

# April 2026 Ukraine

## **Marcus Heaster \* 28.02.1933 - 01.04.2026 †**

In the midst of a very demanding Ukraine trip, my dear dad Marcus fell asleep in the Lord back in London, UK. I'm still in Ukraine but due back in London soon, Lord willing. Dad was a humble man and didn't want any obituary nor eulogies. But truly, "I knew a man in Christ", and it would be hard to think of a longer serving, braver, zealous and more consistently loyal and faithful servant of His, since his conversion to the Lord and baptism into Him in Clapham in 1951. "So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous" (Ps. 58:11). "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:2).

Duncan

-----

## UKRAINE

We're thankful for the Lord's blessing so far on a wonderful trip to Ukraine, including to front line areas. Our objectives were to spiritually encouraged our brothers and sisters, give aid, fund energy and heating appliances given the lack of power, and to meet with and baptize contacts and friends. All were achieved. We picked up a number of needy brothers and sisters living near the eastern front. Drones are a constant experience in these areas, and we drove many kilometers through roads covered with anti drone netting, some made from old fishing nets. The drones are locked on to vehicles and guided by remote operators, but the idea is that the netting catches the drones and delays them from hitting their targets- many drones are quite small, "only" big enough to destroy one vehicle [and its occupants] at a time. The idea is that the driver then accelerates away from the drone whilst it is delayed in the netting. The roads themselves are in a terrible state, potholed from drone hits and also from the falling debris from drones that are exploded in mid air. Every few hundred meters in some areas we found soldiers with machine guns and rifles, waiting to shoot down or explode the drones in mid air before they reach their targets. The result is falling debris. Punctures are inevitable in this situation and Mark showed his worth doing amazing wheel changes. In the photo you can see the dragon's teeth anti-tank spikes and mines up to the side of the drone netted road which are found around the front line areas. Tyre repair booths are everywhere. As we got our tyre fixed, a stray cat had just given birth to a kitten. It was so fragile and small. Just like us. There's a video of us driving under the drone nets near the front, with related dramas, at <https://youtu.be/5ikVHA1mWfl>







But in this awful environment we found some wonderful brothers and sisters. Every visit they eagerly invited us to break bread and sent heart breaking messages of deep thanks for the help given. We exhorted them on the theme of the resurrection and the Kingdom, and the need not to be distracted by literally anything, not even death itself, from the Lord's love. Many are in advancing years and / or with serious medical issues, now with no family or family who have left Ukraine. We met some with cancer and heart issues, Oksana battling pancreatic cancer, living

with pain with little electricity, often no light nor water, little access to health care... clinging on to the memories of their baptism, the Bible Schools they attended, the brothers and sisters they remember and still have contact with... Many are also grieving from losing loved ones in the war. One sister had buried her son the day before we met. Another had a nephew who was killed 6 months ago, and since then his parents, her sister and brother in law, had both died from strokes. Everywhere there is fear about the future, and a total loss of faith in human leadership to resolve things. Others have loved ones living in Russia, who they can't visit nor receive help from as they used to... or who have been poisoned against anyone in Ukraine by propaganda.







Others are facing old age alone. We met one sister who is now almost totally blind but still works, who has broken her shoulder from a major fall, who literally asked us to take her hands and lead her through the darkness to her home from our meeting point. Her flat has caught fire from an electrical fault in the kitchen after a power surge during one of the many bombardments. This sister is alone with no family. All refuse to let us move them to safer areas with more amenities, so we accept that and seek to help them where they are. But it's very difficult.



They all love the Bible, sister Ludmila's NEV Bible is so well used, and is full of notes taken at the Bible Schools we used to run. Sister Elanora came a long way to help her prepare a meal for us in her flat, where she nearly died during the cold Winter. She is now very bent over. They're both in their 80s now. So devoted to the Lord, both of them, daily looking at old photos from previous Bible Schools, and so eager to break bread with us:





Others have sons who are scared to go outside lest they be pressganged into the army, suffering mental issues now because of being at home so long. Everyone told us they had witnessed the military police pressganging men. It is happening all the time, and the loss of men at the front is huge. Those pressganged are typically sent to the "Kill zones". Funerals are commonly seen.

We cannot exaggerate the strength of faith of all those we met. The joy at seeing us and the gratitude for the help given was huge. We met sister Ludmila in her pet food shop she runs, having taken it over from another sister. She begs us to pray for her sons, one who is a sapper in the army, at the front; the other, a chronic drug addict who failed his medical and so isn't in the army. Alcohol and drug abuse is everywhere, now that many of the soldiers return from the front drug addicted or alcoholic. Sisters complain that their neighbours in the flats around them are now addicts. And mental health / anxiety issues are now everywhere, with the constant sirens, air raids, and war related stress.

We have given generators to those in villages, but it's harder to help those living in apartment blocks, as many do in Ukraine. Electricity is off much of the time in some areas, and in others the standard 220 Volt supply has been reduced to 110 volts, meaning that electric boilers and appliances won't work. There are many clever but expensive devices now flooding the market-inverters, to raise 100 Volts to 220 Volts; and large batteries, similar to car batteries, which can be charged whenever there is electricity, of whatever voltage, and then using an inverter this can provide 220 Volts. We spent large sums paying for these technologies to help our dear ones:





Special prayers for brother Alyesha, who against his will was forced to the army and to the front. We did try to meet him when his unit were given some rest days just back from the front but the meeting didn't happen. His mum sister Elena is worried silly about him. He manages to remain in contact with us every few days:



One highlight of the trip was the baptism of ROBERT, son of sister Lena and grandson of sister Ludmila, after completing an instruction course. This is a family we have known and worked with in the Lord for well over 30 years. He was baptized just as brother Marcus was falling asleep in London UK.



Another highlight was meeting brother Alex. We reminisced how as a schoolboy after the break up of the USSR in 1991, he began reading the Bible. In 1994 he saw a small advert for Bible Basics, was tutored through the lessons by correspondence with brother Marcus, and then met Duncan in 1995 in Kiev and was baptized by Duncan in a bath tub when he was 17. And has remained faithful all these 31 years. This is fruit that has remained, developed by the Bible Schools we ran for 25 years before Covid and then the war put an end to them.



Another highlight was visiting sister Vera and her family and breaking bread together with the huge loaf of bread they had just baked:



This work is very real. The Lord has promised to work in our hearts and lives to perfect His saving work in us, "until the day of Jesus Christ". The war and all its traumas are part of that process. We all really appreciate your prayers, and the donations which enable this help to be given. Please do continue them and step up the support or spread the word to others if at all possible. These brothers and sisters are well grounded in the Truth and the spirit of our Lord Jesus; they need and deserve our absolute support in this their time of need. It will be no good all trooping over to Ukraine to "rebuild Ukraine" once the war ends- although there is no sign this will end any time soon. Their time of need is right now.

Does anyone feel moved to volunteer to come out on the next visit, Lord willing?

We just give deep thanks to the Father and His dear Son for their work and their ways amongst men.

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks