

# Tragedy in Ivano-Frankivsk: Ivan Skoleba's home burned—Update January 18, 2022



*Photo to left: Smoke bellows from the fire engulfing the home of Ivan and Sveta in Ivano-Frankivsk. Their home was located on the far right corner and you can see smoke coming through the roof.*

December 15, 2021 brought tragedy to the Skoleba Family in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. Fire began when the old electrical wiring in another section of the roof ignited gas vapors. The structure was built in 1910 and renovations to update the building have been lacking. Since privatization following the dissolution of the USSR, updates are the responsibility of the owners. Ivan had updated his electrical wiring, but other owners have not.

We quickly sent out the sad news in December and many responded wanting to help. We have waited to ask for funds until we have data to share. Ivan has just sent that information. He has spent countless hours and energy being sent from "pillar to post" begging for information that will help him and the other families in the section to be able to repair to the basic threshold of moving back. A month later, he can send us the requested information.

Although some may have read communication related to this waiting time, I want to include it in this update.

*Replying to queries about the expected costs, Tanya wrote:*

As for helping Ivan, he is still waiting for an estimate of the damage done by the fire. He doesn't have the expertise to come up with an amount on his own so he depends on the experts. They promised to do it last week and had to figure out first whose fault it was and then give an estimate. However, Ivan hasn't been able to get any kind of info out of them until now. Holidays have thrown a wrench into the process. I'll keep you posted as much as I can (or Ivan himself will let you know). Thank you so much for being willing to help. Have a blessed day! Love, T

*In last month's UKRAINE MISSION Newsletter, Ivan included this in his report:*

I've already written you about the trial that my family is facing now caused by the fire that burnt our apartment. The fire destroyed the neighboring apartment as well. And the firemen flooded the building with water from top to bottom. All ceilings fell and everything was soaked with water. None of the apartments was insured. People don't trust insurance companies because they never pay the claim whenever an insured event occurs. The apartment building is very old, built in 1910 and hasn't been repaired for 60 years. So, we'll have to struggle with this problem in the New Year. Please, pray on our behalf for it is a horrible stress and cause of a great damage. Experts are supposed to let us know about the cause of the fire and calculate the damage estimate on January 4. Thanks to God for everything, thanks to you for prayers. More greetings to all of you.

*We have just received this information from Ivan:*

Greetings, dear brother John.

I received the document from the Fire Department experts stating the reason of the fire. They didn't give any specific reason but that the fire was caused by bad wiring or a fireplace. That was their conclusion.

Besides, we met with the city Mayor Ruslan Martsinkiv. He promised to help with a design project (*ie this is the blueprint required for repairs*) but the City doesn't have the money to repair the roof and the building. We asked him to authorize design projects for the roof and electric wiring to be done free for us. Such design projects are very expensive and we don't have such money. I don't know how long it will take but I'm sure it

won't happen soon. All paperwork and permits can take maybe one or two months to receive. The building has a historic and architectural value. Thus, we have the right to ask the city to help us at least with design projects.

Repairs of the whole roof will cost around \$12,000.00 and my part will be \$7,500.00 out of that amount because almost all the roof is on my side. Besides, my apartment and that of a neighbor burnt. Ten apartments under us were damaged—all floors down to the first one were covered with water from the firetruck. All the owners are poor as the majority of them are retired.

Galya lives one floor down with her old parents and she basically has no place to live now. It snows and when the sun shines the snow melts and leaks all the way down to the first floor. We temporarily covered the roof with a plastic sheet but it leaks when snow melts.

Residents are in despair and are asking our American brethren for help. We had a meeting today with all the residents and they asked me to pass their request onto to the Church.

We, the residents of the building, have already collected 5,000.00 UAH (*i.e. approximately USD \$192.00*) but this is a mere droplet of what's needed.

They know that we are members of church of Christ and the mayor in their presence thanked Church for the help to hospitals. He attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the doctor's office that members of Church repaired for Doctor Natalie Adamivna in a City Clinic. So, everybody asked us for help. But we cannot help it ourselves.

For my home to be repaired here are costs that I have repairs of the roof and my apartment will cost \$35,000.00—\$37,000.00. We can buy an apartment in a new apartment building for that much. Thus, we are in a quandary. *We can't understand why we have to go through such a trial. We are staying at Ruslan and Masha's now. I am at a loss and don't know what to do. Brethren, we ask you to help us if you can!*

Here is the bottom line:

1. The amount to repair Ivan's roof—\$7,500.00
2. The amount to repair the interior so they can move back in—\$37,000.00
3. The outstanding loan Ivan took to repair his home before the fire—\$5,000.00 (Note: Ivan has not included this in his request but I am. He is willing to repay this himself even though all went up in smoke!).

So the total cost he is facing is \$49,500.00.

When the tragedy was announced we received some donations from brethren in AL, FL, and TN. Now that we have a targeted amount we are sending this second update asking for any donations that can be made to assist our brother and his family in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. The total thus far has accumulated to a generous: \$11,940.00!

If you would like to help donate to help Ivan and Sveta please mark your donation FOR the SKOLEBA FAMILY and mail it to the Dalraida Church of Christ, 3740 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36109.