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# S.T.O.R.M. REPORT

Short Term Outreach, Relief & Missions

A Newsletter From the Office of the Short-Term Missions and Disaster Response Coordinator

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*"If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."*

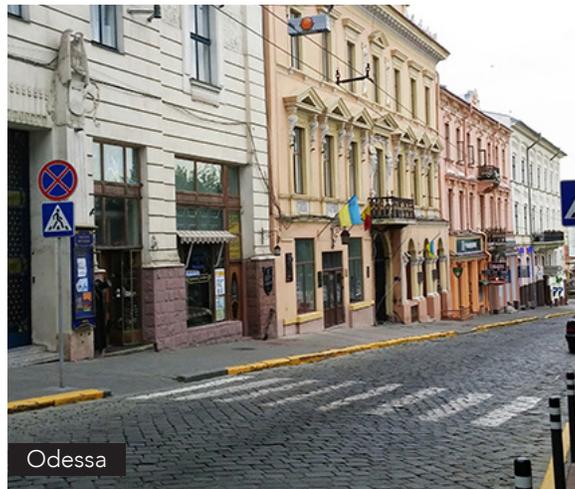
—I Corinthians 15:19-22

## Easter in War

photo and story by Sarah Klazinga, Administrative Assistant for the Committee on Diaconal Ministries

The smell of chocolate fills the air, oozing out of open shop doors. People bustle up and down the cobblestone streets. A horn drones from a ship in the port. Restaurants are full of people slipping in for a quick cup of tea, or a cappuccino and a croissant. Vendors offer pussy willow branches on every corner. There are flowers everywhere—irises, tulips, roses—huge bouquets of roses! The first signs of spring. The church bells ring and the cathedrals swell with the sounds of "Christ is risen!" It's Easter in Odessa, Ukraine—at least, that is how I remember it.

Four years later there are no people chatting over a cup of tea. The flower stalls are empty. There are no exports from "The Breadbasket of the West." The churches and cathedrals are silent. War has destroyed the historic port city of Odessa. Millions of people have evacuated. Those that can't are enduring the horrors of



war. In the wreckage of what sin in the world has done, we hold fast to the promise of the resurrection: Christ, our hope in life and death.

The believers in Ukraine continue to meet for worship and prayer throughout the week, as they are able. Even so, they continue to open wide their doors for hospitality. And they are working hard to support their members on the frontlines of war, and to disperse humanitarian aid wherever they can.

To date, the OPC's Ukraine Crisis Fund has received \$522,808.48 in generous donations. Portions of those donations are being disbursed to a variety of ministries throughout Eastern

Europe while other opportunities continue to be explored. (Read more about that in David Nakhla's article below.)

Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ, as they live and serve others, in this war-torn country and beyond.

## Coming Together to Aid Ukraine

by David Nakhla, Administrator for the OPC Committee on Diaconal Ministries

The OPC Committee on Diaconal Ministries is committed to using the gifts given to the Ukraine Crisis Fund for ministry to those affected by the war in Ukraine, ideally through Presbyterian and Reformed avenues—those with whom we share similar understandings of God's word and the proper uses of diaconal funds. In seeking to determine where the funds might be used the best, we have grown in our understanding of the

number of Reformed and Presbyterian churches, missionaries, and organizations ministering to Ukrainian refugees in Eastern Europe.

### Planned Assessment Trip of the Ministries to Refugees, May 10-16

Further, I am planning to travel to Eastern Europe for a whirlwind assessment trip of the various ministries, accompanied by Rich Bout, the URCNA Missions Coordinator. The dates for this

trip are May 10-16. Please pray for the Lord's blessing on this trip.

**Mission to the World (MTW, the PCA's mission organization)**, has had a presence in Ukraine since the early 90's, following the fall of the Soviet Union and communism. As a church-planting mission, MTW birthed the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ukraine (EPCU). There are now 16 EPCU churches and/or church plants sprinkled throughout

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Ukraine (and one outside of Ukraine in Krakow, Poland), see the map on the [website](#).

Prior to the war, MTW had teams concentrated in three cities: L'viv, Odessa, and Kiev. At the outbreak of war, MTW determined to relocate most members of the team in L'viv about 200 miles west to Krakow, Poland. The team in Odessa moved its operation 350 miles west to Brasov, Romania. The team in Kiev has been dispersed to various places.

MTW established the Ukraine Crisis Church Fund with the goal of raising \$4 million. In less than 8 weeks, they raised almost \$4.5 million (\$75,000 of that is from the OPC's Ukraine Crisis Fund).

With the L'viv team now in Krakow, and the Odessa team now in Brasov, MTW has been able to use these funds for the facility, material, and personnel expenses related to housing, feeding, transporting, and clothing refugees in those locations. For some refugees, they have also had to provide medical care and counseling.

The funds have also been used to enable a ministry to the many sick and elderly who have been left behind in many of the cities in Ukraine. Through the faithful, tireless, and heroic efforts of some of the saints in the EPCU, truckloads of humanitarian supplies are being purchased and driven to eastern Ukraine to help care for the sick and elderly.

When the vehicles return westward for more supplies, they do that transporting more refugees out of the more dangerous areas of Ukraine.

We look forward to seeing the work of MTW in Krakow, first-hand on May 12. Please continue to pray for the safety, comfort, and care of many EPCU church members who have been left behind in many dangerous areas of Ukraine, especially the city of Kharkiv near the Russian border in the Northeast.

Continue reading this article: <https://opcdisasterresponse.org/coming-together-to-aid-ukraine/>.

## SERVE



**Short-Term Missions OPPORTUNITIES**

### NEW OPPORTUNITY—English 4 Kids—Quebec

The OP mission in Quebec is once again hosting their summer English

Camp for Kids and OP member Olivia Durham is looking to lead a group of volunteers to serve.

For more information, go to our website, or [contact Olivia Durham directly](#).

### The Uganda Mission

**IMMEDIATE NEED** – Facilities Engineer in Karamoja, Uganda With the Van Essendelfts scheduled to return to the States in April, there is an immediate need for a Facilities Engineer to serve in Uganda. While short-term help is welcome, there is a longer-term need for one to go serve alongside Mark Van Essendelft upon his return to the field next January. Support package negotiable. Contact Douglas Clawson directly: [douglas.clawson@opc.org](mailto:douglas.clawson@opc.org).

### Boardwalk Chapel, NJ

There are a few staff position openings for the 2022 summer:

- Whole Summer: Two female beds open
- 7/30-8/27: Two female junior staff beds & three male junior staff beds
- 6/25: One male junior staff bed

May 26-30: Men, young and old, who have a desire to engage in open air preaching, please join us in Wildwood. You will be challenged. Contact the Chapel: [boardwalkchapel@gmail.com](mailto:boardwalkchapel@gmail.com).

### Churches Helping Churches

There is still time to ask for help for your VBS, or to help another church with theirs! Visit our website and fill out the form to receive or offer help: [OPCSTM.org](http://OPCSTM.org).



**Disaster Response**

### Serve in Ukraine

Mission To the World (PCA) is currently taking applications to gather basic information from people willing to serve MTW Ukraine's Crisis Response

efforts. This form is only step one. No short term trips are planned at this time but they will be in touch as teams and trips develop. Mission to the World (PCA) is building a list of people with special skill sets and a willingness to help with efforts both in Ukraine and in bordering countries. They are also using this interest form to build and develop their crisis response teams.

### Looking for Help in Tornado-Damaged Kentucky

OPC Disaster Response often has the opportunity to volunteer with organizations that are working toward the same goal as ours: to show the love of Christ to those who are suffering by offering tangible and financial aid, where able.

In this case, Reformed Mission Services, an organization we have worked with for many years, has an opportunity for volunteers to come alongside those affected by the tornadoes that hit Kentucky back in December of 2021.

Find out more by going to [OPCDisasterResponse.org](http://OPCDisasterResponse.org).



**We're Hiring!**  
The OPC Committee on Diaconal Ministries is looking to add to their team!  
[OPCCDM.org](http://OPCCDM.org)

Are you drawn to mercy ministry? The Committee on Diaconal Ministries of the OPC is searching for an additional part-time (20-25 hours/week) team member! The Committee is looking for an outgoing and organized person who is eager to aid the work of those who serve in mercy ministry, through our work with the OPC deacons, short-term missions and disaster response. Get all the details by going to <https://www.opccdm.org/opc-cdm-employment-opportunities/>.

Where you can find us:

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