



Ivano-Frankivsk Church of Christ Update – April 2026

Hello there!

We have had a busy start to the spring in Ivano-Frankivsk! The winter blizzard lasted through most of February and finally melted around mid-March. But, even though we have had warm enough weather to melt the snow, it still has not been “warm” yet. At this rate, I expect spring weather will arrive just in time for winter to begin. The cold weather has not deterred the work here, however; in fact, since the Great Melting, people are able to come out of their homes and move around much more easily, so we’ve been able to get a lot done. Our main goal in March was to prepare for several American visitors to arrive in April. Once April finally rolled around, we hosted Avery Hackney, Jared and Whitney Kelly, and John Durham for different activities. Avery, Jared, and Whitney have all been here 3–4 times previously, and John has been here too many times to count! It was a nice addition to have their presence for a few weeks after such a long winter.

One of the main goals of the visit was to host an evangelism class for the church here. As we have been discussing the spiritual growth of individuals over the last several months, it was time to turn

our focus outward and encourage people to begin taking the story of Jesus to their friends. For several nights, our visitors hosted a class that was part lesson, part discussion/question and answers session. As someone who has attended and even taught several different classes in this location, I can confidently say this was the best class we have had in many years. The church members are ready to evangelize and needed guidelines and motivation for how to do so. Thanks to this class, they are now well-equipped! In addition, those who have been visiting have started asking serious questions about being baptized after these classes. They are studying and thinking, and I imagine soon they will make the decision!

We also had some time to go around to different community centers for volunteering work, as well as the usual English classes. These are very beneficial for promoting the church in the community, as our presence in these places continues to build our reputation and allows for people to ask questions and receive more information. Bringing a small group of Americans to these places also makes it quite memorable for everyone there, so that when I run into them in the city, or visit them again on my own, they know both who I am and who I represent, which is incredibly useful.

John Durham joined us as well, though his focus was mostly on working with King Daniel University and the Galaxy Center. Still, the church was encouraged by his presence at the classes and also the sermon he preached before he left. John has made many contacts through the years, and due to that, many people visit when he preaches purely because he invites them. It's a great lesson for us all!

These visits were an excellent start to the spring season, and I believe there will be some great fruits from it in the coming months. I'll let the others tell you from their perspectives as well!

-Gif

Jared Kelly

It's been 2 years since I've been in Ukraine and it's so good to be back! This year we taught an evangelism seminar for the church in Ivano-Frankivsk. Avery would lead the lessons, and then I would lead the church in discussion following the lessons. The church members asked many great questions, and they were eager to learn and encouraged to continue sharing the message. We got good feedback from them on the lessons, and I think we eased some of their fears that come with evangelism. While we were there we also were involved with helping organize some humanitarian aid, that will go to help people near and on the front lines. It's been a very cold winter and Ukrainians are very grateful for many of the warm clothes that have been donated. We also were involved in teaching classes at the local high school and University. It was a wonderful opportunity as always to meet young people and to let them know we are there because we love them and care for them. I pray our efforts while there will encourage others to join the great harvest of souls in Ukraine. Continue to pray for an end to the war soon!



Whitney Kelly

We had a wonderful third trip to Ivano-Frankivsk! It was so good to see old friends and meet new faces at the church! We had our nightly bible study with the congregation, taught English in the high school, sorted and sent clothes to the front lines and made anti drone nets to help protect soldiers and people from drone attacks. The women helping to make the nets have been displaced from all over the country but have found community in each other and in making these nets. Many use their lunch break to come and help for an hour to try and make a difference. The Ukrainian people are strong, kind, and welcoming in a way that truly needs to be experienced to be understood.

Avery Hackney

Serving in Ukraine has been both a humbling and deeply rewarding experience. Despite the many challenges the country continues to face, the faith and resilience of the people have been a constant source of encouragement. The hunger for truth and the openness to the Gospel are evident in both personal conversations and group gatherings. It has been a privilege to witness how God is working in hearts, even in difficult circumstances.

One of the primary focuses of this trip has been teaching night classes on evangelism for the congregation. These classes have brought together believers who are eager to grow in their ability to share their faith effectively. Through Scripture, practical training, and discussion, we have explored how to communicate the Gospel clearly and compassionately. Many participants have expressed a renewed confidence and boldness in teaching to others in their communities.

In addition to teaching, a significant part of the ministry has been encouraging the brethren. Fellowship has been especially meaningful, as the congregation encourages each other. The unity and perseverance of the church here are inspiring, and it is evident that God is sustaining His people.

Overall, this trip has been a powerful reminder that the Gospel continues to advance, even in the midst of uncertainty. Your prayers and support have made this work possible, and we are grateful to be involved in what God is doing in Ukraine.



Volunteering, humanitarian aid, and teaching English are big parts of the work here that keep us connected

May 3, 2026



Encouraging classes and worship services for the church have been very productive for the last two months

