

AUTUMN 2022

# ECM LIFE

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION BRITAIN  
NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL UKRAINE UPDATE

A woman with long, wavy red hair and blue eyes is holding a large white rectangular sign in front of her face. She is wearing a yellow long-sleeved top. The background is a solid light blue. The sign has the text "YOU GAVE" in large, bold, black capital letters, and "WHAT HAPPENED?" in smaller, bold, black capital letters below it.

**YOU GAVE**  
**WHAT HAPPENED?**

# ECM BRITAIN

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION BRITAIN  
IS AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL,  
EVANGELICAL, MISSIONARY ORGANISATION  
WORKING IN EUROPE.

## ECM'S MISSION IS TO



EQUIP,  
CONNECT  
AND MULTIPLY  
FOLLOWERS OF  
JESUS



THROUGH  
DISCIPLESHIP  
AND



CHURCH  
PLANTING  
ACROSS  
EUROPE

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# DIRECTOR'S LETTER

KENT ANDERSON

**Thank you! Many of you for gave generously to the Ukraine Crisis appeal run by ECM International. This issue will look at the impact your donations are making. But first, pause to think about why you gave.**



Giving begins with God giving to us:  
light from the sun so that we see;  
gravity to keep our feet on the ground;  
air for our lungs to breathe; families and  
friends to love; forgiveness in Jesus....

***"Everything we have has come from you..."*** 1 Chronicles 29.14b (NLT)

But you have proven that giving doesn't  
stop with God. His generosity is so  
contagious that His children also give.

***"Everything we have has come from you,  
and we give you only what you first gave  
us!"*** 1 Chronicles 29.14b (NLT)

ECM has been able to share God's love  
for more than a century because people  
like you have given and given and given —  
through World War 1, the great depression,

World War 2, the economic challenges of  
the 70s and to this very day.

And that has taught me that God leads His  
people to be generous regardless of what  
they are facing. Thank you for that valuable  
lesson. You have lived out the verse ***"And  
do not forget to do good and to share  
with others, for with such sacrifices God is  
pleased."*** Hebrews 11.16 (NIV)

Thank you for helping us take Jesus' love to  
people across Europe, including Ukrainians.  
As a result may you truly experience ***"Give,  
and it will be given to you. A good measure,  
pressed down, shaken together and running***



***over, will be poured into your  
lap. For with the measure you  
use, it will be measured to  
you."*** Luke 6.38 (NIV)



## STORIES OF LOVE IN THE MIDST OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE



The news has been full of horrendous reports from Ukraine — schools bombed, millions fleeing as refugees and cities devastated. But Christians both there and in surrounding countries have responded with love and courage. Your donations to ECM International's Ukraine appeal have enabled many of these and other ministries to take place. Thank you!

The ECM team in the Ukraine is made up entirely of Ukrainians who are mostly based in Lviv. They are involved in a wide range of ministries including church planting, youth ministries, orphan care and online bible studies. During the Ukraine crisis, the team, assisted by the wider ECM network, have actively been involved in the relief effort.

## Giving food and more

The church in Irpin is serving as a volunteer hub working for the United Nations and other NGOs involved in their region. As such, they are distributing over 2000 food packages each day, and around 1000 people come to the church each day to collect those packages, charge their phones and get warm. This help is not only practical, but spiritual as well. Over 100 people come each day to the church to pray, most of them non-Christian!



## Giving a warm welcome

"The church in Murska Sobota, Slovenia, responded to the Ukrainian crisis in a number of different ways. The children in Sunday school collected clothes and toys for children and attached encouraging notes to them. The church as a whole gathered food products, clothes for adults and hygiene items.

"Our church also organised a charity concert played by our worship band. The place was packed with over 300 people from different walks of life and social contexts. The funds raised are being used for the integration of Ukrainian families in our region. Around 50 Ukrainian families came to the church service, with special

workshops and Sunday school for children. The rest of the day we went for a trip with lots of fun activities for the families.

"With these small acts of love we want our Ukrainian friends to feel welcome in our midst. In the following months we hope to have summer camps with the Ukrainian children to encourage them and show them the love of the Lord in practice."



## Giving a place of safety

"Yesterday we decided to look through the list of refugees who stayed in our church building from the beginning of the war and we are so glad that more than 1100 people stayed with us. Some for one night and some for a few, some still continue to live in the church building and with other families from our church." *(written only five weeks into the war)*

## Giving comfort

"Every day we host 40 to 50 people. We do our best to provide as much comfort for these people as possible.

"Artem is from central Ukraine, and he is nine. With his older brother and mum, he stays at our centre. He's been here for more than a week already. Artem has a dream to

see his pet cat Busik when the war is over. They couldn't take the animal with them.

"Katia and Liza are from Kharkiv, a city that borders Russia. The city has been bombed and hit since the first day of the war. They only have with them two backpacks and two bags. They have no idea what has happened to their house. While fleeing, they grabbed their pet dog to cover more than 1000km to come here."



### Giving children joy

"One of the workers in our team came up with an idea to hold 'Bible Camp'-like meetings for children. For two weeks we have gathered children from the neighbourhood and the children who stay at our facility as refugees. Every day we have 12-20 children coming. They watch Bible stories and movies, play games, have art and crafts lessons. Some of the parents spend their time with us too. They appreciate our initiative as they realise that we all have to do something to protect our children from the psychological and emotional traumas of war."

### Giving as God provides

"Given the difficulties to buy food and basic products in Ukraine, we worked for weeks

to bring the resources our team in Ukraine needed to help the refugees there. When everything was ready, a last-minute change with the bus provider meant they would not allow us to bring a vehicle from Poland into Ukraine. What a disappointment!

"So we prayed and in less than 24 hours God brought in a new contact and another bus in Slovakia. However this meant that we needed to find a place for the refugees that would come into Slovakia, and quickly! But God was already at work. Before we could ask anyone, we received an email about a place in Slovakia that could host big groups of refugees. They did not know we were looking for that, but God knew our needs and provided.

"On Saturday, a bus with €5,500 worth of supplies (4 tons of mostly food, plus mattresses and basic products) left Slovakia and arrived in Ukraine. The supplies went to several places where our team and their network are hosting refugees. The bus returned with 48 refugees!"

### Giving night after night

"We are a team of 10 helping the local church at the Eastern Polish border work with up to 160 refugees every night. We meet mainly mums with kids, as men and boys over 15 are not allowed out of Ukraine. Just this morning I sat with a young woman named Maria who crossed the border with her eight year-old son and five (I think) year-old daughter. Yesterday she said 'goodbye' to her husband who is now fighting in Kiev, and she does not know whether she will see him again. The little girl was crying, missing her dad. Such stories are countless."



### Giving a place to all

"This man and his son are unbelievers. They stay in our church building. Every day we have a church prayer and they decided to join. This is the first prayer in their life."

*ECMI stories from Europe 18 May*

### Giving special care

"A group of people with special needs travelled to Croatia from Ukraine at the beginning of March. Some of them are saved, some are not yet. The Croatian government was providing food and shelter for this group, but they needed spiritual food and care for their souls as well. So on Wednesdays I travel to where we have a Bible study together, time for prayer and lunch. Every Sunday night I also bring them to a church service."

## SEEING THE WORST AND THE BEST

By David James, British ECMer in Austria

**During my short visit to Ukraine I saw death, destruction and misery. But I also saw the tremendous human response, especially in the outpouring of love by the church.**

The journey to Ukraine: I befriended a mother and her teenage daughter who were on their way home from Bratislava. Three months in a strange culture was enough and they longed to return. As we would be passing by their home the following morning, I offered them a ride in

the minibus with Stepan and myself to Lviv, a place to stay in the New Hope Centre that night, and a ride home the next day. They quickly and gratefully accepted. While pleased to help, I was shocked that this woman had naively accepted a lift in a van with two strange men. How easy it must be for human traffickers.

**The road to Kiev:** Passing through 500km of agricultural plains, I reflected on the almost certain world food crisis that is a





consequence of the war. Signs of war fill the last 40km into Kiev. Factories, warehouses and retail outlets have all been damaged by seemingly indiscriminate rocket fire. We passed a destroyed tank, abandoned in front of a tractor dealership. Next we saw damaged homes. Were the residents able to escape?

**The bridge at Irpin:** The bridge over the Irpin river was one of the lasting images at the start of this war. Destroyed by the Ukrainian army to prevent the Russian army entering Kiev, there was a battle on the bridge and the surrounding area. Residents fled over quickly constructed wooden walkways under the collapsed concrete, many carried in wheelchairs or in makeshift stretchers. Nearby I saw a car park with the wreckage of over 100 vehicles destroyed in the battle: family saloons raked with bullet holes the size of my thumb; a car like my own opened like a tin can by a direct hit from a rocket; a bus burned to just its frame.

**The church at Irpin:** The Irpin Bible Church is making a massive impact in the community. Volunteers go out from the church each day to help people repair their damaged roofs and put polythene sheeting over blown out windows. Others hand out food parcels or serve hot meals. Kids play in the grounds, trying to snatch back a piece of normality. We delivered our van-load of food packages to their small

*“In this devastating darkness, we as a church have a unique opportunity to shine the light of Jesus. So, we continue to give shelter to people, feed the refugees, and care for their needs.”*

warehouse. Some of the food supplies and clothes was to be transported further east, to areas of the country that had suffered far greater damage.

The church used to have three Sunday services with a total of 1000 people attending. Now it is just one service of 250, an indication of how many people have fled. However, 40% of the congregants are new people from the community, searching for answers in the church that has demonstrated Christ's love to them. Many people come daily to pray for each other and for Ukraine.

**Return to Lviv:** Back in the New Hope Centre, the air raid sirens sounded again. I sat in the basement for two hours with some of the team plus 40 or so neighbours. In total I heard the air raid sirens five times in a few days.

**Final reflection:** I've been home for three days now and people ask me, 'How I am doing?' There is no simple answer. Such a mixture of memories, emotions and thoughts. Ultimately, I'm sitting at home in safety. All of those people I met do not have even that. As I write, the app on my phone pings again to tell me there is another air raid warning in Lviv.

## The British connection

Many British ECMers have also been involved, including:

- **Mike McMaster (our British Trustee Chair):** welcomed a family into his home
- **Gary and Iona Stoll (Romania):** their church made 16 beds available to refugees
- **Stephen and Tabita Bell (Croatia):** collected refugees from the border and found them accommodation (including in their home)
- **David James (Austria):** leads the ECM International team responding to the crisis
- **Jules Mercer-Wilson (Spain):** donated towards a shipment of vital supplies
- **Roland Smith (Netherlands):** helps select and support projects caring for Ukrainians



## Giving you thanks

“Friends, thank you for enabling our team to serve in different parts of Ukraine, helping refugees, and sharing hope and God's Word. It's an honour and privilege to be on one team with you, our partners, friends, and brothers and sisters in Christ!”

**Roman Matviyiv**



## Please pray

- For those impacted by the crisis as they adjust with the upheaval of the life they once knew.
- For perseverance for the church as they love and serve those impacted as they seek to rebuild their lives.
- Remember those who are displaced, and still looking for a new home. Give thanks for how others have come to the need of those fleeing their homes and for all the practical help provided.
- Pray that lives would be won for Christ, as people are experiencing God's love and are being directed to Him.

# GIVING IN TOUGH TIMES

**A PASTOR'S REFLECTION ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE GENEROUS WHEN LIFE GETS DIFFICULT.**

**By Liam Rutherford**



Paul knew all about tough times and his young church plants did too. We get a flavour of this in 2 Corinthians 8.1-3:

*'And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.'*

These words challenge us at a time when the price of everything is going up. We are in a perfect storm of inflation due to Brexit, Ukraine and COVID, and so it is easy to give way to fear and hold on to what we have. But Paul reminds us that grace has been given to us — and such grace — “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9.15).

It was this grace that caused the Macedonian churches to give in a way that doesn't make sense. Look at the words Paul uses — severe trials and overflowing joy — extreme poverty and rich generosity. How these things can all be true at once staggers us.

We are still on average five to ten times wealthier than the populations of Eastern Europe. In some countries the contrast is stark, especially Bosnia, due to the ravages of war.

Paul wrote like this to the Corinthians because he feared that the Macedonians would put them to shame (2 Corinthians 9.3-4) and I can't help wondering what he would have to say to us?

Giving in tough times requires that we understand God's grace — the indescribable gift of His Son. The rest flows from that.

**Liam Rutherford recently took a month's sabbatical and travelled 2700 miles across 10 Eastern European countries visiting ECM members and local church leaders. He is minister of Ballydown Presbyterian Church in Banbridge, Northern Ireland.**

*“Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.” - 2 Corinthians 9.11 (NLT)*



## Prayer for a generous heart

Almighty God, give us our daily bread. Help us to remember that You are the one who meets our needs. We acknowledge that every good and perfect thing we have has come from You. Keep our eyes and our confidence set on You, not on what we possess. Protect us from anxiety when we listen to the news and see rising prices in the shops. Keep our hearts generous towards those in greater need than ourselves. We praise You that our greatest treasures are stored up in heaven where they can never be stolen or destroyed. And thank You for giving us the greatest gift of all — Jesus. In His name, Amen.

# THE IMPACT OF GIVING

ECM's work isn't only being done by missionaries. The people who stand beside our missionaries are just as important. Here are some reflections by ECM Britain members who want to say thank you.



## Your gifts build our faith Jack and Sarah Winterburn, France

Thank you for your prayers, both the regular and the spontaneous. Thanks to the newsletter digesters and the WhatsApp prayer warriors. Thank you for the financial support. The one-off, the past, the present and the ongoing.

You helped us to get off the ground — to make it onto the 'mission field' that is France. Your gifts help sustain us in our

service here. Your partnership enables us to be where we are and do what we do. To join in with what God is doing here by His Holy Spirit.

We are grateful to God for you, and we see His hand in the provision we have received. The gifts that were just the right amount, or just at the right time. The regular, the unexpected, the more than we needed... these all speak to us of the generosity, goodness and trustworthiness of our Father. Your gifts build our faith in the Giver.



## All because of you Steve and Lydia Cockram, Portugal

One concrete way that God reaffirmed that He was sending us to Portugal was through the generosity of our friends, family and church. Within six months we had the support pledged that we needed (although we'd been told it could take over a year).

The Portuguese church has few full-time workers. Our church here only recently started supporting its pastors, Joel and Cecilia, full-time. They aren't able to support other staff members. But you enable us to:

- work with Joel and Cecilia, where otherwise there wouldn't be anyone
- offer the young people regular groups and disciple many of them one-to-one
- release Joel and Cecilia to do pastoral visits and other ministries, rather than being spread thin.

This is all possible because of you — the people who pray and give faithfully, and are part of God's work here in Portugal. We thank God for you every day because your support means that we can focus on encouraging, challenging and helping young people to become more like Christ.



## To those behind the scenes Peter and Kate Knowlson, Spain

To those of you who have so quietly given, allowing us to serve the Lord over years and years — thank you!

There have been times when we found ourselves at breaking (or resigning) point and God's faithfulness through you has been our comfort. Thank you!

Months and years have passed where your investment in the Lord's work might have seemed like throwing money at a financial black hole, but you carried on. Thank you!

Small gifts to God or percentages sacrificially given have enabled us to be where we believe God has wanted us. Thank you!

We have come to know the people whose lives have been touched: whilst, behind the scenes, you have enabled them to hear the gospel, believe in Christ and join our Father's family. Thank you!

We can neither thank God nor you enough. Thank you!



# FROM THE UKRAINE TO THE UK TOUR

7-14 OCTOBER AT VENUES ACROSS  
SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL ENGLAND

**Don't miss this exciting opportunity to:**

Meet Ukrainians directly involved with the  
refugee response efforts both inside and outside Ukraine.

Hear first-hand stories of God at work  
and personal insights of life within war-torn Ukraine.

Turn the pictures on the news into faces you've seen for yourself.

**Find out more at [ecmbritain.org/ukraine-tour](https://ecmbritain.org/ukraine-tour)**

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GREAT. BUT  
YOU CAN  
ALSO PRAY  
AND GO!**



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brings you to the  
front-line of ministry in  
Europe. But whatever  
you do, thank you!



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*giftaid it*

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# I WANT TO GIVE



☐ For use where most needed:

☐ Towards the work of: .....

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☐ £5 ☐ £15 ☐ £30 ☐ £50 **Other £** .....

**Acknowledge:** ☐ by post ☐ by email ☐ no acknowledgement

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**“BE PATIENT  
WHEN TROUBLE  
COMES, AND  
PRAY AT ALL  
TIMES. SHARE  
WITH GOD’S  
PEOPLE WHO  
NEED HELP.”**

**Romans 12.12b-13a (NCV)**



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