

February 2026 Latvia, Ukraine, UK

LATVIA

This week we have been getting around Latvia providing Winter welfare support to our brothers and sisters in the very low temperatures. People are doing anything to try to keep their windows from leaking heat... as the economic crisis related to the Ukraine war continues:



This Winter has been the coldest for many years. Extended periods of -20 C [around -4 F] have even resulted in dry firewood being sold out in many stores. Wet [i.e. freshly cut] firewood isn't much good, it makes a lot of smoke and not much heat. The largest store was allowing only 1 packet per purchaser, we argued we were a family of five buying for old Christian ladies [note the yellow sign about 1 packet!]....



We managed to get 12 packets from that store:





And then the usual games to see which kid could carry the most packets of wood to the houses, and in the cities, up the freezing stairs of those miserable tenement blocks:







Video at <https://youtu.be/35fuqZGVUac>

We also held a gathering in Riga, with a breaking of bread meeting followed by a nice free meal for everyone. And it was a good chance for the elderly and needy to bombard Cindy [and Evia too!] with about every social and medical situation known to humanity, all met with love and the spirit and Hope of our Lord Jesus:







UKRAINE

The intense cold and Russian destruction of the energy network in Ukraine has caused huge suffering for so many of our brothers and sisters. We were able to do a little for some of them this week. Generators are like gold dust, standard suppliers are sold out. People are literally dying from the cold. By God's grace we were able to find a source and would like to share with you one incredible journey, enabled by the Lord alone with all factors so against us without Him.

The war means that a lot of public services like road de-icing just don't function much especially in rural areas. We were in a town having finally bought a generator, weighing 47 kg. and needing two men to carry it. We needed to take it on a few hours' drive to a remote village on potholed, ice covered roads, to a brother who is seeking to avoid the call up. He's in a truly remote location. And we needed to get back from his place afterwards. Duncan has hernias on both sides and shifting the 47 kg. generator box wasn't going to be possible. Standard taxi drivers weren't interested in such a long, uncertain, all day trip. And these days many drivers are themselves lying low avoiding the call up, so many of the taxi drivers are now women. They didn't fancy such a long journey with a stranger, let alone helping hump around the 47 kg. box. By the hand of providence, Duncan waved a wad of Euros before a guy who had really quite a nice car. And he agreed to the trip for that payment, and to help out with humping that weight around.

We drove on awful roads that surely damaged the shock absorbers on that really rather nice car. The roads got worse and worse, we were crawling along in and out of potholes much of the way. Until we came to the track that leads to our brother's home:



We were expecting the driver to say "No, look, sorry, I'm not going to wreck my car for this". But he kept going, with a cheerful spirit. We nearly got scribbled by a truck coming toward us, the driver ascribed it to his Russian Orthodox icon ever dangling from his rear mirror. Surely it was rather, the power of prayer:



The potholes were partly from lack of repair, partly from shelling and partly from heavy military vehicles using those roads. And under the snow you really can't see how deep they are whether there is jagged debris in them. One sad site was the fields of maize that had gone unharvested this season, just rotting. Lack of tractors and manpower are the main reason:



We finally got to our brother's home. They currently have 3 hours' electricity every 30 hours. They have an outside, hole in the ground toilet that's really... something else. Lack of heat means it's so hard to dry any clothes that are washed:



They are down to burning sticks rather than wood to keep warm; note them in the bag:



They were absolutely thrilled with the generator, and so so grateful.



Our brother has a 16 year old relative BOGDAN living with him. His dad was killed at the front and his mother turned to alcohol afterwards, so Bogdan is being looked after by his uncle, who has taught him the Gospel. They had truly prepared for his baptism. They had brought an old bath tub into the house, cleaned it up and [despite no drainage] blocked up the plug hole and placed it in the kitchen. For hours they had been boiling up water on the stove, using sticks as that's all they had, and bringing buckets of cold water from the well to make up the volume. They also used some propane gas they still have to heat up some more containers of water.



With the bemused driver wondering what quite was going on, they poured the long heated water into the bath and we baptized Bogdan. And then had to ladle all the water out of the bath tub as there is no drainage.



Their gratitude was huge, for both the spiritual and material help. They were just so grateful for the generator. Afterwards our brother wrote that "It was a gift that is simply priceless for us".



We put together a video of it all at <https://youtu.be/MQyz3QX217U>

This is just one example of the work being done. We're doing what we can and hopefully will be able to do a lot more when brother Mark comes over in March. Do, please, pray for the work and try to support financially if you can.

UK

A reminder of our upcoming Carrotty Wood Retreat in March, God willing. And despite all the other issues in Ukraine, a reminder that our policy is "We'd rather see you than your money" but that does leave a significant deficit to be met every time... please do support as you can. And do come along!

Find Yourself in Bible Characters

YOU'RE INVITED TO

CARELINKS / CROYDON CHURCH IN A PUB WEEKEND RETREAT

When: Friday 13 March - Sunday 15 March, God willing

Where: Carrotty Wood Centre, Higham Lane, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 9QX

Theme: Find Yourself in Bible Characters

Speakers: Chris and Marilyn Rodwell, Duncan and all of you

Cost: Whatever you can contribute
[Don't want ££ to stop anyone coming]

Accommodation: All rooms have en suite

Discussions, break out groups, lessons for kids, games etc with really interesting folks

For more details and to reserve your place contact:

Duncan 07481122556
Cindy 07481120989
freebibles2000@gmail.com

PRAYER POINTS

- For those recently baptized
- For those enduring intense cold
- For wisdom and resources in further assisting our brothers and sisters in Ukraine
- For us to be able to keep on with our work everywhere despite rising costs and acute needs

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks