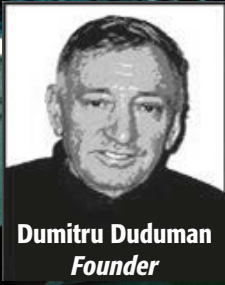




September - October 2022



Hand of **HELP**



HAND OF HELP

PO Box 496719 • Garland, TX 75049

HAND OF HELP OFFICE

1012 South Third Street • Watertown, WI 53094

Toll Free: 866-371-7636 Ph: 920-206-9910
www.handofhelp.com info@handofhelp.com

 [handofhelp.com/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/handofhelp.com)

 [handofhelp.com/youtube](https://www.youtube.com/handofhelp.com)

Amenities

As a child growing up in the U.S., I recall the rare occasions that we would get to travel. Most of the time, it was for church meetings or ministry events, but it was still exciting, something new, different, a break from the monotony of sitting in front of our apartment complex throwing lawn darts at each other. It didn't much matter where we were going. A day or two away from our cockroach-ridden 900 square-foot apartment, home to seven individuals and the ministry office, was a welcomed treat.

While looking for accommodations, one amenity was a must, a complimentary continental breakfast for our family of growing boys. If the property happened to have a hot tub, regardless of its condition or the oily residue floating atop the murky water, we would say to ourselves, "This must be the life."

Oh, how times have changed. Don't get me wrong, I still think a complimentary breakfast is a coveted amenity, but the other offerings are certainly different on the far side of the world.



As I was researching a motel where we might spend the night before going into war-torn Kharkiv, a particular property's advertisement stood out: "Air Raid Sirens" and "Underground Bomb-shelter" were the amenities offered that were meant to seal the deal. After all, what more could someone possibly want?

We arrived at the property in Poltava, now a city without power following the most recent bombings, after a strenuous, almost 14-hour drive, just before

all the lights would be shut off and the city would go dark for the night. After sharing a meal with the team in the hotel lobby, we went to our rooms to get some rest to prepare for the day of ministry that would follow.

The advertised air raid siren "amenity" started going off just after midnight. I don't handle midnight adrenaline surges very well, and I had not asked about the protocol for evacuating should the need arise.

I woke up my roommate, who had been snoring louder than the aforementioned siren, asking if he knew what we needed to do. His response was priceless, "Go back to sleep; it's in the Lord's hands." In retrospect, I am not sure if that was a position of faith that he took or if, perhaps, it was just a strong desire to get back to his snoring and deep sleep.

Since I myself was very much awake and had no plans to return to sleep any time soon, I decided to peek outside and determine what was making the sound I heard once the sirens had subsided. Was it a plane? Were bombs about to drop?

As the sound was getting closer, I thought it sounded like a tank, or at least what a tank sounded like in my mind.



After a few minutes, I discovered it was neither; a street sweeper was simply doing its scheduled rounds.

One's imagination is certainly exacerbated after a few rounds of midnight air raid sirens.

As much as I hate the term "new normal" (I think Covid ruined it for me), this is what normal looks like for the people in Ukraine.

I can't imagine being a parent having to comfort my children multiple times a night as sirens blast, wondering if we will make it through the night. At this very moment, spouses prayerfully wait for a sign from their loved ones to find out if they are still alive. The elderly are paralyzed with fear wondering how they will make it through the winter as they are

left without electricity, water, or natural gas in many areas. The country and the world wonder how this war will finally end.

I, of course, do not have the answer to the aforementioned question, but I know who does, our Sovereign God! The One who knows the end from the beginning. Our Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent GOD.

It is a blessing to proclaim the Gospel to the hurting as we continue serving these people.

Let us thank God with ever-grateful hearts for all the blessings we often take for granted.

In His service,
Daniel Boldea

The vehicle of a ministry partner



2 Corinthians 4:8-18

“We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you.



And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, ‘I believed and therefore I spoke,’ we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us

up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.



Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

This very passage could be the motto of the church in Ukraine. Though facing this generation’s greatest challenge, they persevere through God’s grace. They carry on with the work knowing that God will continue to build His church until the day when His own will be glorified.

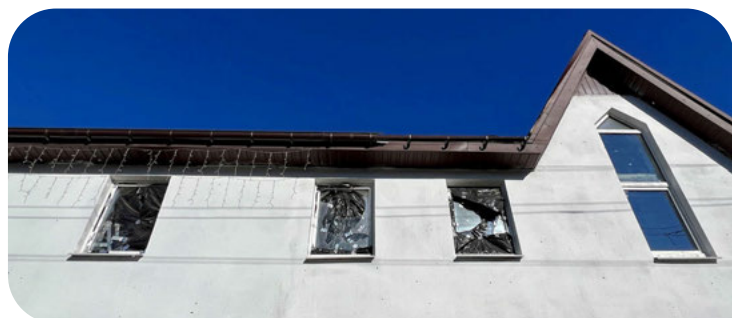


The Gospel of John

Kharkiv was a city we often passed through on our way east to the frontlines. But, unfortunately, the second-largest city in Ukraine has now found itself having to defend its integrity on the frontlines as the occupier's forces moved in.



We had heard of the great work that the Lord was doing in this area through the local church, and we wanted to come alongside their efforts and meet them personally.



Deep into the country, we found this vibrant church with shrapnel-lined walls and a hole in the ceiling showing the only damage left by a missile that hit the church but did not go off by God's grace. A small army of dedicated believers has resolved to stay regardless of how hard times get and minister to the people.



We arrived early morning and were able to join them for their daily devotional and prayer meeting. Their smiles do not depict the looming death or threat of bombs dropping but rather saints who know they are walking according to the Father's perfect will for their lives.



We heard testimony after testimony of God's protection, God's provision, and even of the fruit from their obedience in proclaiming the Gospel in such perilous times. The church and its immediate proximity had been targeted four times by the Russian bombings.

Pastor Ilie and his team were first on the scene when the war began in Kharkiv. Before any government agency made its way to evacuate the residents of the district hardest hit, the church was there, to date facilitating over 20,000 evacuations. Before any international organization could deliver much-needed resources, the church packaged and distributed food to those unable to flee, hiding in



Continued on Page 8

More Blessings



2 Corinthians 4:8-18 (cont.)

make-shift bomb shelters in the basements of the communist-built high rises. This group of believers, now with the help of many ministries worldwide, including Hand of Help, has distributed over 1.2 million food parcels to the desperate in the region.



During the morning we were there, over 2,500 individuals lined up to receive a food package. As the people waited in line, hundreds of copies of the New Testament and the Gospel of John were handed out, and the Good News message was proclaimed. Invitations to come and attend Lord's day service were made, and the pastor shared with us that hundreds show up every Sunday, and it has prompted them to hold multiple services so they can accommodate all those who come to listen to God's Word.



Just as we began our distribution, the first bomb of the day went off, then the second. A residential building in the city center was struck and destroyed. I counted 15 bombs going off in the few hours we were there. For them, a regular day of ministry in wartime Kharkiv, Ukraine.





Pastor Ilie, with tears rolling down his cheeks but with the biggest smile I've ever seen, a picture much like that of a bright rainbow after a dark and powerful storm, shared how 24 individuals who have come to saving faith in Christ were baptized since the war began.



Just in the last week, Pastor Ilie had performed seven funerals, one for a close friend in his 50s who was killed while harvesting some potatoes for his family.



“We understand the risk, but we also know how important it is that all who would listen hear the Gospel.”

I pray that my heart would also burn with such passion for the lost, that I would value the Gospel over all else, including my life, and that I would cease making excuses.

If we believe, let us also speak!

Let us take our eyes off of what is seen, take our focus off of our light affliction and the temporal, and in faith, fix our eyes on Jesus and the eternal.

Let us labor for Him.

With genuine love and conviction,

Daniel Boldea

Defining Moments

There are but a handful of moments that define one's life and the trajectory thereof. We can run ourselves ragged, going in circles, wondering what could have been had we done something different. For the fortunate among us, all we have is a good story we repeat to anyone willing to hear about how we could have bought such and such stock when it was the price of a stick of gum, and now, years later, three shares would buy you a midsize sedan with electric windows.

Those less fortunate among us, however, have more than just a story. They live with the repercussions of those defining moments for the rest of their lives, letting the question of what they could have done differently to prevent the current outcome eat at them like some starving parasite.



The Curca family is not well-to-do by any stretch of the imagination. That said, Gheorghe is a hard worker, and they managed to scrape up enough money to build themselves a home. Given that the home did not have any closets and the family did not own a dresser, they built a small storage shed next to their home where they kept their clothing and sundries.



The Curca family also has a six-year-old special needs grandson living with them, who, as boys his age are known to be, is fascinated by fire. All it took was a moment of inattentiveness for the boy to pocket the box of matches the family used to light their stove and wander off to play with them. Offering the requisite privacy, the boy entered the storage shed and began playing with the matches. The boxes that held the clothing ignited, and the storage shed went up in flames, which then spread to the house.

Thankfully the boy was unharmed, but the Curca family found themselves without a home. The walls can be salvaged, so all the Curca family needs is a new roof and the interior work required to make the home habitable again.

Having responded to the local pastor's call to come and see the situation for ourselves, we can confirm that this need is immediate, as fall will give way to winter in short order, and the family will have nowhere to live.

Please be in prayer about this need, and do as the Lord leads.

Hand of Help Staff

Child of the Month

Stefana and her brother, Gabriel, were taken in by the Hand of Help Orphanage in February 2012. At that time, they were living in a house that belonged to their mother's last boyfriend, in an environment hard to fathom. Mud floors, a few wood boards thrown together as a bed, walls stained of smoke, and a room lacking even basic amenities like electricity- this was all that could be provided for them. The only income for the household was the monthly government stipend for the children. Their mother was an uneducated woman who often traveled to neighboring countries to beg.

After she was caught and expelled back to Romania, she sent her children out to ask for money. Even with the help of the local authorities, the children often went unfed, unclothed, and not taken care of. The mother was not able to handle a budget or be self-sufficient, while the children's father was unknown.

It was impossible to provide proper growth, development, and education for the children in their family setting. The best option for the

children was to be separated from their mother for a season. Hand of Help agreed to take these children in and, with God's help, provide an environment where they can flourish like they would in a healthy family home.

Stefana and Gabriel keep in contact with their mother (currently living abroad). The siblings get along very well and are happy to be together.



Stefana does well in school and is always involved in activities around the house. She is eager to learn and takes advantage of the time with our staff, helping around the kitchen and learning to cook. She also plays the flute in her free time. In the fall of 2022, she started the eighth grade, an important school year for children preparing to be placed in one of the various specialty high schools.

Thank you for making stories like Stefana's possible! We are grateful for your prayers, love, and

support, and we know He who sees everything will amply reward your work for the needy and fatherless!

Dear Brethren,

There is a stillness before every storm that does nothing to foreshadow the magnitude of what is about to be unleashed. It is a quiet that settles upon the world like a blanket, as though, for a split second, everything and everyone is holding their collective breath.

If you live long enough and learn to listen for it, you'll know a storm is coming even though your smartphone and preferred meteorologist insist on the contrary. A few days back, we had planned on taking the girls to the zoo. It's one of their favorite places, and the weather had been less than ideal a few days before. Seemingly out of the blue, the sun broke through the clouds, and it seemed like we'd have a day of respite.

Everyone was getting ready to leave when I walked outside, car keys in hand, took a deep breath, and knew that not everything was as it seemed. Even though the sun was shining, there was a chill in the air. The kind of chill you feel deep in your bones and foretells of something brewing.


"I think it's going to rain again," I said to my wife as she was bringing the girls along, "and I think it's going to happen soon."

My wife rolled her eyes and waved her phone in the air, saying, "I checked the weather. It's looking fine."

Because after twenty-two years of marriage, I've learned to pick my battles, I shrugged, got in the car, and proceeded to drive toward the zoo. Halfway there, the skies turned dark, and the wind began to pick up; then, the hail storm started in earnest.

Currently, those warning that a storm is coming, is near and is almost upon us seem like odd ducks. Everyone from the talking heads on the news to the press secretary to the president himself is insisting that the worst is behind us, the storm has been weathered, and blue skies are ahead for as far as the eye can see.

Because it's human nature for us to gravitate toward those telling us pleasant things, even though they might not be true, the contrarians among us, those who feel the storm in their bones and can't help but



say something, are ridiculed and belittled as though by tearing them down you somehow negate the truth of the message they bring.

What those throwing stones fail to grasp is that, for the most part, the few individuals warning of economic collapse, civil unrest, natural disasters, and a handful of other things are doing so hoping they are wrong, hoping the things they have seen do not come to pass.

It's not as though if what they say occurs, they will somehow be unaffected. It's not as though they will be kept from seeing the hardship and suffering of their fellow man. Because they are duty-bound, they speak a hard truth rather than a comforting lie, knowing they will be held accountable for every word they utter in the Lord's name.

The storm is here. I wish that it was not so, but we cannot deal in what we wish would be but rather the reality of what is. The only thing I can do is reaffirm what we already know, which is the incontrovertible truth that there is hope and peace and joy and safety and refuge under the shadow of His wings.

We do not fear as the godless fear; we do not rage as the godless do. We have the blessed assurance that our Lord and King will carry us through and prove His faithfulness for all the world to see.

Psalm 91:2 "I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust."

With love in Christ,

Michael Boldea, Jr.