



# The Rue Family

## UKRAINE

April – May 2024

Dear Praying Friends and Family,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The months of April and May were busy with meetings in OH, KY, IN, MI, and NC. During my last visit to Ukraine, I saw that the Ukrainian language is replacing Russian in regions that previously only communicated in Russian. I decided that it is time to begin language study once again, this time in Ukrainian. My family and I are taking lessons twice a week via Zoom from my long-time friend Oleg, aka “Captain Translator.” The month of May was also eventful for Naomi and I as we celebrated our 31<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary.

During my last visit to Ukraine, I was able to gather some vital information ahead of our return to the field. It will be unavoidable for us to return to our home because of our residency permits. We are, of course, trying to understand if it is safe to do so. **“The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD (Prov. 21:31).”** I spoke with several men “in the know” who explained the situation in Transnistria, a country where a Russian army is located and whose border is only a ten-minute drive from my house. I now feel much better about returning. However, the situation in Ukraine makes day to day life very difficult. We recently received the official schedule from the electric company in our town. We will have only five hours of electricity in a twenty-four-hour period, divvied up an hour or two at a time. In addition, there are water shortages. I will have to make at least one more trip to prepare our home before the arrival of my family. It would be almost senseless to return to a house with no water, no power, and no heat during winter! Solar panels for power and a deep well for water would be ideal and keep us independent of the utility system which was bad even before the war.

After discussing future plans with Alexei we decided to submit our paperwork for visas after Michael turns sixteen in July. Ukraine places young people in a category all their own between the ages of 16 and 18. To avoid a lot of extra problems and paperwork, which would require us to exit the country, we decided that this is the safest option. We’ve also discussed the nature of the ministry for the time being. We plan to continue to take the Gospel and aid to Eastern regions of Ukraine into the formerly occupied territories. They are humbled, hungry, and listening now.

Possible New Recruits! Even during wartime there are still young people praying about going to the mission field! My son, Samuel, and his wife, Susanna, are praying about coming over to help us in Ukraine. He wants to accompany me on my next trip while praying about the Lord’s will for their lives after he graduates Bible Institute. What a blessing! Not to mention my daughter, Miriam, is committed to returning with us as well. She is a certified bookkeeper and is working hard to get her online business to the point that she can be self-supporting on the field. I praise God for the blessing of having a family that is now producing second generation missionaries that grew up on the field!

*(Continued on the other side...)*



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Please pray for the men in our church who are carrying a heavy burden during wartime. Pastor Alexei is doing a fine job overseeing the church. He is under a lot of pressure from many sides and needs prayer. On the one hand there are constant threats of missile strikes in Odessa. On the other stands the sobering possibility that he, or the other needed helpers in the church, could be conscripted. They also get constant updates from church members and their families who are fighting now and say that Kharkiv is very hot and that they may be going soon. In addition to these pressures, the changes that are fast coming to Ukraine from the West are very discouraging. The Parliament of Ukraine has already presented a bill that would take the first steps to the legalization of gay marriage. What a disgrace! The men are between a rock and a hard place. If Russia wins the war then our liberty to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ will almost disappear. If Ukraine wins, then the new form of "Western Civilization" (the Hollywood kind) which has replaced the old will come in and make Ukraine a new colony of the USA and Europe. These new "western values" and immigration will change Ukraine forever. Time is short. Even so, Come Lord Jesus.

On a positive note, I spoke with one of our church members who is serving in the Ukrainian army. He emphatically wanted me to know one thing. He said, "Pastor, I just want you to know that I give to missions as much as I can." He gives to the Lord's work from his small soldier's salary. He listed the several national pastors and missionaries we've supported over the years. I thought of the past trials and temptations we encountered while discipling him and his mother. I was reminded that it is all worth it! It is the "fruit" that the Lord described which does indeed "remain" (see John 15:16).

Another blessing from our last trip was seeing the hand of God at work in those that were recently saved during our first trip. I was concerned about these new believers and felt an obligation to help them grow (Matt. 7:6). We met a man named Sergei during our last trip, who said that he relocated to the area to help disciple the new converts that we led to Christ last year. I saw the fruit firsthand when we arrived in a town where we had previously preached. There were two women in particular who recently received Christ and who sang a special hymn for me during my first visit. They were happy to see that I returned to visit them again and then they asked, "Did you bring our pastor with you?" I did not know that they had one so quickly, then it was explained to me that their new pastor was the same Sergei with whom we had been working! What a blessing to see the Lord provide men where they are needed.

A Ukrainian pastor in eastern Ukraine was present when I preached the Gospel to a town north of Mykolaiv. He has invited me to return to preach a weeklong revival in his church in Nova Odesa. Please pray for these meetings.

We need prayer! A lot of prayer! Please continue to pray for the following requests: 1) the Lord's continued guidance and protection on our next trip to Ukraine; 2) God's provision for plane tickets, solar panels, and deep water well; 3) our paperwork; 4) God's will for Samuel and Susanna; 5) God's comfort, wisdom, safety, and strength for our men in Ukraine; 6) the growth of those recently saved; 7) our study of the Ukrainian language; and 8) our upcoming meetings.

My family and I would like to thank you all for your friendship, fellowship, prayers, and support of us in this work that God has given us. May the Lord Jesus bless you as you continue to serve Him.

That Ukraine May Know Him,



Christopher Rue

Phil. 3:10