



For God's Children
INTERNATIONAL

a personal note

from joel burkum

FGCI Executive Director

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"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear..." —Psalm 46:1,2a (NIV)

Dear Friends,

I am scheduled to leave for Romania/Moldova in just a few hours, but I wanted to prepare this *Personal Note* before I head out. [It may not be the prettiest, but I hope it gets the point across!]

We have all been watching in shock and sadness over the past month as the Russian invasion and war with Ukraine continues on like a very bad nightmare. It's hard to believe that such atrocities as bombings, the leveling of cities to rubble, and ESPECIALLY the killing of innocence civilians, elderly citizens and young children are happening right before our eyes with no signs of stopping in the near future. Let us all pray for a swift end to this needless killing and destruction in Ukraine. May those suffering at the hands of terror find strength, refuge and peace in the Lord.

"For such a time as this..." (Esther 4:14)

Many of us serving in Eastern Europe have found ourselves very near the situation happening in Ukraine, and feel called upon to shift our focus these days to helping the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing for their lives across the western Ukrainian border. Where FGCI serves in Romania and Moldova, we have been in the right place at the right time to extend the love of Christ to thousands of refugees flooding into southeast Moldova and eastern Romania. Ever since the war broke out in Ukraine in late February, our FGCI workers have been driving refugees from the Ukrainian border crossings to safe accommodations in Moldova and Romania. Vlad Pogor, our FGCI representative in Moldova, has been averaging over 700 miles a day to drive refugees to safety in Chisinau and other places in Moldova, including our Home of the Good Shepherd foster home in Nisporeni, Moldova. He has transported 450 or more refugees to safety in less than a month.

In Romania, FGCI representative Mihai Pungila has been driving refugees to shelters in and around Tulcea, Romania. At times, Mihai and his wife Magda have had as many as 30 or more people bedding down in their home. Mihai has also organized a Food Trailer at the Isaccea, Romania, border crossing just across the Danube River from Ukraine. Each day, hundreds and hundreds of Ukrainian refugees have been welcomed and served free hot food and drinks as they enter across the Ukraine/Romania border.

FGCI continues to provide assistance in many ways to the Ukrainian refugees. Lord willing, I will soon be joining our FGCI representatives and helpers in both Romania and Moldova to see firsthand what is happening at the Ukraine border. We are thankful to everyone who is partnering with FGCI to provide assistance to the refugees.

If you would like to partner with FGCI in our efforts to serve Ukrainian refugees in Romania and Moldova, please go to our website at: www.fgci.org.

Here you will find a way to donate to our **Ukrainian Refugees Relief Services** fund. 100% of gifts designated to serve Ukrainian refugees will

go directly to help Ukrainian refugees (with food, transportation, shelter, medicine, personal hygiene products, diapers, clothing, bedding, Bibles, etc.) passing through the areas where we serve. And, of course, we will be sharing the Gospel and the love of Christ with them, as well.

I'd like to share two recent reports I received from our representatives in Moldova and Romania that may give you some insights into the work we are doing there in Jesus' name.

Vlad writes (on 3-20-22):

I sent a minibus with food, medicine, fuel, etc. to Ukraine with Pastor Vadim, who serves there. I spoke with Pastor Vadim about how FGCI will get



FGCI representative Vlad Pogor (left) with Vadim.

involved in helping Ukraine. Vadim is the pastor who opened the church in Kyiv one year ago, but because the war did not allow him to stay in Kyiv, he took the church and went to Chernivtsi, Ukraine, 300 km from Kyiv. Vadim is my spiritual Father. When the war started, I proposed to him to come to Moldova with his whole church, but he refused. He chose to stay in Ukraine



Ukrainians are delighted to receive food and necessities in Ukraine.

and help the people who fled the war. Vadim still wants to go to Kyiv to help evacuate the sick, the elderly and the disabled. I will go to Ukraine every month to bring products, medicines, etc. Pray for Vadim and the service he does there, I don't think everyone would choose to go [and help people in Ukraine in this way]. I think the next point of service for FGCI is Ukraine.



Pastor Vadim (at bottom) with believers from his church are thankful for supplies provided by FGCI for people staying in Ukraine.

Thank you for everything you have done. Because of your involvement, it is easier for the people of Ukraine, says Pastor Vadim.

Mihai writes (on 3-22-22):

Up to now, more than 150 refugees have passed through our home. I helped them with accommodation, transport, documents, food... There are those who have stayed for a long time and want to send their children



to school. Two little girls are already going to school. We need backpacks, pens and supplies. In customs [at the Isaccea, Romania, border] we make every day between 200 and 1000 hot dogs, tea and coffee for refugees. They are desperate. We tell them a word of comfort and we listen to them. Many times we listen to them and keep quiet because there is nothing more to say. We have Ukrainian-speaking volunteers there. Yesterday, a family came from Mariupol. Oxana, our volunteer, asked them how they managed to escape. They said that God had saved them, among bombs and shooting. They can't believe they escaped. They said the only thing people there pray for is that when they die, they will die whole... they have no hope of escaping. The Russians have been bombing Odessa for several days, and many refugees are coming [across the border at Isaccea]. Without your help we could not do anything. There are many people in town who ask us for food for refugees. We are very happy that we can help. May the Lord bless you.



FGCI-Romania representative Mihai Pungila has established a Food Trailer ministry to serve free hot food and drinks to Ukrainian refugees at the Isaccea, Romania, border crossing on the Danube River.

Last night, a family from Nikolaev [Ukraine] came: an old man with his wife and daughter with two teenagers, five in total. They were very discouraged and did not know what to do. I offered them a place to sleep and, in the morning, I found them longer-term accommodations. In the morning they wanted to pay, but I told them we were doing everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. They all started crying and hugging us. Thank you very much for your help, without you we could not do what we do.



FGCI-Romania representative Mihai Pungila (right) with some of the Ukrainian refugees for whom he has provided rides to safe shelter, food, and other necessities, including encouragement and Christian love.

Joel here again. We cannot thank you enough for your financial support and prayers. May God bless you. Do keep the Ukrainians in your prayers, as well as our tireless workers serving in Romania and Moldova.

Love in Jesus,

Joel Burkum

brother joel



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P.O. Box 434, Council Bluffs, IA 51502-0434 | fgci@fgci.org

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