



# The Rue Family

## UKRAINE

November - December 2022

Dear Praying Friends and Family,

There are so many difficult choices in writing a prayer letter. Where to begin and when to end? What to include and what to leave out? What is important to you versus what is important to me? Would you, could you understand some of the things that I want to say if you have not experienced them? It is a simple task of just telling people what the Lord Jesus has done in, and to, and through you and those the Lord has called you to serve. However, it can be paralyzing when you only have a limited time to write knowing that our dear supporters are limited in their time to read. That said, let us begin this last letter for 2022.

We want to give our sincerest thanks to all of you who have prayed for us, our family, our ministry, and our people in Ukraine. Over \$70,000 was sent to Ukraine for relief in addition to the 27 tons of food our church distributed to our region from a UN initiative. This was used to show people the love of God opening the door for thousands to hear of God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

The tone of our communications with our brethren in Ukraine has changed to be somber and grave. Our men describe to me what is going on in their regions. The direction this war will take and its outcome for missions hangs in the balance. They said that people are tired and no longer panic when the air raid sirens go off. One brother described that as we spoke he could hear the rockets shelling his city just a few kilometers away, while, at the same time, little children played on the playground outside his window. He said that a rocket hit less than a half a mile away while he was teaching in the school. Everything shook. The ground, the desks, the windows, and walls. He said there was a brief second of the feeling of panic. Then, they continued on with the lesson. People no longer run to the bomb shelters. They continue on with their lives trying to keep them as normal as possible. He said, "We understand now that it is meaningless to panic. There's nowhere to go." Many of them, saved and unsaved alike, have surrendered to the idea that God will ultimately decide their fate. What a paradox it is when unsaved people understand nuances of surrender better than some of God's children!

A dear friend of mine said that his parents' health is declining because of the war. He doesn't know what he will do if the Russians take his city. He doesn't want to think about it or talk about it. He said that his father walked to the local store for food and a Russian rocket, one of the older ones, landed just a few meters away from him and stuck in the ground. It didn't explode! God is good! He said people just gathered and looked at it and conversations followed. Daily conversation pieces in America are a universe away from what our brothers and sisters in Ukraine deal with and talk about. We are so blessed and yet so petty.

Brother Kalinin described the situation where our church is with both optimism and realism. They only have electricity three hours at a time never knowing when it will come back on. "But," he said, "God has given us a mild winter so far. A harsh winter would almost be too much to bear right now." They only have limited amounts of water as well. They often sit in the dark with no communications, no electricity, no water, and listen to the air raid sirens all the while trying to make life normal for their children.

*(Continued on the other side...)*



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The military is calling up more men. They are even calling those who previously were exempt. Such is Brother Kalinin's situation who has been God's man, His gift, to our ministry. He has always been exempt from service but He received a notice to appear at the recruitment center for reevaluation. He will either be determined exempt from service for good or drafted. Please pray for God's will to be done and pray for him and our church family there to be strong.

There are daily notifications and prayer requests about the loved ones of our church family serving in the war. Some have been sent to Bakhmut and the surrounding area. They plead for God's people to pray! Some of them go off the grid for days while their wives and mothers and grandmothers cry and plead with God and God's people to pray. What rejoicing there is among them when the soldiers come back online and say that they are still alive.

My family and I are so homesick. We still have our return tickets on hold. I know that we are doing the right thing finishing in visiting all of our supporting churches and others who have asked me to come to them. The past two months were spent mostly in the Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee area. We have been comforted, encouraged, and edified by God's dear people. We are thankful for the opportunities to minister and be used of the Lord. We hope to finish up this part of our work in the states sometime in the summer, Lord willing. We will then decide when and where we will go in light of the war, Lord willing.

Please pray for a young woman in our church who had several close calls during the first wave of the Russian invasion. She ended up in Canada and is having a difficult time there spiritually. Her name is Vladyslava and we just received the letter of approval to bring her to the US where she will stay with us until the war ends. Please pray for her as she seeks God's will for her life.

We are still praying about a short trip into Ukraine. I believe that it is necessary for many reasons but we need to know God's mind on the timing for such a visit. Thank you for all that you do for the Lord, giving us the privilege to serve Him in Ukraine. Until our next prayer letter or our meeting in the air!

That Ukraine May Know Him,



Christopher Rue

Phil. 3:10