



April/May 2023

March 3rd–8th Dnipro Hope Mission Ukraine Ministry Trip Meeting our partners in person - 'Heroes of the Faith'

Report from Khurst

Six members of the Dnipro Hope Mission team travelled to Khurst in Western Ukraine to support, express their solidarity with, and pay tribute to our Ukrainian partners. We also wanted to give them a time of rest and refreshment and find out first hand their needs for the year ahead.



The DHM team: Inna, Ian, Margaret, Liliya, Joshua and Rodger (front row)
Ukrainian partners: Andrii, Olga, Roman and Denys (rear)



An emotional reunion for Joshua and Oleksii



International Advisory Board member, Rev. Rodger Murchison, author of 'Guide to Grief', sharing years of pastoral experience and study.

International Advisory Board member, Rev Ian Stackhouse, author of 'Praying Psalms', preaching on Psalm 23.



'Share each other's troubles and problems...' Galatians 6.2

Report from Pastor Sasha: Vasilkivka Baptist Church



Pastor Sasha serves in the village of Vasytkivka, Dnipro region, just 70 km from the frontlines. When the war started, people came to the churches because they knew they would be helped there. Pastor Sasha and his team rose to the challenge providing comprehensive assistance to the large number of refugees coming from the east providing food, housing, clothing, logistics and evacuation from the war zone. Pastor Sasha was then called to work as a military chaplain providing social, spiritual and material support to young men serving on the front lines. He writes: *'I am grateful to the Lord that not only in times of joy, but also in*

times of trouble, we have friends like you, more than that, such a family. As for the plans for the 23rd year, to do what we do with even greater inspiration and in this I need your prayers, let's win together!'

Dnipro Hope Mission would like to thank the **Oasis Trust** who provided the funds which enabled us to purchase and send the car pictured for Pastor Sasha's work. It has already made many trips to the front line to deliver aid, evacuate civilians and minister to the troops.



Pictured: Partners Sasha, Serhii and Andrii.

Please pray for:

- ◆ Pastor Sasha, his wife, Iryna and their three adult children. Please pray especially for Iryna's health.
- ◆ For safety as he travels to and from the front lines.
- ◆ For the military unit that Pastor Sasha cares for—that they will be protected as they fight for Ukraine and justice.
- ◆ For the vulnerable relying on Pastor Sasha and others for material aid and social, emotional and spiritual support.
- ◆ For the summer plans which include camps for children.
- ◆ For a new project to repair the water supply in a mostly destroyed village where forty seven people remain. They have been without water, electricity and gas since August.

Report from Pastor Oleksandr: Bible Church, Tsarichanka

Pastor Oleksandr, who works with Pastor Sasha, continues to serve people with disabilities in a care home (where many disabled and wounded people arrived from the war zone). At the beginning of the war, the church gave all of its resources which had been used for children's and youth camps to refugees: over twenty tents; fifty sleeping bags; fifty mattresses with sets of bedding. They gave everything, because they thought that if the Russians came, they wouldn't need it anymore. Over the first year, the church provided help and shelter to several thousand people. The church took aid to the soldiers in the combat zone in the Donetsk region—Lyman, Bakhmut, Pokrovsk. They delivered food to people who could not leave even though the battle was raging—to Pokrovsk, Lyman, Sviatohirsk and Kramatorsk. During the war, a school for refugee children operated in the church. The church prepared firewood for the winter and supplied ten refugee families, seven families with many children and five widows and elderly people. Twenty four stoves were installed for people who did not have heating for the winter.



Pastor Oleksandr and his wife Julia pictured with Inna (DHM International Advisory Board)

Please pray for:

- ◆ Oleksandr, his wife Julia and their three adult children.
- ◆ The residents of the care home in Tsarichanka.
- ◆ Those in the military who have been wounded and disabled.
- ◆ Oleksandr and all at the Bible Church as they continue to serve and minister.

'...hold onto what is good'. 1 Thess. 5.21

Report from Pastor Serhii: Poltava Baptist Church



'We have been ministering to displaced people every day since the first day of full scale war.' During the last year Pastor Serhii and his church provided shelter and food for over 3,000 people. As food, hygiene products, medicines, clothes and shoes were distributed those receiving them were able to relax at tables and given social, emotional and spiritual support as well as food and drink. More than 10,000 portions of hot tea, coffee, pies, and sandwiches were given to refugees fleeing from Kharkiv and Poltava to the western part of Ukraine at the railway station. More than 20 tons of medical aid and food products were donated to the military. More than 5,000 servings of free hot lunches were served. (Serhii and Olena pictured with Rev. Rodger Murchison, DHM International Advisory Board)

Please pray for:

- ◆ Pastor Serhii's wife Olena, and daughter Sofia who have serious dental problems requiring surgery and treatment.
- ◆ The on-going humanitarian work of Poltava Baptist Church.
- ◆ That funds are available for the 2,000 food packages; 500 packs of hygiene products and 1,000 sets of medicines—all of which need to be purchased, made and distributed each month.

Thank you for being with us every day of this terrible year for our people.

Thank you for doing and doing unreal things for our people.

Thank you for supporting and caring for us all this time.

Thank you for praying for us every day.

Thank you that we are in your hearts.

Thank you for being sacrificial, devoted and merciful!

Without you, we would not have been able to do all that we have done this year! Pastor Serhii

Report from Pastor Oleksii: Vinnitsa

'From February 24 to April 11 2022, my family and I served in Berdyansk. We received thousands of refugees from Mariupol. 17 Mariupol residents lived in our house, and the church building was turned into a shelter. Our city was occupied on 27/02/22. We served in the occupation and it was very difficult and risky. Resources were scarce and we needed a lot. On April 8, the Russian special services began looking for me in the city and I had to leave urgently. On April 11, God brought me and my family to Vinnitsa, where we immediately began to gather people and help them in their needs, inviting them to fellowship. Now, about 50 new believers gather weekly for the church service. Also, my ministry consists of constant trips to the front line. This is from Kherson to Kharkov. Weekly, I travel 2000-2500 km. There is a special need there, and I try to serve people with prayers, fellowship, humanitarian aid. For the period from 11.04.2022 to 5.03.2023 I drove about 120.000 km. With my team, we distributed about 500 tons of humanitarian cargo. There is much to tell and show.'

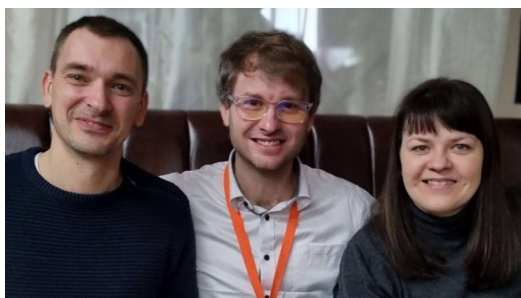


Please pray for:

- ◆ Stable financial support for renting a room for church services in Vinnytsia.
- ◆ The opportunity to collect food kits, hygiene and water for people at the front.
- ◆ Prayer for transport and finances for fuel and maintenance.

'So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid of them. For the Lord your God will go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.' Deut. 31.6

Report from Pastor Mykhailo: Dnipro Central Church



Over the past year, Dnipro Central Church took in more than 15,000 displaced people; organised overnight accommodation and meals and found transport to take people to a safe place. They evacuated people from the east; organised a point for issuing humanitarian aid (food and hygiene kits); gave medical aid; organised holidays for the children of displaced people; supported married couples (through loss, grief, separation), ran summer camps for children; helped with warm clothing, food and a stove for the military. They also provided clothes

for wounded soldiers in the local hospital. The church provided social, emotional and spiritual support to many thousands. They also delivered food, clothing, bread, medicines, hygiene products, generators and construction materials to the east.

Please pray for :

- ◆ Mykhailo and his wife, Tatiana and their six children
- ◆ Their plans for activities for traumatised children and teenagers including summer camps which will support and encourage them and providing healing through play.
- ◆ The work of the church - no-one can predict what tomorrow will bring.

'I really liked the atmosphere .

Meeting new people who are not indifferent to Ukraine.

To see friends who understand.

The opportunity to hear the testimonies of others, it gives an understanding that you are not alone and it inspires you to serve in the future.

Hear words of encouragement and feel support.'

Pastor Mykhailo, talking about the ministry trip

Please keep these partners in your thoughts and prayers

We don't have the space to provide reports on all of our partners but please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. We are thankful that we were able to give them all a small gift and a 'Hero of the Faith' certificate signed by the President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain - a small sign of our appreciation which was well received.



Dr Daryna, Anaesthetist
Dnipro State Hospital



Pastor Roman from
Zaporizhzhia leads the Mennonite team in Ukraine.
There are over 20 Mennonite churches and over
250 volunteers serving refugees and
'loving their neighbour.'



Pastor Serhii, from
Novomoskovsk.

'And I suppose if all the other things Jesus did were written down, the whole world could not contain the books' John 21.25

Andrii Chizmar, Poltava

Andrii and others delivered food kits and much more to the frontline and de-occupied zones. Thousands of refugees from the east came to Poltava and many people joined the church. Now, Andrii and his wife Olga feel called to found a new church. **Please pray for:**

- ♦ Andrii, Olga and their young daughter, Amelia.
- ♦ A large room or hall that Andrii can rent for church services, educational classes and community support.
- ♦ The resources for a church: 150 chairs for parishioners; musical instruments, an electric piano, speakers, microphones and a video projector.



Military Chaplains

Watch the 'DHM Tribute to Ukrainian Heroes' on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/WrEXz5lhNP8>

All of our partners are potentially subject to conscription but have chosen 'Alternative Service' as the performance of military duties is contrary to their religious beliefs. As military chaplains, they serve on the front lines providing comfort to young men who face death each day. Each of the chaplains is assigned to a specific unit and become very close to the soldiers and their families providing spiritual and social support where there is a constant stream of life-changing injuries and loss of human life. It is difficult to see friends die and live with grief each day. Many of the chaplains have sons serving in the army and so know first hand what conditions are like and how important it is to help soldiers retain their humanity.

Please pray for:

- ♦ The safety of all the military chaplains, their sons and daughters who serve, and the troops they care for.
- ♦ That each chaplain will have the emotional resources to carry on helping those in need.
- ♦ That they can continue to supply life saving medical supplies, hygiene products, chargers and life-saving equipment (helmets, bulletproof vests) to all those who need them.

What next?

Recommendations from Inna Haitan, new to our International Advisory Board, who talked to each of our pastors:

- * Psychological support centres for servicemen, veterans and wounded fighters are needed.
- * It is important to support children and women, as they are particularly vulnerable sections of the population. Churches could run regular meetings for women offering relevant talks and social and spiritual support.
- * Easter and summer camps for children and teenagers are important in order to distract them from the news about the war and to provide an opportunity for communication and therapeutic play.
- * Provide material assistance to military chaplains who often save the lives of soldiers. In conversations with them, it turned out that there is a shortage of NiO Adult Intraosseous Access Devices. £110 saves one life. These need to be purchased here and sent to Ukraine.
- * Currently, under the extreme stress of war, interest in God is growing among Ukrainians. It is important for Christians to share their faith through evangelistic literature and events.

Please pray for:

- ♦ Wisdom for the Board of Trustees as we ponder and pray over the many needs and funding requests and consider further ministry trips to support our partners.
- ♦ That we will continue to raise the funds needed to support our partners and their life saving work in Ukraine.



Pictured: The Board of Trustees with members of our International Advisory Board including Jose Arras, European Coordinator of Mennonite Conferences. Jose is a great supporter and encourager of DHM.

'When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs.' Psalm 84. v6

Pastor Vasyl Kovalyov: "Rock of Salvation" church, Donetsk

Since the beginning of the full scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Pastor Vasyl's small team has been constantly on the move, travelling over 140 thousand kilometres. They evacuated about 1,000 refugees from Donetsk, Luhansk, and some of the Mykolaiv regions. They delivered humanitarian aid from Europe to civilians and military in the east. They worked in the front line zone of Avdiivka, Krasnohorivka and other places and provide on-going support to the residents of the de-occupied territories of the Donetsk region. Over the past year, two hundred and fifty tons of food, clothing, bed linen, medicines, dressing materials, generators, small cooking pots, fuel materials etc. were sourced, delivered and distributed. They transported over 40,00 units of bread from their own bakery from Kharkiv to Zaporizhzhia. People were fed this bread in the basements of Volnovakha, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, and Maryinka under fire. When Vasyl and his team found that no drinking water had been available in one region they built a filter station from scratch. Since October 2022, 450 cubic meters of drinking water have been made. Five days a week, they consistently deliver and distribute water in the region, and also people can collect water from the church. All money from Dnipro Hope Mission goes to refuelling and repairing equipment so this work can continue.



Vasyl pictured with Joshua, Ian, Margaret and Rodger

Please pray for:

- ◆ Vasili, his wife Larissa and their three children.
- ◆ The congregation of 'Rock of Salvation' church, Pokrovsk, Donetsk Region.
- ◆ The safety of Vasili and his team as they travel hundreds of miles each week to deliver humanitarian aid.
- ◆ The city of Pokrovsk and all in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, bearing the brunt of the Russian attacks.

*We greatly appreciate your contribution to our work! Thanks to you, thousands of people received food, water, clothing, warmth, and medicine.
Let's do good together! Pastor Vasili*

Thank you to the Transcarpathian Christian Institute

A special thank you to Pastor Valerii Fedoranych (seen here with Pastor Sasha), Rector of the Transcarpathian Christian Institute who hosted the mission trip and participated in the conference.

He said 'The conferencetime was organized for communication, excursions, joint service. It was possible to make the internal atmosphere warm and friendly. Personally, I was at the beginning, I didn't know anyone, but it didn't make me feel lonely. I saw people from different areas who work and serve in difficult, military conditions. I want to attend such meetings. Inspiring.'

Please pray for all the work of the Transcarpathian

Christian Institute which is a large hub for humanitarian relief. They also run educational and training programs (such as art therapy and crisis pedagogy); support an orphanage for sixty displaced children and support displaced people in Khust and surrounding villages.



*'Darkness cannot put out darkness; only light can do that'
Rev. Martin Luther King—given to us by Pastor Valerii*

Deacon Yevhenii: Dnipro Independent Baptist Church

While our team ministered in Ukraine, Deacon Yevhenii was in the UK to visit his wife and young children. They had not seen each other since May 2022. We are incredibly grateful to Yevhenii and his wife Polina (a professional violinist) who visited New Malden and Guildford Baptist churches to share their experiences of the war and separation.



Please pray for:

- ◆ This very dear family—like so many Ukrainians—separated by war with no idea when they will see their loved ones again.
- ◆ The elderly people and families who live permanently in the church because they have no-where else to go.
- ◆ The team at the church who are working round the clock to serve all those in need and take aid to the front line.
- ◆ Those who are internally displaced who visit the church each week for humanitarian aid.
- ◆ That the church is able to plan and organise spiritual and social activities for children, teenagers, families and the elderly—all of whom have experienced shock, stress, displacement, homelessness, loss and grief.



Pictured: Yevhenii and his family at New Malden Baptist Church in the UK—above. The children presented Yevhenii with artwork and cards to take back to his church.

Yevhenii and the team at Dnipro Independent Baptist Church in Ukraine—below.



'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me.'

Matthew 25.v 35-37

Thank you for supporting our small but life-saving charity!

We thank all of you who support our work with finances and prayers. All gifts are warmly appreciated. They make a difference to someone and are saving lives.

A special thanks to fundraisers: The Woking pastorate @Guildford Baptist Church who ran a charity fashion show raising £543 and the team of street collectors, also in Guildford, who collected an amazing £1,450 on the first anniversary of the war.

We've had some very generous donations from individuals (thank you) and from churches too: Thank you to Barking Chapel, Reigate Baptist Church and Wallington Baptist Church. If we have omitted to mention your donation and/or you haven't received a thank you email from us and you haven't chosen to remain anonymous please let us know as we couldn't do our work without you and we would like to express our deep gratitude.



Pictured: Olga, a refugee from Ukraine, one of the team of street collectors raising money in Guildford on 24th February 2022

We are working mostly in the east of Ukraine where there are many internally displaced people and needs are highest especially amongst older people, people with disabilities and those unable to leave because of illness or lack of economic resources. Are you inspired raise funds for our partners? From fashion shows, to cake and produce stalls; street collections and sponsored runs—every penny will make a difference to the most vulnerable in Ukraine.

Please contact melanie@dniprohopemission.com if you are able to help

Please join us as we pray for peace

Every month, on the first Thursday, we pause and pray for peace. Please join us, if you can, on April 6th, May 4th and June 1st from 3-4pm GMT as we pray for a just end to this terrible war and an end to the anguish of the Ukrainian people. Please contact the prayer convenor for the Zoom link: melanie@dniprohopemission.org

'Pray especially for pastors and ministers, it is especially difficult for them. We have ceased to be afraid of death, we would be afraid of being indifferent to the pain of our people. This is our reality and our choice to serve.'

Pastor Roman from Zaporizhzhia

Give

As the suffering continues, we go from 'need to need' and we want to be able to help our partners on the ground in Ukraine continue to provide support for the most vulnerable. We need your help to do this.

DHM is an organisation comprised of volunteers and local ministry partners, we don't have any paid staff and 100% of your donations go directly to where they are most needed in Ukraine.

Please donate either through Stewardship or through a standing order or one-off payment to the DHM account:

Sort Code: **30-90-91** / Account Number: **68149860** / Account Name: Dnipro Hope Mission

Bank Name: Lloyds Bank

Please contact gill@dniprohopemission.org for a gift aid form or download it from our website

<https://www.dniprohopemission.org/donate/>

'Hold onto what is good.' 1 Thess 5.21