



## BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES

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### July-August 2023

*"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice." Psalm 55:17*

#### Dear Pastors and Friends,

Hello again from the Slobodians! We are grateful for your interest, prayers, and support for our ministry of reaching souls and planting churches in Eastern Europe and in Muslim lands. Your prayers are being answered as we continue to see souls saved and lives changed for the glory of God during these challenging times.

We were in Ukraine from the end of July through the first part of August where we were able to participate in camps and check in on the war relief efforts our national missionaries are engaged in. We thank all those who prayed for our safety and the safety of camp workers, campers, and the personnel distributing war relief during our trip. Glad to report the funds needed for camps mentioned in our last prayer letter was provided. Praise God! It was a blessing to see the fruit of souls that are a result of our war relief efforts. For example, we were able to participate in two baptisms. One in Ternopil, and the other in Smolin, a town near the Goncharovsk military base. In both locations those baptisms included converts who were reached through our war-relief distribution efforts. The baptism in Smolin was attended by the mayor of Smolin and his wife. Please pray that the Gospel they heard will work in their hearts.

Another example we heard was from Vitaly and Natalia, a Ukrainian couple that has played a large role in our war-relief efforts, especially in the area of Donetsk, which is in Donbas, where they have many contacts. They told us of a church of 100 we have been helping through them. It is only 15 miles from Bakhmut, which has seen probably the heaviest fighting for months. When the war started, 80% of the congregation left for the West, including their pastor and his family. Although only 15 members remained, they worked hard distributing the aid we have been providing to the community. As a result, their auditorium is full to overflowing for services, and many have been saved!" These kinds of reports are what we are hearing from all over Ukraine!

Your prayers were especially needed during this time because that's when Russia stepped up their attacks on Ukraine. Nevertheless, none of us were hurt, although we sometimes heard sirens and lost electricity at times, once for 13 hours. Praise God, the camps were unaffected, and the Lord worked mightily in the hearts of the hundreds of children and youth who joyfully attended. God also protected us from ourselves. While returning to the Kyiv area from Nizhylovychi (a formerly Russian-occupied area between Bucha and Hostomel, where a new church has been planted through our war relief distributions), we passed some beautiful fields of sunflowers. We could not resist stopping to take pictures. Lots of pictures—until we noticed a sign warning of land mines! That sign abruptly ended our photo session! Please take the time to view a 15 minute video of this trip which ends with a sample of what it is like to be in Ukraine these days, by typing the following link in your browser; <https://vimeo.com/855809988>

August concluded with a trip to the Republic of Georgia where we were able to visit with some of our missionaries there. On the way we made a stop in Turkey to visit a special orphanage that we have helped with War Relief funds. This orphanage houses nearly 600 Ukrainian children & youth that have been evacuated to Turkey. Many of them are war orphans, children of parents who have been killed in the war. It was a blessing to see how these children are being cared for and to see a location where BIEM is practicing James 1:27. May God continue to bless each of you!

#### *The Slobodians*