

## April 2022 Afghanistan, Belarus, China, France, Iran, Ukraine, UK

We strongly recommend you download the "*Bible Companion*" app, from where you can access *Carelinks* messages, daily Bible readings, *Bible Basics*, commentary on every verse of the Bible and audio exhortations on every chapter of the Bible.

For Android / Google Play at

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.carelinks.bc>

and on the App Store for Apple / iOS at

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bible-companion/id1475914490>

You can break bread live online as follows:

Saturday mornings 09:00 a.m.UK time; on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6697401754?pwd=K0VWNDlScGwzaThPM2tiU0didmNyUT09>

Meeting ID: 669 740 1754 Passcode: XPb9Sz.

Sundays at 3:00 PM New Zealand time. That's 1 PM in Sydney Australia; 10 PM in New York, USA on Saturday evening [run by Br John Aldersley in New Zealand] on

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87934245299?pwd=WmVDdGdPaG9JU0RTTnFtcW1VNk1pdz09>

Meeting ID: 879 3424 5299 Passcode: 411793

Sundays at 10am North American Eastern Time [3 PM UK GMT time, 11 PM Sydney Australia time]. Run by Br Jim Barton in Canada.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9123758179>

Meeting ID: 912 375 8179 . Also, Bible class on Wednesdays at 7 PM North American Eastern Time

### AFGHANISTAN

This week we baptized MOJTABA online, more fruit from the Farsi Bible app.

### BELARUS

For some time we've been discussing with TATYANA, an app user in Belarus. Doctrine by doctrine, from the nature of the Lord Jesus to the death state to the devil, all fell into place with her. With joy we conducted her baptism online early one morning, with her in Belarus, us near the Ukrainian border, and our recently evacuated sisters in their rented apartment in Warsaw also present. It was a wonderful occasion and you can see it all in Russian at <https://youtu.be/4R3xFCTjMDc> . Sister Irina from Ukraine, now in Warsaw as a refugee, gave some very spiritually mature prayers, as did Tatyana herself. We give thanks to the Lord who teaches and calls. We so wish that in better circumstances we could have met in person for the baptism, but the war currently precludes that.



### CHINA

Despite some restrictions, our work continues in China. Brother Donald reports: I baptized brother SUN. He wrote me this personal testimony:

In 2021, the building I lived in was sealed up because of Covid outbreak. We were told it would be sealed for at least 14 days. We had two hours to buy vegetables in the supermarket before the deadline. We had never seen such a scene. I bought quick-frozen dumplings, raw soy sauce, eggs, vegetables, carrots, onions and other durable dishes. By the start of the second

week of isolation, I began to worry that I would run out of food. My psychology was very depressed, my body was very tired. But during that time, I started to think a lot about the Lord Jesus and searched about Him. through the Internet, and I had a lot of peace in my heart. I contacted some other churches online. Through a period of contact, I noticed that fake priests, fake teachers and fake prophets on the Internet were often not teaching the word of God. Moreover, there were many heresies on the Internet. By God's willing, I come to contact with *Carelinks*. I found agreement on doctrines and only regret we didn't meet earlier. So I found with them what I already suspected or had concluded

1 When Jesus Christ returns we will be resurrected, judged and given eternal life in His Kingdom -“ which will be based here on this earth.

2 After death we are unconscious - ~hell" means just 'the grave'.

3 The soul is not immortal; we are made of dust and return to the dust.

So now, Knowing that all this is in the hands of God, we should be good children of our Lord, spread the true gospel."

Here's our brother writing his testimony:



## FRANCE

On the drive over to **Ukraine** we sought to visit contacts across Europe. Whilst in France we dropped down to Paris to baptize HELGY. He is an enthusiastic user of the French *Bible Companion* app, and loves getting an explanation on every Bible verse. He has been doing the *Bible Companion* readings for some time, and when we met him he was making his own special study of Hebrews. He has built up a WhatsApp group of others in France who like him have been disillusioned with standard churchianity and also are using the app, and he tries to mentor them spiritually through the group. He is now going to work on encouraging them to baptism. It'd be hard to imagine a more humble, prayerful man, sincerely seeking to believe and do the right thing before God. We baptized english one. We will try to make another visit to him , Lord willing, to meet others in his WhatsApp group in person, although they are scattered all over France.



## IRAN

This week we baptized MOJTABA and MEHDI online, again more fruit from the Farsi Bible app. These baptisms and the brother in Afghanistan were all done at different times as we travelled across Europe and into Ukraine, often in very unusual situations. We marvel at how the Lord uses technology to gather together His scattered people in various circumstances worldwide.

## UK

We're delighted to report the self baptism of PHILIP in northern UK, and he attended our breaking of bread meeting on Zoom afterwards. He wrote this most wonderful letter which with his permission we can share with you:

"Thank you for your very kind and pro-active interest in my spiritual growth. It's very gratifying to

know that my *Bible Basics* quiz submissions did reach a target! It has been a long journey to get where I am now at age 73. As a sometime remunerated purveyor of Trinitarian religion it seemed almost impossible to turn into another path, but the events which the Lord brought about to chastise me also meant that I was able to break my ties with the Constantinian apostasy. I then had to deal with some very unsatisfactory domestic arrangements which required a more salutary ordering of my lifestyle, and to shed some bad habits which were pulling me away from fellowship with the saints. This has taken 25 years. I hope and pray that I am now reasonably well-placed to begin and sustain a serious commitment to knowing the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ whom He has sent. It's not practical to get to my nearest ecclesia in Blackburn, partly because I don't run a car and partly because health issues make public transport difficult. I have in the past had some tentative contact with ecclesias but the need to outgrow and erase so much of the Trinitarian branding, the domestic situation alluded-to - not to mention the intrusive bad habits - meant that the time was not then ripe for baptism and fellowship. The discovery of *Bible Basics* and *Carelinks* and its use of the wonderful technology which the Lord has provided for the propagation of the true Gospel in these latter days has enabled me to at last enter the race to final salvation, in earnest, before I die. I thank God for His grace in calling me to Himself and never letting me go in order that, so chosen, I may bear fruit that will last.

The chastisements of the Lord have left me somewhat physically and mentally debilitated, and not able to handle stress well. Sad to say, I feel that the presence of others at my baptism would have been very stressful to me and would have distracted me from the focus necessary for this important event. I therefore underwent baptism by myself at 10.20 a.m. this morning. You are the first and as yet only other person to know of this event. I was glad no one except the Almighty and His Son were present while I grappled with the logistics of total immersion!

I read today's New Testament scripture portion from John's Gospel about the healing of the man born blind. I re-acquainted myself with Romans 6. I called to mind my many sins, and asked God for forgiveness and to be washed clean in the blood of Christ. I prayed that I would receive a sufficient measure of His spirit to enable me to strive to be made worthy of His promises, and that my emergence from the water would bring me to a new life participating spiritually in the life of my resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I uttered the following form of words: "Father in heaven, by this immersion in water may I die to my life as a slave to sin and rise up in Christ as a son of Abraham and heir to a place in Your kingdom. I undergo this baptism in the name of your Son Jesus Christ and trust to the saving power for me of his death and resurrection." I then completely immersed myself in a bath filled with water. After leaving the bath I prayed for my new brothers and sisters in Christ, for the conversion of my compatriots, and for those newly encountering Christ in circumstances of adversity. I offered thanksgiving for your ministry, Duncan, and prayed for God's blessing on your new endeavours.

I will, of course, continue to engage daily with the resources accessible via the wonderful *Bible Companion* app. and via Kindle; and I am, by the way, so glad to have access now to a version of the Bible (ie. the *NEV*) where I don't have to do a "double-think" while reading the Prologue to John's Gospel! As I turn my face now towards the new dawn of Christ's return I greet all the saints sharing the same hope in joy, with a love and faith which bestows a peace that passes all understanding. If there is anything here in what I have written worth sharing, by all means share it - abridged or unabridged. Anonymity is not a requirement of mine: let the light of Christ penetrate even the darkest corners of my life and be reflected to illuminate others!

I am pleased that my baptism happened on Easter Day, which in this year of Our Lord 2022 may be the actual lunar anniversary of Jesus' resurrection (with Nisan 14 coinciding with Good Friday). It will help me more easily to call instantly to mind this event when backsliding seems imminent! But that's incidental; whatever calendar day this is, it is above all the first day of my new life in Christ.

So, from your brother now in Christ, be assured of my continuing prayers:  
Phillip

## **UKRAINE**

Mark and Lisa Hawkins [from the *Foothills ecclesia*, **Western Australia**] and Duncan drove across Europe and into Ukraine this week, with all your prayers opening ways. They're still on their journey at this point. Duncan reports:

We managed to enter and evacuate the family within Ukraine. So many deliverances and stories, but maybe we'll leave them as between us and the Lord. And so much else we were likely saved from that we didn't realize at the time. Anyway at this point we are all safe and mission accomplished with the family. The family are very traumatized but very spiritual. Kids [whose father was killed at the front] had nightmares last night. Irina called Igor [her husband] whom she left behind as no adult males can leave Ukraine, to hear again the sirens. They are yet again under bombardment. So very grateful to Charles Abel and Vanessa Boler who have flown out from UK to Warsaw to meet them and care for them further until they get clearance to enter the UK and live with Vanessa. They've arranged an apartment for them to stay in, took them to their interview with the UK authorities, and now they await the documents with which to leave Poland for UK. Just a few rather scattered memories and insights... The road signs in Ukraine all blacked out lest any Russian troops use them for directions. The way life has to carry on as usual in a strange way despite war. The lines of new Mercedes and other high value vehicles being brought IN to Ukraine at the border... makes you wonder... about a lot of things. The way some people make money out of war and tragedy. What truly wonderful company Mark & Lisa were. How they both cared for animals whom we met wandering around. How good those poor children were despite having only recently buried their daddy, 3 and 6 years old, cooped up in a car for a whole day in difficult, uncertain and potentially dangerous circumstances. There were 5 adults and the 2 children in our Kia Carens packed with baggage and a yellow bucket for the girls to use as a toilet in the many hour wait at the border, inching forward one car length at a time for hours. The stench of urine and decaying rubbish in some places. How young, very young, the soldiers looked. So young. Such tired faces, haggard beyond their years. The sense we all remarked on, that you felt "You, you just shouldn't be here, you should be at home or college, you're too young for this". The hard goodbyes... knowing brother Igor, Irina's husband and Nastya's uncle, could be taken away by the military at any time, possibly to the same fate as Nastya's late husband. Sister Irina's prayers. There is a woman who knows Jesus as Lord, Master and Saviour. The last goodbye in a cheap roadside cafe, with the kids colouring in the things Lisa had brought for them... that place whilst we were sitting there had greater awesome sanctity than of any Cathedral, in God's eyes. The sense time and again that God takes you right up to the limit, putting you in a position where it seems "mission impossible, we can't get through this"... and then He makes a way of escape appear right out of left field. Two verses that kept coming to my mind as I struggled, but I think succeeded, in seeing "God in all this". From the KJV of my youth, somewhere in Isaiah: "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour". And simply "God is love". Despite it all, He has been a great God to all of us involved in this mission. The very best Father. And Jesus... true friend, patient companion, unflustered

captain in danger's hour, stiller of the storms. So, all glory to God and His dear Son, and thank you for your prayers".

Us and a few other things... and Lisa so good with Google Translate:



Finally into Ukraine at 3:30 AM after 7 hours waiting at the border



Packing the bags in, all they have for their new life in Poland the UK; the famous yellow bucket at that point full of food for the journey



The hard goodbyes



Handing them over late at night in Warsaw to Vanessa and Charles



### **PRAYER POINTS**

- For those recently baptized
- Thanksgiving for our mission in Ukraine
- Prayer for those attempting to escape war through the corridors
- For those awaiting UK visas in Poland

**With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks**