduation from the Ivano-Frankivsk Medical Institute in 1987 our family went by referral to Lysichansk, Lugansk Region. We lived 27 years in the Donbass area. We built up our family and our lives there. We moved to Lugansk in 2000. We bought a 3-room flat and we had our own dental business and office, where we worked for five years.

During all the years we lived in the East of Ukraine, we had no problem with Russian speaking population. We spoke Ukrainian at home and Russian at work. We met father Mykhailo of the Greek Catholic Church of "Christ the King." He and his wife would support and encourage us in times of tribulations and I am very thankful to them for that. I started attending church then. My husband and I would go to church every Sunday, would help the needy and church as much as we could. Do I believe in God? Yes. I pray every morning and ask Lord for peace to come to our country, for health of wounded soldiers of the ATO (i.e. Anti-Terrorist Operation), and for a quick end to this fratricidal war.

At the beginning of Maydan when they started killing our people, there were a lot of wounded and we helped as much as we could. We sent money for the wounded. Nobody would imagine it would go that far. April 2014, Ukrainian channels stopped broadcasting in Lugansk; a false referendum took place and they started threatening Ukrainians.

ATO was launched and Ukrainian Army went on the offensive. And they almost reached Lugansk but for some reason received an order to retreat. June last year, our son ran to us at 3:15 a.m. and said, "Mom, they are shooting!" We ran to windows and saw it glow at a distance. With shelling continuing, we decided to leave Lugansk and go back to our home ground. But we still hoped to be back in a month or two.

However, things have not worked the way we hoped. War is still in place until today. We first lived with our relatives, and then we moved to Ivano-Frankivsk and rented a flat. Then we started looking for jobs and faced problems with that. My husband has worked for 2,5 months at a private dental office and was able to earn enough to only pay the rent. Our daughter found a job of pharmacist at a pharmacy. She worked for 2 months and was fired. Now she is unemployed. Our son worked at the "Electrolux" plant, got ill and was fired without a word. I have worked for a month now and received minimum wage, 1250 gr., while our flat and utilities cost 2,600.00 gr. a month.

What aid do we receive? Within eight months we received food packages twice from "Prosvita"; "Caritas" gave us 400 gr worth of groceries in summer, in February we received 300 gr. worth of groceries, 100 gr worth of household detergents. Government paid us 880.00 gr. for two months, 440.00 gr. for another two months. Since we do not have jobs the government will not help us anymore. Our family is thankful to church of Christ in Ivano-Frankivsk for help in form of groceries and money.

I would like to share with you our flat-hunting story in Ivano-Frankivsk. If you mention on the phone that you are from Lugansk the person on the other end hangs up right away. Another situation: realtor and owner agreed to meet with us by the building. When the owner heard we were from Lugansk, she turned away and did not even want to talk with us.

Our life in our home land is very stressful. We are very glad to meet people like you who help displaced people and encourage them at times of distress. Maybe God has brought us to church of Christ because He planned something for us.

We pray sincerely for peace in our country, for our soon return home. May God bless your good deeds.

Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the Heroes!

Lilya's story... My name is Lilya. I am 29. It happened so that my family and I had to leave our home in Eastern part of Ukraine due to the worst disaster that our Motherland had ever faced - war.

Who could have ever thought that our peaceful, God-given country would be shelled by "Grads" coming from a neighboring brotherly nation after 24 years of independence? Only now do we realize that we never were truly independent. Only now do we have to fight for our long-desired Independence and pay for it with blood of our sons and daughters.

My husband brought me to Eastern Ukraine, to the Lugansk Region. He was born there and lived almost all his life there. As for me, I was born in Ivano-Frankivsk - the heart of the Carpathian Region. We met in the capital where both of us worked at that time. Upon the birth of our daughter and son, who now are 3,5 and 2,5 years, we had to decide where we would live. We did not have many options. My husband suggested that we should go to the town of Stakhanov where he had a 2-room flat. To make our flat fit for living with little children we took a loan. We put in autonomous heating, replaced windows, and started repairing the flat. Older daughter started kindergarten. Younger son was ill a lot because he was born with a severe health problem, underwent two complicated surgeries on his intestines and had very feeble immune system. But God helped us overcome all hardships and the child showed improvement. We planned to take our children to the nearby Azov Sea in summer for rehabilitation treatments.

And then Maydan began in fall of 2013. My husband and I watched closely with strong emotions everything that was going on there wishing we could be in the epicenter of the event that shook the whole country. Had it not been to the little children that were often ill we would have been there side by side with our patriots, we would have fought against lawlessness and injustice. We share in all the ideas of Maydan about Ukraine moving towards European future. Death of the "Heavenly Hundred" wounded our souls deeply and that wound will never heal.

Unfortunately, there were people around us that did not share our ideas and emotions. The majority of our friends, neighbors and acquaintances believed Russian mass media and its twisted reality. Many people anticipated with great joy the coming of Russia, which to their mind would take the land and people living in it and they would become Russians. My husband and I found it utterly difficult to be around such people trying to reason with those who did not have even a little bit of love for Ukraine, for their native land. The more we tried to reason with them, to explain to them the purpose of Maydan and Ukrainian concept, the more aggression and evil looks we would experience in response. That situation made me take children and move in with my parents in Ivano-Frankivsk at the end of March. My husband had to stay but when he took care of his business there and was about to move out and join with us the East of Ukraine was filled with checkpoints. Those at checkpoints would take by force anything - appliances, equipment, personal items and even food, which people tried to take with them. My husband had to leave the majority of things that we had gained over years at home in Stakhanov. Winter clothes, appliances and equipment, and even toys - all of that was left there. We took only the essentials. But God is good. He has not left us on our own in this great distress. March 7, 2015

A REPORT FROM KRIVY RIG



Greetings and much love to you, my dear brothers and sisters. I always thank our Lord for having opened your hearts so that you would support and pray for us with such love, understanding and sympathy. In line with the current situation in this country associated with both the warfare in the East of the country and economic problems due to our currency inflation that brought about increase of prices but no increase of salaries, I would like to ask you to send us a few boxes with children's and adults' clothes as well as anti-cold meds. We used to help people who needed help as much as we could but it was impossible for us to embrace a great amount of people. But thanks to your help, and your love, and humanitarian aid that you send to Ukraine, that circle of people has broadened, for which a large amount of people is thankful to you and prays for you.

I would like to ask you to pray with me for those that made their minds to accept Christ in their hearts and obey in their faith, which are my mother Galina and Kate (I wrote you about them previously). But we know that Satan is awake and creates obstacles all the time to stymie church growth. However, I know that the Lord will not abandon His children and if someone has decided to follow the Lord, He will help. I would like to ask you to pray with me for my family as well, especially for my sons who are recovering from a very bad case of cold. And we know that a joint prayer is more powerful than an individual prayer.

As for my ministry in Kryvy Rig, we continue Bible studies, Exodus in particular. We have also studied such topics as "Right Way to Choose a Spouse and what It Means to Be a Family". I continue teaching children. We had sessions talking about computer games' impact on people and about being obedient to parents.

I spent a couple of weeks in Ivano-Frankivsk where I was charged spiritually fellowshiping with the brethren. We also had a seminar "Church Work and Ministry Planning". Knowledge that I gained during that seminar will help me with my ministry in Kryvy Rig. While in Ivano-Frankivsk I took part in the distribution of food and humanitarian aid to refugees from the East. We want to implement the same project in Kryvy Rig in March. As I've already said, there are a lot of needy people due to the situation in this country and thanks to your shipments we DO have opportunities to help them.

I pray for you always. I thank you for your love and support. I wish you good health, God's love and blessings.

In Christian love, Your brother Pavel (Tuznichenko)
с любовью ваш брат Павел

RECOGNITION FOR OUR CONSIGNEES IN ZAPOROZHYE

A validation of the integrity and respect surrounding our effort came this week in an email..."John, I heard from Alexander (in Zaporozhye). They participated in the presidential nomination "Best Benevolent Organization of Ukraine." Awarding took place earlier today and they were recognized in the 2nd place!!! Alexander called me a few minutes ago and he was so excited. It's exciting! You might be able to meet our President. Alexander wanted me to give you BIIIIIIIIIGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG thanks because it's thanks to the humanitarian aid that you and brothers and sisters coordinate that they were able to be recognized with this honor. More information and pics to come."

A PLEA FROM A SEARCHING HEART...

Here is an email I received that contains some disturbing elements. In some respects it is heartbreaking as it exposes the ridiculous flaws of the false election/predestination dogmas that are entrenched in many denominations. Please read this and then look at the opportunities that are placed before us.

How do you view the pleas from the displaced, the wounded, the widowed, the elderly and the orphaned?

This message below is sent by one struggling to find his way out of Calvinistic error and who has realized the fact of Calvinism, that if God has indeed predestined the elect to salvation and predetermined the damnation

of the rest, then why should Christians be involved in helping or teaching anyone—if they are the “elect” then they will be helped by God regardless of what is done or not done for them.

Take a few minutes and read this email and think about the absurdity of man’s worldly wisdom trying to limit the Sovereign Jehovah God and how worldly wisdom brings burdens to sincere hearts! Read this email and be awakened to the urgent needs opening before us!

Hello brother John, I hope this finds you well. Thanks a lot for all your prayers for the Ukrainian people. Our country IS going through a very difficult time. This is also a time of testing for the church of Christ. But we believe that God will bring justice to the evildoers and bless Ukraine with peace and safety.

Last year we did camps for many children - normal children, children with physical disabilities, orphans and refugees. All those kids had a great time at the camps where they had an opportunity to be introduced to the Bible and the Christian faith. Many of them cried when the camps were over because they didn’t want to go back home. Well, some of them couldn’t go back because they received news that their houses had been destroyed after shelling.

Last year, however, we didn’t have as many children from eastern Ukraine. This year there are about a hundred that our congregation is working with. There are many more children from the Donbas region here, but, unfortunately, we can’t help all of them. We wish we could, but it’s humanly impossible. We just keep them in our prayers.

The economy is going downhill, unemployment is rampant, the national currency devalues further against the US dollar and, as a result of this, prices are skyrocketing because Ukraine’s economy is closely tied to the US money. Wages and pensions haven’t been raised, of course. At this time many Ukrainians literally have to survive.

We are trying to find people and churches in the States that would be interested to provide financial assistance for the children. Needless to say, we have very limited resources; and without the help from the States, we can’t accomplish it this year. Last year the exchange rate was \$1 U.S. to 8 UAH. Today it’s 1 to 25!

I did ask some other churches but was disappointed with their response. Not so much because they refused to help, but more because of the reasons they gave. But to tell me to forget about these children and simply commit them into the Lord’s hands was a bit too much.

One “pastor” wrote me that God actually doesn’t love all children, but only those children that are among his elect. I told him that my Bible tells me that Jesus blessed all the children that were brought to him, not only a select few.

Another “pastor” told me that we don’t have to teach these children because God is sovereign, and if they were predestined for salvation, they will be saved anyhow, but if they were not foreordained by God to go to heaven, all our work and teaching will be merely a waste of time.

Well, I do believe in predestination for the Word of God clearly teaches it. But I believe in biblical predestination. Also, there is no question that God is sovereign. But it’s just as true that many seem to have a mistaken view of what it means for God to be sovereign. They overemphasize God’s sovereignty and diminish or completely annul human responsibility. I think we should believe both and teach both. But their view and their attitude toward children and the preaching of the gospel are totally unbiblical in my opinion.

Well, I guess I got a bit carried away. That normally happens when I get too emotional.

Brother John, I’ll make it plain and simple for you - we need help. And we need it in the worst way. I was asked to contact the folks in the States that I know and explain this to them. No positive response so far. But then I thought of you.

Looking forward to hearing from you. Please continue to pray for us and thanks a lot for everything you have been doing for the people of Ukraine!

PLEAS FOR PARTNERSHIP CONTINUE!

Will you help?

Thankfully we have been able to put together a number of containers with critical relief supplies. We have secured partial funding from some sources but not all transportation expenses for our containers are covered. The commodities in the food containers have been donated but we needed transportation costs to get the food from the points of loading to the points of distribution in Ukraine. At this time we have a container of new shoes that will ship 26,300 pairs of shoes into Kyiv where distribution to children and women will be coordinated. The shoes have been donated but we need transportation costs covered. We have containers of general relief supplies that are collected and ready to ship but we are waiting for transportation to be covered.

At this point I have **EIGHTEEN** approvals to ship containers into Ukraine!! Will you, your congregation, your school, your civic clubs and your friends join with us in collecting commodities to ship into Ukraine? Resources are all around you!

How easy it is to "pass by on the other side" when an opportunity comes for alleviating the suffering that has fallen upon another— especially if it is far away.

He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor...He who oppresses the poor to make more for himself or who gives to the rich, will only come to poverty (Proverbs 22:9, 16).

WE NEED HELP TO HELP THOSE IN UKRAINE! PLEASE SEND A DONATION TO:

**College Church of Christ/UKRAINE MISSIONS
2934 East Moore Street
Searcy, Arkansas 72143**

Thank you to all who have responded. Please think of congregations and individuals who are like-minded and willing to help us ship more containers to assist those struggling against devilish evils! Forward this report to others who are able to join with us and fulfill Galatians 6:10!

