

Ukrainian Baptists sow 'seeds of hope' in war zone

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Six months after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Baptists inside the embattled nation and in neighboring countries continue ministry in a war zone and begin preparation for what could be a hard winter.

"The war has become a powerful catalyst for creativity and sacrifice," the [European Baptist Federation](#) stated in a [Sept. 7 update](#). Ukrainian Baptists "continue to sow seeds of hope to those in need," the report continued.

The federation noted eastern and southern Ukraine remain the areas with "the highest concentration of fighting and the most desperate need."

"Limited access to food, water, electricity and transit out of occupied regions continues to press the region into a humanitarian crisis. Many fear the consequences of the harsh winter approaching," the EBF update stated.

At the same time, violence is not limited to occupied areas in the east. Western cities in Ukraine continue to experience "sporadic missile strikes and air raids," the EBF noted.

"Despite this, many who were internally displaced from the north and central regions have risked returning to rebuild their lives. Baptists continue to serve across every region caring for the physical, mental and spiritual needs of their neighbors."

Baptists continue to "embrace their opportunity" to meet needs through humanitarian aid projects, and they "delight in the chance to share Christ in the midst of suffering," the federation noted.

"Churches in the central and eastern regions continue to provide aid,

electricity and water to those on the front lines and, when possible, in occupied areas as well,” the EBF update stated. “As people continue to move across the countries, Baptists provide transportation to those seeking safety.”

During the summer, pastor retreats offered ministers times of respite, the federation noted.

Baptists in Ukraine also provided youth camps, a day camp for individuals with special needs and a women’s prayer breakfast that focused on interceding “for those fighting and for those who are displaced.”

Baptists gather for worship, even when it involves great personal risk. The EBF report singled out Nikolaev Baptist Church as a place where worshippers filled the sanctuary in spite of heavy shelling.

“Despite explosions and the difficult situation in the city, these people came to God’s house looking for support, stability and peace,” the EBF update stated.

Looking to the future with hope

While focusing on meeting immediate needs, churches also look to the future, the federation observed. At the dedication service for a new church building in Bilhorod-Dnistrovs’kyi, leaders said: “The consecration of a new house of pray during war means God always has a view of tomorrow. God started something yesterday and is developing it today for tomorrow.”

Baptists in neighboring nations also continue to demonstrate the love of Christ to hurting people, the EBF added.

“In Romania, All4Aid partners have been asked numerous times by locals: ‘Why are you doing this? Why are you still helping?’ Their answer mirrors that of countless churches, leaders and volunteers around the EBF region:

We serve because Christ first loved us,” the federation reported.

“In fact, numerous reports from Germany, Romania, Moldova, Poland, Hungary, and, of course, Ukraine have all highlighted the professional, quality care and aid Baptists have been able to provide across the region. Local authorities, international NGOs and aid organizations have all praised the quality work of Baptists. Our brothers and sisters are shining the light of Christ brightly in this dark time.”

The European Baptist Federation hosts a monthly prayer call on the last Wednesday of each month to intercede for Ukrainian Christians and pray for peace. To register for the Zoom call, go to https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZApceGqz0iEtZGRNIuIMS_Vca4pa54kuCR.