



MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS

ONE  
YEAR  
AT  
WAR

REFLECTIONS ON UKRAINE

*Prayers, Pictures  
&  
Personal  
stories*



## ABOUT US

Mission Without Borders (MWB) is a Christian charity which has been working in Eastern Europe for over 60 years responding to the practical, emotional, and spiritual needs of poor and vulnerable people. Previously known as Underground Evangelism, we began our work smuggling Bibles into Communist countries behind the Iron Curtain.

Today, our vision is to reach people for Christ through word and deed. We enable and encourage children and families to lift themselves out of desperate and isolating poverty, building strong long-lasting relationships with people in partnership with the churches in their communities.

Since the invasion of Ukraine on February 24th 2022, around 12 million people have been forced out of their homes and many have lost loved ones in the conflict. Together with local churches, Mission Without Borders staff and volunteers have distributed urgently needed aid to children and families. This work continues in 2023.

## A YEAR AT WAR

One Year on from the start of the conflict we reflect on the impact of this terrible war on the people of Ukraine. Volodymyr Brychuk, MWB Programme Manager in Ukraine, speaks to the heart when he says, “the reality of war proved very vividly that life is uncertain and fragile... I’ve never heard so many Bible readings and sermons based on the Psalms, especially those where David and other psalmists pour out their hearts and emotions in times of distress.” Amid the cruellest of situations, we see the love of God in action and pray that help, healing and hope will come to this country in 2023.

God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though  
the earth give way and the  
mountains fall into the heart of the  
sea, though its waters roar and  
foam and the mountains quake  
with their surging.

Come and see what the Lord  
has done, the desolations he has  
brought on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the ends  
of the earth.

He breaks the bow and shatters  
the spear; he burns the shields  
with fire.

He says, "Be still, and know that  
I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth."

The Lord Almighty is with us; the  
God of Jacob is our fortress.

PSALM 46 V1-3 & 8-11



psalm





**Misha Vaveliuk**  
Writer & Photographer

“What has changed in these nine months? Ourselves. Our land, our language and identity mean to us much more because they want to take it away from us. There has never been such unity among our people. Everyone is helping and supporting anyone who’s in bigger need than themselves. We have begun to pray a lot, because we believe that God’s protection can stop the missiles that hit our homes.

We have been learning to be more thankful: for electricity for a couple of hours a day, for warm radiators in the house, for a hot meal. We are thankful for the people from abroad who donate generously and try their best to support us. I am amazed at the fact that worldwide, people have united to keep Ukraine alive through this cruel war.

The Bible says, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). I’ve never seen so much evil and so many good deeds as I have over this past year. Our belief is that good will overcome evil. God bless you!”

## The Orlovs A refugee family from Kherson



“The war began and we suddenly found ourselves in the front line. It was a nightmare we couldn’t wake up from. Everything we used to love was erased by bombings and shelled to the ground. Thankfully we managed to escape to a safer area.

Over time, our frustration turned into anger, our anger into resentment. Then sadness and a slight hope came. The hope became stronger and turned into a deep longing for victory and peace. Peace became the most desirable and precious thing to all of us.

In the Bible, Jesus is called the Prince of Peace. When my mind recollects the unrelenting and the horrifying destruction that I saw, my only comfort is setting my heart to focus on the Prince of Peace.

Our village was recently liberated, and it became safe to return. We will rebuild our village, no matter how difficult it may be, and it will become our personal victory.”






**Volodymyr Brychka**  
A pastor from Rivne

“I will always remember the first weeks of this war, when Russian troops were purposefully destroying our towns and villages and the civilians who lived there.

One time, we were evacuating children from an orphanage in the east. The route was dangerous due to constant shelling. There wasn't enough space in the bus for everyone, so each sitting person had a terrified child on his lap, trying to calm and comfort them. I will never forget that evacuation operation.

We are witnessing huge needs and a huge need for God's light to be poured out on people: on families who have lost loved ones, on people who no longer have a place to live, on people who have become injured by the war and disabled and on those who are suffering from the traumatic experiences they've endured. It is a big challenge. Prayer is vital and will keep our hands strong and able to work. I am extremely grateful to all our friends from abroad who support us. May God bless you richly”.



A photograph of a man in a green quilted jacket and a black cap with a logo, embracing an elderly woman from behind. The woman is wearing a grey jacket and a colorful floral headscarf. They are both looking down at a black shopping cart filled with groceries, including a large orange bag. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a public setting.

How long, Lord? Will  
you forget me forever?

How long will you hide  
your face from me?

How long must I wrestle  
with my thoughts and  
day after day have  
sorrow in  
my heart?

How long will my enemy  
triumph over me?

Look on me and answer,  
Lord my God.

Give light to my eyes,  
or I will sleep in death,  
and my enemy will say,  
"I have overcome him,"  
and my foes will rejoice  
when I fall.

But I trust in your  
unfailing love; my heart  
rejoices in your salvation.

I will sing the Lord's  
praise, for he has been  
good to me.

PSALM 13

*psalm*



The violent rupture of “normality” for Ukrainians since the outbreak of the war has been reflected in a spontaneous outpouring of poems. As Ukrainian translator and scholar Oksana Maksymchuk says, they “crystallise a particular moment in time, or an emotion that is fleeting”. What they do try to capture is the impossible task of expressing the inexpressible.

### A POEM BY HALYNA KRUK

Someone stands between you and death —  
but who knows how much more my heart can  
stand where you are, it's so important

someone prays for you even with their own words  
even if they don't clasp their hands and kneel  
plucking the stems off strawberries from the garden  
I recall how I scolded you when you were small  
for squashing the berries before they ripened  
my heart whispers: Death, he hasn't ripened yet  
he's still green, nothing in his life has been  
sweeter than unwashed strawberries


I beg you: oh God, don't place him at the front,  
please don't rain rockets down on him, oh God,  
I don't even know what a rocket looks like,  
my son, I can't picture the war even to myself

*Translated from the Ukrainian by Sibelan Forrester*

**HALYNA KRUK** was born in Lviv in 1974. She is a poet, writer of fiction and a scholar of Ukrainian medieval literature. She has authored four books of poetry and collected some of Ukraine's top awards for young poets. She teaches literature at the Lviv University.

*(from Words for War: New Poems from Ukraine)*



A woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark green or black zip-up jacket and matching pants, is walking towards the camera on a wet, muddy path. She is carrying a large bundle of folded blankets or quilts under her left arm and a black shoulder bag in her right hand. The path is surrounded by bare trees and a utility pole runs across the upper part of the frame. The background is hazy and overcast.

The Lord is my shepherd,  
I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in  
green pastures, he leads  
me beside quiet waters, he  
refreshes my soul.

Surely goodness and love  
will follow me all the days  
of my life, and I will dwell in  
the house of the Lord forever.

PSALM 23 v1-3 & 6

psalm

I hope you enjoyed the prayers, pictures and personal stories in our One Year At War booklet. Below are 4 ways you can find out more about our practical and life changing work and help. Simply scan the required QR code with your mobile phone. Alternatively, you can email us on info@mwbuk.org or phone us on 0207 940 1370. We would love to talk with you.



### PRAY

Receive our bi-monthly prayer diary



### STAY IN TOUCH

Sign up to receive our latest e-newsletter



### DONATE


Help provide immediate help to children and families you have just read about by making a one off donation.



### SPONSOR

Sponsoring a child or family in Eastern Europe is an exciting way you can become part of their story and help them towards a more sustainable future.





Heavenly Father, God of love,  
God of peace, God of justice  
and mercy.

We join with our brothers and  
sisters in Ukraine and around  
the world as this  
crisis continues.

That those who are fearful  
and anxious will be comforted  
and protected.

That those who have been  
injured or lost loved ones will  
know that they are held.

That those in power will be  
guided by You and be wise  
and compassionate in  
seeking peace.

That the churches of Ukraine  
will be places of safety,  
sanctuary and love.

That we might all be lights  
that shine in the darkness and  
reach out in solidarity.

We ask this in the name of the  
Prince of Peace.

That reconciliation, peace,  
justice and love will prevail in  
Ukraine and in the hearts of  
its people.

Lord, may Your Kingdom  
come and Your will be done.

Amen

*prayer*





## IN ONE YEAR WE HAVE ...

Served  
more than  
**152,000** meals



Sent **31** trucks of  
donated goods



Helped accomodate  
more than  
**16,673** families



 Helped over  
**80,000** refugee  
families with food,  
hygiene and clothing



Distributed  
**10,000** Gospels  
and New  
Testaments



Partnered with  
**163** churches in  
Ukraine, Moldova  
and Romania to provide  
refugee assistance

**...BUT MORE IS NOW URGENTLY NEEDED. PLEASE HELP.**

[WWW.MWBUK.ORG](http://WWW.MWBUK.ORG)

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