



Your Help. Their Hands.

CRATES FOR UKRAINE

Dear friends,

The Lord is faithful.

Can I be transparent and honest with you for a moment? The last year and a half has been a season when I've had times of not really believing that statement. I've been in a season when my faith has been struggling for a number of reasons. But being with you week in and week out during this season has encouraged my faith so much. Seeing your faithfulness in worship, or at morning prayer, or at Bible study each week has reminded me at times to just keep going. Your faithfulness has been just a small glimpse of the Lord's faithfulness. And the Crates for Ukraine project and trip to Kraków gave me a fresh sense of his faithfulness both as I witnessed the faithfulness of his people here and on the other side of the globe and as I watched him go before and behind me, ordering my steps, and ordaining each interpersonal interaction. Indeed, he has done a great work in my own heart to allow me to claim with confidence: The Lord is faithful.

As soon as Pastor Josh asked me to lead our church's Crates for Ukraine effort, I had a vision of wide involvement from not only our church family but the community at large. We spread the word far and wide. We were able to involve members of the Colleyville Ministerial Alliance, receiving donations from congregations even of different faiths. We also engaged our covenant children as we made bringing donations for Crates for Ukraine our mission emphasis during VBS. Our goal was to fill six crates with donations from a variety of sources. And we ended up with eight crates full of supplies and items leftover. (I have passed those leftover items to another courier who will take crates later in August.) We all pressed into the call to help and support the church and faithful Christians in another part of the world and the Lord has been faithful to provide exactly what was needed.



I saw him answer prayers as our baggage handling agent with Finnair approved the waiver of luggage fees for 3 of our crates. He answered prayers as my flights went really as smoothly as they possibly could have. He answered a very special prayer and desire on my part by allowing me to see the crates being loaded onto the plane going from Helsinki to Kraków. He answered the fervent prayers of so many by bringing the one missing crate to Kraków on Thursday of that week.

He went before me and ordained that two of our Team L'viv missionaries were on my flight from Helsinki to Krakow and I got to meet them in baggage claim. Mikael & Zuzanna Römer were coming back from vacation and noticed me picking up crates with the Ukrainian flag on them off



the baggage carousel. They told me about a picnic coming up on that Wednesday for the Ukrainians who were in town. As I spoke with team members Clarke Norton and Joel Spence, I heard the story of how the Lord went before all of us by unexpectedly planting a church in Kraków several years ago which has aided and blessed the members of the Ukrainian church who have sought refuge there. He went before me, and blessed me with time to see the beautiful city of Kraków and spend time experiencing some difficult reminders of our past at Auschwitz-Birkenau. And finally, not only did I get to witness the faithfulness of our missionaries who are serving the Ukrainians so diligently through the Crates for Ukraine effort, in the Lord's kindness to

me, I got to meet some faithful members of the Ukrainian church and see them loving and serving their fellow Ukrainians at the picnic Mikael told me about.

I met some incredible, amazing, strong and faithful women who are loving and serving those around them in the midst of their own trauma and grief. Katya, in particular, who left her life and job in L'viv and fled to Kraków once the war began. She has not gone back because her work ministering to Ukrainians in Kraków has become far more important. She inspires me. The strength and perseverance of the women I met and saw at the picnic was so encouraging and yet heartbreaking at the same time. They grieve for their homes and long to be able to return. They express disbelief and an inability to really understand what is happening and why their fellow Ukrainians are dying. And yet they all show such strength as they support one another knowing why they are in Kraków while the men in their lives are still in Ukraine. The faithfulness of these believers who are experiencing such loss, trauma, and disruption of their lives is so encouraging.



The Lord truly encouraged me by giving me glimpses of the faithful church in this part of the world. Not only through the Ukrainian believers that I met, but also as I just walked around these new and interesting cities (Kraków and Helsinki). Something I enjoy when visiting Europe especially is seeing churches. I had a wonderfully different experience of it this time though. As I entered each church, I sat on a pew and because of the liturgy we do each Wednesday and Friday in morning prayer, I was able to worship for a moment in each of them with the words of the Te Deum Laudamus on my lips. For the first time, I visited churches and really experienced joining with believers past and present as I was able to sit and speak such a meaningful and ancient declaration of praise. And then as I wandered around Helsinki for an afternoon during an overnight layover on my way home, I found a little out of the way church and entered to find a group of about a half a dozen women participating in a liturgy. It reminded me so much of our



morning prayer time at CPC. What struck me about this particular encounter is that out of the many churches I've entered in the many cities I've visited, this is one of the only times I've actually encountered worshipers worshipping. I stopped and prayed for those faithful Christians in Helsinki and have prayed for them since.

The Lord allowed me so many opportunities to witness his Church, to witness faithful Christians, in these two cities. And in doing so, he reminded me anew that they are faithful only because he is perfectly faithful and that I can know this primarily because of his faithfulness to keep his promises to his people in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

And that, friends, is what I want to encourage you with.

The Lord is faithful.

In the midst of a war, he is faithful.

In a part of the world that in recent history seems to have largely forgotten him, he is faithful.

He is lifting up what has been brought low.

He is ministering to the orphan and the widow through his faithful followers.

He is building his church.

And he is faithful.

With so much love and thankfulness,

Donna

P.S. Continue to follow the experiences of our brothers and sisters in Ukraine at <https://voice-of-ukraine.com/>.