



A Ministry in Support of the Churches of Ukraine

*Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.
- Hebrews 11:16*

At the time of this writing the country of Ukraine has been ravaged by its enemy for 568 days. Devastation in both countries is overpowering as Russians realize the lies The Kremlin has fed them and the Ukrainians face the grim reality of their ravaged country as they head into another winter. It would be easy to let the light of the gospel be snuffed out, to allow the evil that they are surrounded by, steal their joy. In a sense the battle ground has shifted to a battle of morale. "When will God deliver us?"

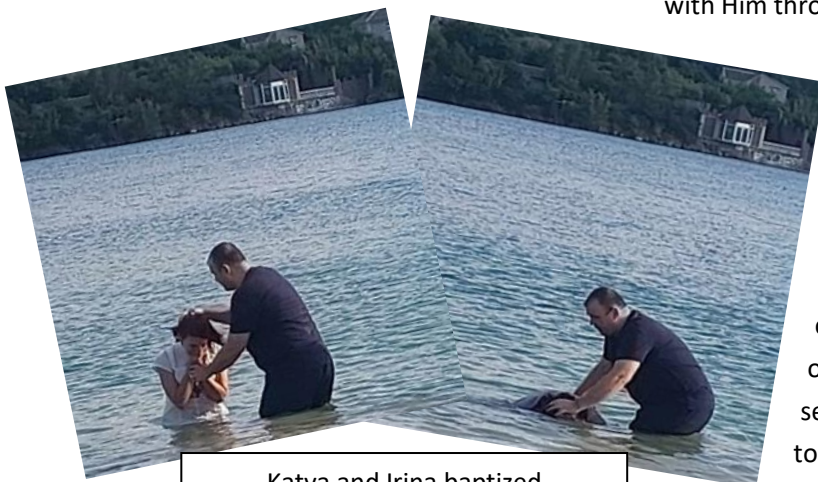
Some Christians have felt the pressure to defend their homeland, and some Christians have lost their lives on the physical battlefield against Russia. I am thankful the Christians in Nikopol and Pokrovskoe have kept their eyes on Jesus and not allowed the winds and the waves to sink their faith. They encourage Christians everywhere far beyond the borders of Ukraine to fight the spiritual battle that surrounds all of us.

Summer in Ukraine

Over the summer, we saw three souls won to Christ; Ksusha, Irina, and Lyosha. Lyosha (pictured next to Slavic, at right) has been coming to services for close to 10 years. Andrew and I knew him and his mother while serving the congregation in Ukraine. Lyosha is an autistic savant. When Andrew read the date of an event in scripture, Lyosha could tell us what day of the week it would be on at any point in time. Because of the way



his mind works, Lyosha's approach is very black and white. Slavic said he came to him and simply stated "I don't want to burn in hell." Praise God, the bible has a solution for that! Lyosha was buried with Christ in baptism and was raised with Him through faith in the working of God. (Galatians 2:12)



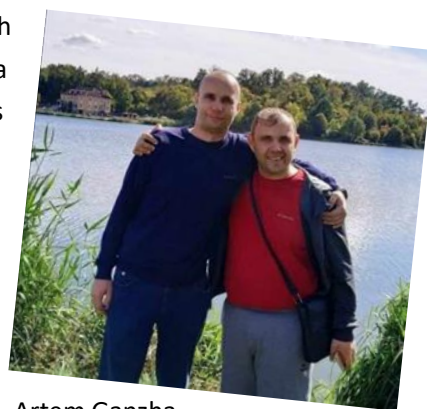
Katya and Irina baptized

Irina, our second new sister, is Artem's mother. Artem came to Christ about three years ago through our alcohol rehab program has been a sturdy part of the congregation in Nikopol since. Artem already brought his elderly grandmother to Christ more than a year ago. It's good to see Artem continuing to grow in his own faith and bringing more of his family to Christ. His grandfather has come to services for some time. But has yet to turn his life over to Christ.



Artem's Grandmother, Galina Alexcyevna, baptized a year ago.

The last week of August brought tragedy with it. Drugs in Ukraine prior to the war was a dangerous epidemic. The war complicates these issues as there is less oversight on drug trafficking, making the epidemic a lot more dangerous for those previously dependent on substances. Even some who were not formerly dependent on drugs have turned to anti-depressants, to moderate their anxiety. Artem Ganzha



came to Nikopol through the rehab a few years ago. Sadly, he succumbed to his addictions and lost his life leaving behind his wife, and two children whom he loved dearly. Vika is struggling financially with the loss of his income. The church in Nikopol has offered help, but she was not formerly a part of the congregation and currently is doing what she can

on her own.

I have shared some about Nastya and her brother Yan. Their little sister joined them at the rehab last summer. This summer their little brother Bogdan has come to stay with them at the rehab as well. Slavic and Katya are overjoyed to have their family grow from a family of four to a family of eight. However, Bogdan comes from tragic circumstances. He was removed from his mother after the courts realized he was not safe in her care. He was frequently left in the apartment alone. One of these instances, he discovered some matches, and set fire to the apartment. He was rescued by a neighbor with only a minor injury to his foot, but the incident made it clear to Ukrainian version of child protective services that Bogdan was not safe in his mother's care. Andrew and I knew his mother when we lived in Ukraine. Even then, she struggled with a heavy dependance on alcohol.



The courts have placed temporary custody with Slavic and Katya, and they await trial to receive permanent custody. Bogdan is six years old and should be starting school, but Slavic said that with his trauma he is set back a few years from other kids his age. For the time-being Katya will work with him at home. With Slavic now having additional mouths to feed, we have increased the amount of salary Slavic receives by \$100. Currently he receives \$800 a month. Meanwhile, Nastya and Yan have both been enrolled in college and are taking their courses online. Covid forced schools to put their curriculum online, which has been a Godsend as it is not safe for many children to attend school. This puts Katya and Slavic in the position of homeschooling their two, and Sveta, while Nastya studies her college courses online. She studies medicine while Yan is studying construction.



In August, the church received some much-needed respite. They attended a camp with several other Ukrainian congregations, had a good time of fellowship and encouraged one another.

You may remember at the time of the last newsletter; Ukraine was in the throes of a drought brought on by the draining of the Kahovka Dam just

south of Nikopol. Access to water in Nikopol is sporadic. They have reconnected to a water source; however, it is turned off at frequent intervals. The village in Pokrovskoe where most of the congregation has relocated to temporarily, does not have running water at all. Only those who have dug wells have access to water. The church there would like to

express their deepest gratitude to you for providing the funds to dig the wells. We were able to have two wells dug, as the water table was not as deep as expected. They installed a filter on an already existing well in the men's rehab for drinking water. Filtration systems are spendy so they decided to reserve the rest of the money in case of an emergency evacuation. They fill bottles with drinking water and bring them to the church building and to the women's rehab.

The wells they dug this summer are used to water the gardens which they depend on heavily for supplies for the winter. Slavic said they picked 50 lbs of raspberries. They rejoice that they are able to provide neighbors with the ability to shower and do laundry as well and give them water for their gardens. So, the well has been a big blessing to the community.

Ukraine has made significant advances in the war. Especially in the region just north of Nikopol. Unfortunately, the nuclear power plant remains unstable. They are piping water to the plant to fill the pools that keep the plant cool, but this week the water levels are low. The plant is occupied by Russians, and not staffed sufficiently to monitor radiation leaks according to the Ukrainian Telegram channel. There are frequent explosions at the plant, likely attacks from the Ukrainians.

Slavic, wisely, tries to block out news, as he believes God is in control, and his purpose is to keep the church functioning in these difficult times.



1200 E Moreland Blvd Waukesha,
WI 53186
262-271-8570
nikopolcoc@gmail.com
www.nikopolchurch.com