



Bratislava, 10.03.2022

Report on the assistance provided by the Slovak Baptist Union to refugees from Ukraine

Dear brothers and sisters,

The war in Ukraine hasn't ended, guns have not fallen silent, the number of refugees is sadly not decreasing ... on the contrary tens of thousands of refugees continue to look for refuge in our country. According to the published statistics to date approximately 200,000 people have entered Slovakia alone. This is already an enormous number and predictions suggest that, if the war continues, this number will only increase. In addition to praying for peace in Ukraine, we are attempting to give practical help to those affected by this military aggression. This includes people who have come to Slovakia but we have also provided help inside Ukraine. More about what, with God's help, we've been able to do this week you'll learn about in this report.

From the first few days, at the instigation of the leadership of the Baptist Union, we have been mobilizing and working together to find ways to provide assistance and set up our systems to be as effective as possible. Others were invited to join a smaller team, forming a "BJB Crisis team" consisting of about 10 people. To make communication as effective as possible, each church has appointed a local coordinator for the help being given to refugees from Ukraine.

It is amazing to see that almost every church of the Slovak Baptist Union has been involved in practical help - from Košice to Bratislava, from Ružomberok to Komárno. By practical help, we mean that almost every church has accommodated people from Ukraine. When we include those staying at the cottage in Račková, there are around 200 people currently being accommodated, mostly women and their children. Some of them are staying in church buildings, others have been welcomed into the houses and flats of our brothers and sisters.



Račková: refugees from near Kyiv



Račková: refugees from near Kyiv



Refugees in the church in Košice

So far during the first wave of refugees, we have helped mainly those who have needed short term help, often in the form of having somewhere to sleep for 1-2 nights, before traveling on to Western Europe or further afield. At the moment there are people arriving who are planning to see out the war in our country, so they are planning to be here for a longer period.

The church in Košice continues to serve as a kind of refuge for refugees. The church provides this service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with brothers and sisters from that church taking turns in covering morning, afternoon and night shifts. In this way, they have already helped dozens of people who were able to rest, sleep, eat and prepare for the next stage of their journey. It requires a lot of effort, especially through people who are sacrificing their time. They are already at their limits, even though it is a big church. We wouldn't like this service to have to stop because of a lack of people. Therefore the church in Košice is asking for help - if anyone is able to come to help as a volunteer and meet actual needs, it would be a great help, even for one day or for longer. We've been able to help the church in Košice by paying for a washing machine and dryer, which is much needed in their ministry and this is thanks to the funds we've already collected.

In addition to providing accommodation, the practical help being provided by the church in Prešov, includes Milka Lapčáková accompanying refugees to the police station that deals with foreigners, where they could obtain the necessary documents and a resident permit for our country. Serving those in need takes many forms and many times we need to respond to the actual needs of those we're serving. Often it means that we ourselves quickly need to learn something new so that we can serve those who God has given into our care.

In the last week several churches have accommodated Ukrainian refugees who have decided to stay here long-term. They will be in need of just this type of help, advice and going with them on visits to official offices, help with information about the schooling of their children, assistance gaining employment or visiting the doctor. Currently our churches are providing long-term accommodation for around 120 people and, based on the offers submitted through our churches, we have another 190 places. We're encouraged by the solidarity these numbers express and also filled with humility at the challenge it is to serve efficiently and effectively.

Finally, I'd like to share one more thing with you. Over the past week, someone willing to work with us has offered the use of a truck to transport humanitarian aid. After consideration within the wider team we have decided to try to fill this truck with humanitarian aid and send it to Ukraine. Within a few days we managed to arrange; drivers for the truck, rent warehouse space to collect food and contact businesses in order to fill this 24 ton truck and in the coming days we'll send a shipment to Ukraine. In the photo you can see 6 pallets of drinking water, which



Volunteers in the church in Košice



Prešov: Arranging permits



Refugees in Prešov



Humanitarian Shipment - foodstuffs

we obtained from one business. This can only take place thanks to your gifts, which you've sent to help those suffering from the military conflict, whether here in Slovakia or directly in Ukraine.

Thank you for all of your prayers. Many more will be needed. Please continue to pray for an end to the war in Ukraine and an alleviation of the suffering of the refugees. Thank you for every material or practical help. There are still a lot of needs and distress. War does not meet needs, war creates needs, and at a great intensity and very quickly. This is why we're thankful for every sacrifice you're willing to make either materially or in the form of your time. Thank you also for your financial gifts and contributions, for every single euro. If the LORD places it again on your heart, you can send your contributions to the bank account of the Slovak Baptist Union, from where we'll send help based on actual needs. Below you can find all the bank details needed.



In conclusion we invite you to unite in prayer for Ukraine.
For our service to those who the Lord God sends us.
For all practical, mental and spiritual service.

May our God be praised through this in the name of Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the coordination team of BJB,
Ľubo Pál

International transfer

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