

MISSION STORIES

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Galatians 6:9

One Great
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OF SHARING

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IT'S TIME TO SHARE

During a recent interview, Rev. Igor Bandura, Vice President of IM's Baptist partner in Ukraine shared, "There are more generators running in Ukraine than anywhere else in the world." This is just one reality of life one year into war.

Since Russia invaded on February 24, 2022, you generously gave \$1,366,000 to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)-Ukraine Relief. Your gifts combined with others around the world to provide for over \$5,700,000 in humanitarian aid. Most of the aid given has met basic needs: food, shelter, heating, transport, and psychological assistance. The aid has been delivered by Baptists partners in Ukraine and neighboring countries, by your International Ministries Global Servants, including Carmella Jones, Becky and Larry Stanton, John and Amanda Good, and Kristy Engel, by Church World Service staff in Moldova, and by L'Arche staff in Ukraine.

Many Ukrainians—those that remained and those that left—continue to live in the middle space between deep grief and deep gratitude. What Rev. Bandura shared most about is the gratitude and the signs of the "harvest" already emerging...

- Most churches are full on Sundays despite the fact that half of their members have left.



A baptism in the Belgorod-Dnistrovsky church in Odessa.

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Ministering in the occupied Donetsk region, despite danger and limited electricity.

- There have been 3,000 baptisms in the last 6 months of 2022; 25,000 new people are attending churches.
- On seeing God in the midst of war... "It is hard to go through a war. Really hard. And it's the best time for people to see the power of God."

- On the future of the Baptist Union... "We continue to think about, dream about, and plan for our future."
- On the transformation of the local church... "This war has brought a real chance to reform our churches. Our churches were good before the war. But we've become better."
- On the Union's own transformation... Before the war, this Baptist Union, made up of 2,300 churches, had an organizational capacity that was huge, but did no projects on a national level. Now they are coordinated to deliver a multimillion-dollar humanitarian relief program across their country. They never had to do anything like this. Now they not only know they can do it, they are doing it---and they developed this capacity under all the pressures of war.

- On compassion... "Before the war, when we heard about war or hard things in another part of the world, we prayed. Yes, we prayed. But this war has allowed us to truly understand compassion. Ukraine as a country will emerge from this war a more compassionate people."

Thank you for not getting fatigued doing good. Thanks to your generosity, despite the continuation of the war, the harvest has already begun.

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