



Ganson Street Baptist Church <church@gansonstreet.org>

Fw: Pebble in the pond.

5 messages

Michael Green <mgreen@gmx.com>

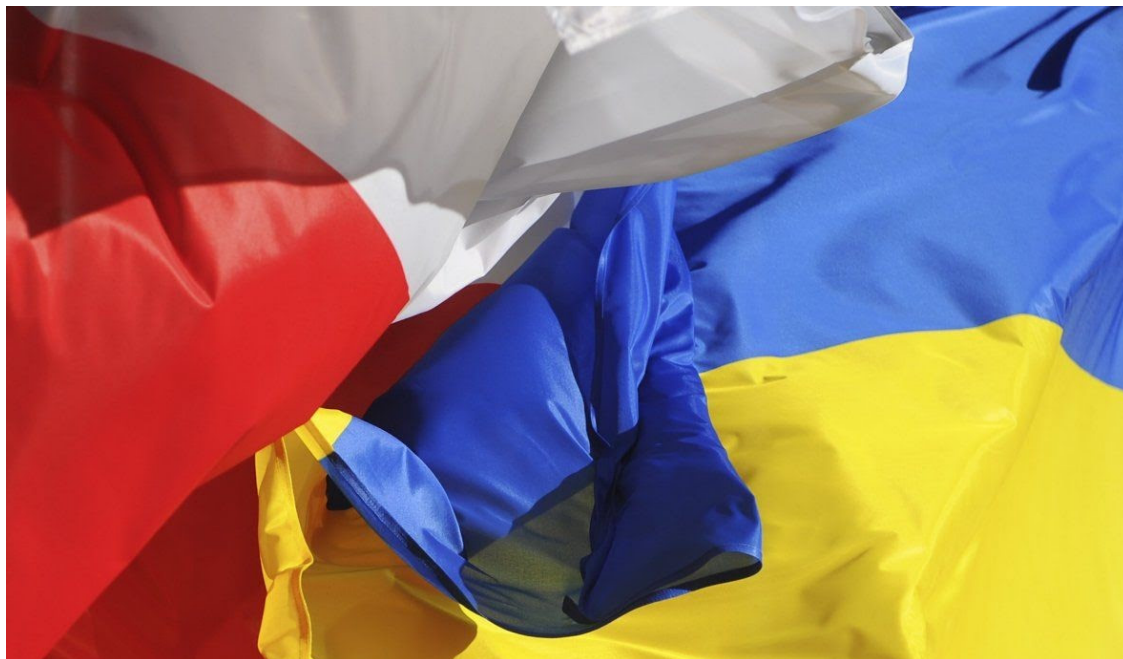
Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 5:34 AM

To: Ganson Street Baptist Church <church@gansonstreet.org>

Sent: Thursday, April 07, 2022 at 11:11 AM
From: "Mike and Agnieszka Green" <mgreen@gmx.com>
To: mgreen@gmx.com
Subject: Pebble in the pond.

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Mike & Agnieszka Green

Your Ministry Partners in Krakow, Poland

April 7, 2022

Dear friends!

I have to warn you. This letter is a little different than the one we usually write. It's longer and more emotional. But these are the days we live in. It is almost impossible to limit ourselves to just a few sentences and a couple of photos.

For 41 days, we have been living as normal as we can but at the same time dealing with issues we've never had to face before. It feels like we all are riding an emotional roller coaster. And unlike a real one, we can't just get off when we are tired of it. So forgive me my many words and honesty.

The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

Ecclesiastes 9, 17-18

On September 20, 2017, I stood on Visegrad's Old Bridge in Bosnia. The turquoise waters of the Drina River contrasted beautifully with the white stoned bridge and green hills surrounding the town. However, only one thought occupied my mind instead of admiring the picturesque scene. I was going back to the story I'd heard a few years earlier.

In the early spring of 1995, day after day, truckloads of Bosniak civilians were taken down to the bridge and riverbank by Serb paramilitaries. The people were unloaded, shot, and thrown into the river. Before shooting or slitting the throat of their victims, the murderers uttered the words: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Serb soldiers raped women and inflicted terror on civilians. Looting and destroying of Bosniak property and mosques occurred daily...

At the same time, some 700 miles away, in Krakow, I was finishing my studies, starting a new job, and planning my wedding and my future. I did not think about the war so far away; I did not try to understand who the aggressor or victim was. There were Bosnian refugees in small camps in Poland, but I did not know about their existence. Although I had been a Christian for several years, I do not remember praying earnestly to the Father to end the war and for mercy for the people in the Balkans. It wasn't my war after all...

Standing on the bridge in Visegrad that September day in 2017, I felt overwhelming sadness, rage at the bestiality of Serbian aggressors, and anger at the indifference and hypocrisy of those who could've shortened or stopped this horror. But there was something else. Although I could very easily find an excuse for my past ignorance about the Balkan war, I did feel guilty. Guilty of my sin of being blind and passive 25 years earlier, while innocent people were being murdered in the name of God. Little did I know that in five years, history will repeat itself ...

There should be at least some celebration in Poland and Ukraine as their soldiers in recent days liberated the Kyiv region from Russian aggressors. But Ukraine is grieving. And I'm grieving today as the stream of photos and stories of Russian atrocities in the suburbs of Kyiv have flooded our hearts with immense sadness and anger.

This evil in its purest form has happened again less than 600 miles from my home. And again with the name of God on lips of murderers and the blessing of Kirill I, Russian Orthodox Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. But this time, without a doubt I know who the aggressor is and who the victim is.

A couple of years ago I took to heart words of Elie Wiesel, Jewish writer, professor, Nobel laureate and Holocaust survivor, who said: "Always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor never the tormented." So, with many Ukrainians whose loved ones were murdered and who were forced to leave their homes I pray today for God's justice and wrath on the heads of the ones who killed, tortured, and raped, the ones who gave orders and

the ones who are supporting all this enthusiastically or silently. I also pray for those who listen to "the shouts of a ruler of fools" to be able to see reality they are helping to create and fall on their knees before God and let Him change their hearts. And I urge you to not be silent and join us in those prayers.

Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

Ecclesiastes 7,3

As of March 21, there were between 110 to 130 thousands of refugees in Krakow, primarily women and children. The vast majority of them will stay here for long time. They all came with one suitcase, and sometimes only with a shopping bag filled with whatever they were able to grab leaving home. They came not knowing where they would stay, what they could do to make money, and not speaking the language. But they came with an abundance of fear for the future and for those who stayed in Ukraine. It was like a tsunami of sadness that hit us all, and we had no choice but to swim in those waters.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is right when it says that facing such an immensity of misfortune not only brings sorrow to our face but also changes our heart. Or instead - it brings out a trace of God's mercy, which the Creator left in each of us - all people created in His image.

In recent weeks, I believe that in Poland, many hearts were made better.



**For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...
the Soup for Ukraine initiative in Krakow**



I was a stranger and you invited me in...

a hairdresser visiting refugees who found a safe place in church in Wroclaw





**I needed clothes and you clothed me...
sorting clothes for refugees in Lublin's church**



**I was sick and you
looked after me...
our shipment of
medicine from Krakow
to hospital in Lviv
(via church in Chelm)**

Sometimes we all have doubts about what influence I can have on everything that happens in our country and abroad. What we do seems so insignificant compared to the task or needs. One of the volunteers I met while distributing soups to Ukrainian refugees said that we are all like a small pebble thrown into a lake. When you drop a pebble into a pond, ripples spread out and affect the peripheral waters. They hit the shore and rebound, bumping into one another, breaking each other apart. Most of these interactions you can't even see with your bare eyes. But in some small way, the pond is never the same again. So, day after day, we let God throw us in the waters surrounding us, hoping to create a ripple that will touch somebody and change us for good.

You've been very diligent; you made it to the end of this letter! In the next one I will tell you more about my pebble – the Soup for Ukraine. And I promise, the letter will be shorter and more cheerful. :-)

**Thank you for your prayers and continuing support of our ministry in Poland.
May God bless all of you!**

**Your friends,
*Agnieszka and Mike***

Praying with us

Thanksgiving:

- We are thankful for all of you who already contributed to WorldVenture Poland special relief fund. So much generosity! Because of your sacrifice people have food on their tables, roof over their heads and medicine to heal their bodies.

If the Holy Spirit guides you to give you can do so by clicking [here](#).

Prayer Requests:

- Pray that the war would stop!



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