

## July 2023 Ukraine

Our work this week has been totally taken up with the situation in Ukraine. You can best see the video we put together of the work so far at

[https://youtu.be/\\_xsHCd\\_saaU](https://youtu.be/_xsHCd_saaU)

Thanks to the clear desire of the Lord to work with us, your prayers and donations, we were able to do a lot of good. The ebb and flow of war continues, but people are adjusting to life under the constant threats and uncertainties. Although the mental health issues generated by enduring a military campaign intended to terrify civilians.... are huge. In some areas we encountered fresh missile strikes especially on bridges, with debris still on the streets; in others, the previous damage has been repaired. It makes travel so difficult, with constant detours because of damaged bridges. And at times we were led by our navigation onto roads which were nothing more than tracks, and virtually impossible. We rented a vehicle this time, and several times nearly ended up stranding it in roads that would be a challenge even to a tractor- see some of the incidents on the video (same video as above) at

[https://youtu.be/\\_xsHCd\\_saaU](https://youtu.be/_xsHCd_saaU)

We register our gratitude to the Lord for bringing us through many very difficult situations on this trip:



Our intention was to do some pastoral work, visit and baptize some desiring it, and to buy building materials and get to work insulating some homes against the Winter. Those living in them were all refugees who have come from the Russian occupied areas and are living in formerly derelict properties in "way out back of beyond" rural areas. This includes sister Nina, who is on crutches with a seriously damaged leg, who was previously housed on the floor of a school gym, along with many other people. Her mum, whom we baptized previously, has been moved out of her old peoples' home to make room for now handicapped, limbless soldiers. So, they are living in a remote location with broken windows, holes in the roof and other sources of heat leaks. What heat they can generate through the firewood we buy them is soon lost. So, we made a few journeys to what could be called "Builder's merchants", a long way from the home, over truly terrible roads. Dirt tracks would be far better than broken asphalt with craters. Of course, our help rendered is only scratching the surface; there is so much to do. There is tragedy everywhere... moving eastwards across Ukraine, you cannot but notice the movement of soldiers, always eastwards, by bus or whatever transport, often with hard goodbyes to be seen with mothers, sisters and girlfriends:



Not sparing his blushes, Mark was the right man for this job. A great tradesman, able to work under pressure and with whatever materials we could get:



We were able to baptize VIKTOR and VIKTORIA who live the same village life- no work, just subsistence farming, broken down homes, shop far away, and life a constant struggle against

the cold for much of the year. But this is Summer, and a very warm one, so we were able to do the baptisms at a nearby "body of water" that was flooded mining subsidence, with a very sticky bed to it. Sister Nina writes spiritual verses, and sung to us afterwards:



Elsewhere we met and baptized PASHA in a formerly Russian occupied area, and Mark was able to give his mother a hand knitted blanket to keep warm this Winter, brought all the way from Perth Western Australia, the other side of the planet:



We provided various levels of help, from clearing debts run up at the village shop, to buying medicines that are not only unaffordable, but inaccessible due to the chemist being too far away to get to:



We gave cash welfare where appropriate. We also visited sisters Vera and Svetlana and family, who lost their home in the Russian occupied south, and are now living in a formerly derelict house in a village with some land- which they have sown with vegetables and got a lot of geese there. God bless them for their industry to try to keep on going, despite the pain of losing everything. We reminisced over years of being together at Bible schools in Ukraine and Russia, none of which can now happen given the war:



What we are doing is really appreciated. Not just the huge effort to get out to remote places to visit with our brothers and sisters, but the love they perceive, your love, the love of God, the love of Jesus, which is behind and through it all. Sister Nina broke down at the end of our time working on her place with absolute and total gratitude, captured in the video (same video as above) better at [https://youtu.be/\\_xsHCd\\_saaU](https://youtu.be/_xsHCd_saaU)



So... thank you all and all thanks and praise to the Father and Son for their continuing work, to their glory, through this terrible war. We do send financial support to various ones in Ukraine quite often and will ramp this up as Winter approaches for firewood and heating issues. Do please keep up your prayerful support.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- For those recently baptized

- For the work in Ukraine
- For sister Nina, on crutches and far from civilization
- For those suffering mental health issues related to the war
- For those facing issues with military call up

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