



BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES

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"Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Psalm 32:7

Dear Pastors and Friends,

Warm greetings from Ukraine, one of the hotspots in a world that reminds us of Jesus' words in Matthew 24, *"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled."* That isn't easy these days in Ukraine. Yet, in many ways here in the capital of Kiev, life goes on as normal. Streets are full of cars; people ride the subway to and from work. The shops, sidewalks and stores are filled with folks trying to go about their usual lives. Of course, life isn't routine when reports tell of soldiers and civilians losing their lives in the conflict that threatens this beleaguered nation. There is great concern that things could get much worse, since everyone understands that Russian forces are engaged in deadly attacks on the Ukrainian troops trying to reclaim the territories occupied by rebels, who resort to barbaric tactics.

Praise God that, despite the troubles, ministry in Ukraine continues (with the exception of Eastern areas where military conflict is taking place and from which hundreds of thousands have fled).

The churches we have planted on the military bases of Desna and Goncharovsk have been greatly affected: large numbers of soldiers and equipment have been deployed to the east. Men from both cities have become casualties, although exact numbers are confidential. Praise God that these churches have been established and that the Gospel has been proclaimed for years in these places where men are being called upon to give their lives for their nation.

On Saturday it was a blessing to baptize several converts of a young church in Fastiv. This church's pastor is Vadim, an early convert of the first church BIEM planted in this area nearly 20 years ago. Vadim was saved from drug addiction, so it was almost automatic that this dynamic church establish a drug and alcohol rehab center. That center has rescued many others from drugs through Christ. Those converts now serve God and contribute to the community.

As God's people pray that in these troubled times souls would turn to God, lost ones truly are coming to Christ. That was the case where I preached last Sunday evening as another soul came forward. Churches are sheltering refugees, plus collecting aid and food for soldiers and civilians in the embattled areas. Another church I visited on Sunday is doing even more—their men have volunteered to transport aid to these dangerous places. As Pastor Alexander called the church to prayer, he pointed them to Habakkuk 3: *"When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops...yet will I rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."*

We in the U.S. have been blessed that, in our lifetime, we've never seen military forces massed on our border. We can learn much from our Ukrainian brethren who face this trial with faith. As you continue to uphold the Slobodians and BIEM in prayer, please pray for peace in Ukraine, for souls to turn to Christ, and for continued freedom to preach the Gospel and plant churches. May God bless you!

Sam & Amy Slobodian