



*December 2022*

*“And she shall bring forth a son,  
and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for  
he shall save his people from their sins.”  
Matt. 1. 21*

**Dear Pastors and Friends,**

Warm Christmas greetings from the Slobodians! It is such a blessing to turn our thoughts from what is going on in the world today to celebrate the greatest event in human history, when the very son of God came to earth to bring salvation and hope to all mankind.

As we look back on this year, it could be said that the war in Ukraine resulted in perhaps the most dramatic and historic events of many of our lifetimes, since not many of us were around during the World War era. Nevertheless, this horrific situation has brought about amazing opportunities to shine the light of the Gospel to so many troubled hearts and to show the love and compassion of Christ to so many suffering people. We thank God for you, our prayer warriors and supporters, who make this ministry possible. Rejoice and thank God with us over some of the highlights of this past year:

- Praise God for the generous response of His people to the opportunities to preach the Gospel, share the Word of God, and bring compassionate relief to millions who are suffering and in great need. Because of this generous response, we have been able to provide over \$800,000 in relief to over 100 churches in Ukraine.
- We thank God that none of the church buildings we had a part in building have been destroyed, even though many were along the path of destruction by forces that were invading Kyiv
- We will never forget traveling to Ukraine during the war, which was necessary for our ministry. On the one hand, it was heartbreaking to see firsthand the massive destruction and grief war brings. On the other hand, it was heartwarming to be received so enthusiastically. The Ukrainian people were so encouraged to have an American come stand with them, even while bombs and missiles were in the air. People on the street, who somehow could tell we were Americans, would stop us to express their gratitude for the help that Americans were providing. Our fourth visit was during the week of Ukrainian Independence Day, a time when Russia launched a massive attack all over Ukraine. This was the same week that Boris Johnson, Britain's former prime minister, made his fourth trip to Ukraine and walked around downtown Kyiv. In the churches we visited, the brethren nicknamed me “the Baptist Boris Johnson.”
- Our summer camp programs are always a highlight. This year, they were even more so since it certainly appeared that summer camps in Ukraine may not be possible. However, our brethren stated that it was more important than ever to have camps during the war! Praise God 3,373 children, teens, and young adults attended our summer camps in Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Georgia and Central Asia. There were hundreds of decisions for Christ; youth heard the Gospel and were challenged from the Word of God. Despite the war, Ukraine by far had the greatest number of campers. Contact us to request a special camp report.

Finally, although the world's eyes are on Ukraine, our ministries continue in other places too. Many Afghani refugees in Central Asia are coming to Christ. In Russia, where we have a church building project, our church planters (who absolutely do not support the war) report that souls are consistently coming to Christ.

Thank you so much for your part in this ministry! We wish all of you a blessed Christmas and wonderful New Year and may the peace of God dwell abundantly in your hearts this blessed season.

***The Slobodians***

