



REACHING ACROSS

April 2022: Special Ukraine Edition

Why This Message Is Critical

On February 24, Russia invaded the nation of Ukraine. Their forces have relentlessly attacked cities, including civilian targets, resulting in thousands of innocent casualties and humanitarian crises across the nation.

Four million Ukrainians have fled the country. A UNICEF spokesperson said **1 out of every 2 children** has had to flee their homes since the start of the war.

This newsletter tells about some of the trials that Ukrainians have experienced. But it is more than that.

It also explains how Future Leadership Foundation leadership responded quickly to help our partners there. But that's an incomplete story as well.



What you will find here is a testimony – telling the story of the faith and actions of Christians who continue to worship and minister, despite their dire condition.

You will also read how you have answered the call for help with incredible generosity through your gifts to the [FLF Ukraine Emergency Relief](#)

[Fund](#), where 100% of your gifts go directly to the needs of Ukraine and refugees.

And yes, we will ask for your continued giving to address the second wave of refugees.

Thank you for your prayers and your gifts that are making a difference in providing hope and relief to the people of Ukraine.

Sewing, Reaping, Caring



Executive Director
Greg Morrow

Events continue to swirl around those whom we love and support in Ukraine and its neighboring countries. As events swirl, so too does the news from those with whom we stay in touch.

We praise the Lord for the way He has touched people to give so generously, and we give thanks to the many donors who daily continue to respond. The response of so many reminds me of the spirit our brother, the Apostle Paul, described how early believers responded to the call for offerings to be given for the church in Jerusalem:

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." – 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:6-9

Continue to pray for our friends throughout this region of the world as they keep on, keeping on in their efforts to be the presence of Christ, and to be agents of His peace to the wounded and suffering.

Greg

What the Lord Has Done: What You Have Accomplished

Two days after the Russian invasion began, FLF issued an appeal for the FLF Ukraine Emergency Relief Fund. FLF staff and supporters, churches, individuals and other organizations responded.

Where have gifts come from? Some have come from churches where hundreds attend. Other churches are made up of a few dozens. Donations have come because of appeals and because of word of mouth.

We were able to make a first disbursement of almost \$100,000 in less than a week. We give thanks that together, in only a month, *more than \$300,000* has been raised!

Where are we distributing the money? Below is an overview of disbursements made as of March 30:

Ukraine Baptist Union	\$ 45,000
Other Baptist Unions: (Poland, Moldova, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia)	\$104,641
Ukraine Baptist Theological Seminary	\$ 24,567
Golden Apple Institute in Poland (chanelling donations)	\$ 20,376
Local churches	\$ 47,338
Total disbursed thus far:	\$241,992

First-Person Report from Burzivka, Ukraine

FLF Executive Director Greg Morrow receives daily updates from Ukraine and throughout the region. They include both stories of victories and encouragement as well as pain and frustration.

This message below was recently received from Olya, wife of Daniel Oliynyk, pastor of the Burzivka church in southern Ukraine, one of the recipients of the Relief Fund. They continue to minister in Christ's name in a most dangerous time.



Left: Daniel and Olya Oliynyk and their family; Right: Wartime damage

Hello, Greg! How are you? To be completely honest with you, I feel very down in the last few days.

I feel I am not humble enough. My prayers are "When will it stop? How long?" I do realize God has a plan and we need to wait. It is just hard.

The news reports are horrible. Yesterday, Russians destroyed the last food store in Mariupol, 350,000 are slowly and painfully dying. They drop from 50 to 100 bombs on Mariupol every single day. Every building in this big city is either destroyed or heavily damaged.

They killed all rescue teams and ambulance workers. There is no one left to help people. I am in shock.

We are safe for now. Still doing our best to help people around us. My university professor comes to our church services with her husband. A young girl from our village and a woman-refugee confessed their sins this past Sunday.

God is working. It might be a great spiritual awakening for Ukrainian people. I hope so. I hope we will live as a nation. I pray Buzivka stays safe.



Future Leadership Foundation

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The Future Leadership Foundation (FLF) develops Christian leaders globally, collaborating with churches, ministry organizations and religious entities by addressing needs and goals that facilitate reaching people for Christ and equipping them for ministry.

Leadership Team:

Executive Director: Greg Morrow; **Director of Operations:** Robbi Haynes; **Field Services Directors:** Calvin Brown, Dr. John Claydon, Chris Cook, Steve Easterwood, Mike and Robbi Haynes, John Jackson, Heber Mena, and Phil Rector; **Treasurer:** Gary Collins; **Communications:** Ken Satterfield

2021 Board:

President: Tom Ogle, California, Mo.; **Vice President:** Steve Easterwood, Kirksville, Mo.; **Secretary:** Gerri Ogle, California, Mo.

Board members: Julius Anderson, Naples, Fla.; Ryan Feeler, Rolla, Mo.; Michael Graves, Mo.; Larry Guess, Fenton, Mo.; Stephen Hemphill, Liberty, Mo.; Janie Houf, Newton, N.C.; Andre Khudyadkov, Kiev, Ukraine; Stephen Mathis, Jefferson City, Mo.; Jean Roberson, Pelham, Ala.; Thea Scott, Jefferson City, Mo.; Stan Sullinger, The Woodlands, Texas; and Tom Wright, Lee's Summit, Mo.

Advisory Board:

Kathleen Boswell, Sedalia; Jennifer Briner, Switzerland; and Nolan Porter, Mo.

FLF First-Person Response: Chris Cook in Poland

Note: Within days after Russia's invasion, Chris Cook, FLF Field Coordinator with Poland, was on a flight to Poland. He shared his experience in an interview, edited for space.

FLF originally had a team of 4 people scheduled to travel to Ukraine and conduct a retreat for Church Planters at Ukraine Baptist Theological Seminary in Lviv, followed by a weekend at a conference for church leaders in Poland. Until COVID, I had been to Ukraine every year since 2013, and was in Ukraine the year the Russian Separatists took the eastern two regions of Ukraine, so I was not afraid to travel.

In addition, my family hosted Bogdan, the son of UBTS President Slavik Pyzh in 2014, so that he could finish high school in Columbia, Mo. During that time our families became very close. Having that personal connection was another reason for responding quickly.

On February 24, when Russia invaded Ukraine, my trip shifted from going to Ukraine to going only to Poland. The Polish Baptist Union was happy to host me for 11 days instead of just one weekend.

Because I had not anticipated traveling until late this year, I had to expedite my passport renewal. With a lot of prayer, I received my new passport in record time — one day shy of three weeks.



While in Poland, I was able to work with and assist the leadership of their Baptist Union in a variety of different ways; Traveling to the border (*see above*) with the Polish leadership to assess the situation there the first night I arrived; Visiting a number of different churches serving as help centers for Ukrainian refugees; and preaching in Polish churches encouraging them to be strong and be the welcoming, caring presence of Jesus Christ.

I also assisted the Baptist Union in communicating to many of their English-speaking partners. I actually sat in decision-making meetings of the Baptist Union leadership, helping them draft email responses to these partners. And, the staff at the Baptist seminary in

Warsaw helped me make connection with the people who could get two satellite phones to UBTS in Lviv.

There were so many groups from the United States and the English speaking world coming and going, bringing supplies and getting a first-hand perspective. Being there for 11 days as a representative of FLF allowed the leadership to see that we were not just there because of a crisis. We are there for them as partners and we are there for them for the long haul.

When I returned, the Baptist Union leadership acknowledged that our FLF presence there was a great source of emotional support for them.

For the nation at large, I believe the Polish still have a vivid collective memory of the 1939 invasions. For the Polish believers, I believe this is part of living out their faith. This is what it means to love your neighbor.



A family of Ukrainians staying at a church camp in the northeast corner of Poland. In the center are Chris Cook and Marek Glodek, president of the Baptist Union.

Demonstrating great generosity and compassion for the Ukrainians, they are rearranging their schedules and making sacrifices to accommodate the Ukrainians. In Chelm (25 kilometers from the border), businesses and unchurched people were coming to the church to donate supplies.

The Poles are doing their best to make sure the Ukrainians are cared for and treated with great respect. In fact, while I was there, I started referring to Ukrainians as guests rather than refugees.

While we should pray for a miracle in Ukraine, we should pray for strength and tenacity on the part of the Poles and all those other neighboring nations that are laboring so hard to care for the Ukrainians.

(Chris Cook is senior pastor at Parkade Baptist Church in Columbia, Mo. Look for more stories and photos from Chris in future FLF e-newsletter updates.)

How Are Relief Funds Being Used?

Here are two snapshots of how our partners are using relief funds:

- Ion Miron, President of Baptist Union in Moldova, says it costs **\$8,000 per day** to feed 1,000 refugees three meals per day at \$2.67 per meal. Since that time, the Moldova Baptist Union is now serving 3,000 meals per day with the help of volunteers from local churches.
- Olya and Daniel Oliynyk at the church in Burzivka (see page 2) are forwarding medical supplies for cancer patients and diabetics into Kiev and Irpin for refugees. Medical doctors in Lviv send requests to medical doctors in Poland. They send medications for cancer patients and diabetics to the church in Burzivka, who then transport the medications to Kiev.



We are so grateful for your prayers and kindness. Every day we spend all our time in our Church. People are bringing clothes and food to help refugees. – Oksana Savka, of New Hope Ukraine,

What About the Ongoing Work of FLF?

Future Leadership Foundation is designed to be flexible to quickly meet needs. But how has our efforts on the part of Ukraine affected other work?

In November 2021, the FLF Board approved 16 projects. Nine of these projects in Central and Eastern Europe – Ukraine, Moldova, Poland – have been cancelled because of the war or flight concerns, as we remain in touch with our partners who are involved in the war.

And, COVID management remains an issue with projects scheduled in Central America, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama and Mexico.

Yet, prior to this crisis, FLF managed to conduct one training event in Ukraine in January. Brad Newbold, Associate Pastor of Worship at Concord Baptist Church, Jefferson City, Mo., provided the leadership via video message at the conference.

A Spiritual Renewal Retreat Leadership Forum with the Golden Apple Institute in Wroclaw, Poland remains on schedule. Two trainers, Patrick Wilson of Rolla, Mo., and Kurtis Estes, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Salisbury, Mo., leave early May to conduct this training event.

Two FLF leaders, Field Service Director Calvin Brown

of Georgia, and Brad Newbold of Missouri, leave late March for Israel on a vision trip in collaboration with the Yuval Center for Worship and Arts in Israel.

Two projects approved in India, Emerging Leaders Initiative and Webinar Classes for English Language remain in discussion between FLF Field Service Worker John Jackson and A.K. Lama, Director of TLA for India.

We ask for your continued prayers and support as we discern God's direction during this challenging time.

How You Can Respond

We ask that you give to the FLF Ukraine Emergency Relief Fund, either electronically, or using the enclosed envelope as we anticipate a second wave of needs.

You can also **sign up** for our email updates. Send a request to office@flfmissions.org

Online: Give quickly and safely at our site flfmissions.org (or go directly to give at tinyurl.com/Relief4Ukraine under Fund)

By mail: Return the envelope to:
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