

December 2022 Afghanistan, Ukraine, UK

AFGHANISTAN

Despite being so busy in Ukraine, whenever and whenever there's internet, we have the chance to hold some kind of meetings at some point. This troubled week we were able to online baptize AMIR and RAHMATULLAH.

UKRAINE

We're really grateful for your prayers enabling brother Duncan to get around Ukraine trying to assist our brethren and sisters and also visiting and baptizing various contacts, GEORGIJ, ANGELIKA, IRINA and NATALYA. We're continuing to provide firewood as best we can, but it's very difficult as everyone's in the same position- just 1 or 2 hours of electricity / day, no other forms of energy getting through, and so everyone who has a chimney and fireplace has bought up all the firewood there is. The local news channels are full of daily accounts of people being killed by mines as they go around chopping down firewood. Although burning freshly cut wood in Winter isn't a great solution, it's very smokey, doesn't give so much heat and you need a huge amount of it. And those most in need are often weak and elderly.

Air raid sirens and hits from drones are a regular occurrence in Ukraine. Scenes like this are common in many areas [trails are left by both incoming and defence missiles]:

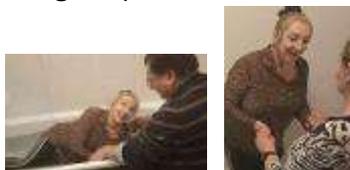


You aren't supposed to photograph military events but there were plenty of such scenes. Do pray for our brothers and sisters living under this kind of constant psychological stress, especially those in the Kherson area which is being shelled many times / day. Whilst we were in Ukraine, the maternity hospital and the general hospital were hit there. However, all this drives some people to their God and to His Son. Usage of the *Bible Companion* app, both the Russian and Ukrainian version, is very strong throughout Ukraine.

You can see the video of Natalya's baptism at

https://youtu.be/ILSsA_fDVEo

a high school PE teacher brought to baptism by her friend sister Alla who was baptized online during the pandemic



I walked the sisters part of their way home through the dark streets. The lack of electricity means no street and traffic lights nor pedestrian crossings working, so crossing the road after dark [it gets dark by 4 PM] is quite a risk. We met a Christian guy who was giving out free reflector arm bands, telling people to follow the true light. I thought this was a good bit of preaching. You can see it in the video. Also there you can see the generators working. They run on petrol or diesel, and the smell and amount of carbon monoxide being pumped out is simply huge. Coffee shops are still open, each with their generator, drowning out everything with the noise and smell- a short video is at

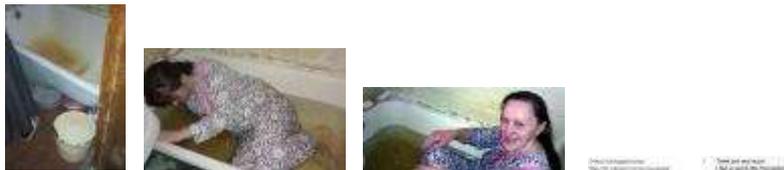
<https://youtu.be/sWAIYBzkBck>

Life has to go on despite the bombardment. I then made my way to the station and got the night train to Kiev, the night of terrible bombardment all over Ukraine. We were asked to keep the blinds on the carriage closed, but even then the noise of blasts and missiles was audible.



Angelika's baptism is at <https://youtu.be/Xp3TDzdXMkQ>

and you can see her there reading her Bible by torchlight and using what little daylight there is; she has only 2 hours of electricity per day and no heating so wears her outdoor coat all the time. She has been using the app a long time and fully shares all our doctrines. She is in an area previously occupied by the Russians. Her block of flats was hit by grad missiles, shattering the glass from her windows. Her very elderly father repaired them for her as best he could. But then a mine went off in the yard and shattered them again. She has tried to fix them up with clear cellophane and sellotape, but as you can see, this has now ripped. The wind makes quite a noise. As the temperatures have been -20 and are set to go down there again [you can see the snow on the ground in the photo], this makes it very cold for her. I left funds to try to get them fixed. Notice the scissors still on the window sill, but sellotape and staples aren't really effective. You can see the very very humble situation she lives in and in which the baptism was performed



Where she is, there are mines everywhere, and other boobytraps left by the Russians. It will take many years to properly de-mine Ukraine. She was there all through the fighting, she slept in the corridor and put mattresses on top of her as the fighting was going on. Hardly any food or water. Said she remembered her parents talking about what it was like in WW2 and thought "So this is WW3". She said she never thought she would have to live through what they lived through.



Sister Irina is in a better situation, and makes candles... which so many are dependent upon for light and a tiny bit of heat. The lack of electricity, and therefore light and heat, is really acute.



Quite some years ago we baptized brother Sergej, and had been praying about his military call up papers. Truly the Lord makes a way of escape so we are able to bear temptation, and He has pulled through for our brother. The story is wonderful and too long to tell, but summing up, he ended up getting a disability pension out of the whole ordeal, and his name removed from the call up list. We went out for a kebab and coffee to celebrate.



And not least there was dear Georgij, now Kingdom ready in his village, another great app user, and grateful for having firewood:



There are so many of our brothers and sisters in need in various places in Ukraine, but transport is so slow and it's hard to get to them all. We think especially of sister Nina, whose home near a military barracks was destroyed and was sleeping on the floor in a school gym. And she walks with just one leg on a crutch. She is now living in a derelict wooden house 5 km. walk from the nearest main road, has very little internet, heating, food etc. Or sister Vera who has fled her home in an occupied area, likewise living in a village house, receiving news of her family home having been wrecked by the fighting. Do pray for them all.

We would appreciate your financial support for the work. It does all rack up. Please donate to Carelinks with the details on this newsletter. The needs aren't going to go away even if the war finishes right now, which it seems most unlikely to.

UNITED KINGDOM

Please continue to pray for our plans for "*Lunchtime church*" in central Croydon on Mondays-Wednesdays, starting next Monday January 9th; Tuesdays will be aimed at Ukrainian refugees and other Russian speakers, Wednesdays for Iranian and Afghani asylum seekers. Do prayerfully consider coming to London to work with us- either full time or part time.

PRAYER POINTS

- For those recently baptized
- For those living with mines and boobytraps in their immediate area and the psychological trauma this causes
- For our efforts in Croydon
- For those currently constantly cold and in need of health care in Ukraine

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks