



Bear Valley Bible Institute - Ukraine (BVBIU)

Ukraine News Update - 05/07/22

Greetings dear brethren,

It was a blessing from the Lord to spend two and a half weeks in Ukraine and Poland, returning home late in the afternoon on Wednesday, May 4th. It could not have been a better trip, as there was opportunity to spend time with many Christians in Chernivtsy, Lviv, and Warsaw, during this most difficult time, with war in Ukraine. I was pretty worn out after getting back as there was just so much that took place.

Brother Ed Linebaugh and I first met up in Minneapolis and then flew to Warsaw (with a stop-over in Paris, France). We met up with a team that was organized by John Kachelman, as they were headed to Ukraine to perform humanitarian efforts. When we reached Lviv, I was picked up by the Director of BVBIU, Dennis Sopelnik, and due to the late hour that we arrived, we ended up going to Ternopil for the night. There, we were able to spend some really good time with a husband and wife, Vitally & Tamara, who are from the Bila Tserkva congregation.

The next day, Dennis and I went to Chernivtsy, where I began to teach at BVBIU on Friday for the next six days. On Sunday, April 24, I was asked to preach, which was a tremendous blessing. There were many Christians in attendance and it was wonderful to

fellowship with them all. Additionally, I was also asked to perform a wedding ceremony that afternoon among two of our BVBIU students, Sasha & Vika. It was totally unexpected but a huge honor. I came to Ukraine preparing to find war, and didn't even bring a coat or a tie, so I had to borrow both from the local preacher, Dima Galuk. The fellowship from the wedding ceremony was tremendous and the food spread that was laid out was incredible.

Throughout the week, there was also opportunity to meet together with the families of Vitally Rodichev and Dima Galuk. These two brothers are working so hard to help many of the Christians that are located at the church building, as well as others, so they can have suitable places to be able to live. Both of these brothers in Christ are concerned about the Church don't need someone to tell them what to do. It is a huge blessing to have these good men, both preachers who hold to sound teaching, working with and influencing so many.

Vitally in particular, continues to help many others throughout Ukraine, distributing funds to those who need medicine, gas to escape dangerous places, and arranges efforts for many to get to safe areas. After I returned home to America, he wrote to say that my mother-in-law, who did not want to leave her home, was finally retrieved and is now in western Ukraine.

My wife, Marina, is so thankful, as it was causing a great amount of distress for her to consider that her mother might die in a bomb shelter. Praise be to God that her mom, Valentina, is now safe and with other Christians.

After leaving Chernivtsy, Dennis Sopelnic again picked me up and we traveled to Lviv, spending Saturday evening, April 30th, and Sunday, May 1st with them. I taught a class for the youth Saturday evening and on Sunday at worship services, was able to see so many Christians that we have known in the past. It was an encouraging time for everyone to be together.

That Sunday afternoon, I took a bus to Warsaw, Poland. On Monday May 2nd, Ed Linebaugh and I met with the Christians who are living at rented facility, which some other Christians have worked hard to get them into. I don't personally know Brother Marlon Rutherford, but want to thank him for all of his hard work.

When Ed and I arrived on Monday, we were given a tour of the facility and were impressed that it has quality conditions. It is newly-built and seemingly the Lord had our Ukrainian brethren in mind when the owner was looking for tenants. It can hold up to 70 people if need be, but right now there are about 50 Christians living there.

Something that stood out right away is that there is a large yard in the back of the building, and since it was already May, the grass was growing quite a bit. I told Ed that we needed to get a lawnmower for the brethren, so we went to a store comparable to Lowe's and bought an electric lawnmower and weed-eater. When we brought them back, the Christian men were so excited and went to work putting them together, mowing as much as they were able before the charge in the batteries ran out.

The next day Ed and I returned and we couldn't believe our eyes. Almost all of the Christians were out working and they had cleaned up the entire yard. It was so wonderful to see them all pitching in. Marina often tells me that Ukrainians love to work, which was very visible from this effort.

People are already asking what my impressions are from having been in Ukraine and Poland at this time. Here are some takeaways from this trip as I see it.

1) First and foremost, I believe that the Lord's people have taken care of the Lord's people. So many American and Ukrainian Christians have worked hard to help brothers and sisters in Christ in multiple areas. For those of you who have contributed funds to help with the brethren, we thank you so much and I believe that the Lord is pleased by the efforts of so many.

2) The situation is completely transitional. Every day brings new changes. People who may live in one area for a period of time, can suddenly relocate to other places with hardly any warning.

3) No one know what to expect in the coming days. While there is a lot of talk that something will be known by May 9th (Victory Day in Russia), I personally think this war is going to continue for some time to come.

4) The Lord's Church in Ukraine continues to move forward. Congregations in various places keep worshipping, teaching, and evangelizing. The devil may work through Russia in trying to minimize the Kingdom, but the Lord always works through these situations for His glory (Rom. 8:28). The Church and Christians in Poland, however, are going to need some special attention. The current family that works with them is going to be leaving at the beginning of July.

5) As long as the Lord allows, BVBIU is going to continue to work hard to train men to preach. I can't tell you how proud I am of Dennis Sopelnic, Director of the BVBIU program. He is relentless in his efforts to help people all over Ukraine. Not only has he driven many people to safe areas and delivered many items of necessity to places to where they can be distributed to those in need, Dennis also continues to lead the BVBIU program by teaching and encouraging. When you think of a leader, Dennis certainly meets and exceeds the definition.

Until the next report, may God bless! Terry