

# International Partnerships

F E B R U A R Y   2 0 1 4

## We need your prayers and help!



*Independence Square – before and after riot police attack*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We want to thank you for your prayers for us personally and for our country during this extremely turbulent time. God has kept us safe and He has given us a victory over the evil regime of our former President, Yanukovich! This letter is to keep you up to date on what is occurring now and to let you know how you can pray for all of us.

We know it's an absolute miracle of God that the Maidan (Independence Square) protests weren't wiped out on February 19-20! We were there on 19<sup>th</sup> when Maidan was surrounded by thousands of riot police and all seemed hopeless! We now know that there were 20,000 military and police with firearms against 5,000 protesters, most of whom were like us, not armed and with no protective armor. The President had planned to kill or arrest all who were involved with the protest.

The subway was shut down and roads were blocked to keep people from coming to strengthen the Maidan movement. With so many streets leading to Maidan it seemed impossible that we would be able to protect all those streets if police attacked from many different directions. The battle raged all night. In the morning - and for no apparent reason - the riot police started retreating in what seemed like

panic; it's unclear what caused this. We believe it was God, for there is no human explanation for what happened shortly after this. The President fled Kyiv and most of the government officials disappeared, too. The riot police loaded on the buses and left the entire city!

This victory was not easy. It cost over 100 lives just on those two days (Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>) and thousands were injured. By the time the battles were over, the streets had pools of blood. When the news was announced on Maidan that President Yanukovich had been impeached, there was no joy; our hearts were heavy with grief for the heroes who had laid down their lives for freedom.

Many Ukrainians are now contemplating the incredible courage and sacrifice, the blood shed to defeat corruption and protect freedom. They promise to never forget. It's also a time when people can better understand the meaning of Christ's sacrifice for humanity. The hunger for God -- for God's Word -- is similar to what it was like in 90s when the Soviet Union fell apart. During the recent protests Christians were present on Maidan, serving food, praying, giving out the Bibles and sharing the Gospel. Many protesters were reading Scriptures between the battles! On Feb 19<sup>th</sup> 400 Bibles were distributed in less than half an hour. We were amazed by our people fervently praying for Ukraine in churches and on the streets!



This priest was carrying out wounded from battlefield

During this difficult time, the church became relevant for people – they seem to understand that they desperately need God in their lives. Priests and pastors were with people during the hardest and the most dangerous times. Prayer tents became a place where protesters came to ask for prayer Olexei Getman, who works at Parliament said, “The church has played an invaluable role in our fight -- a bigger role than many politicians all together. We ran to church to hide from the riot police. Church leaders rang the bells to mobilize the city, came to help, and were saving the injured. All of us now need to reevaluate the role of the church in our lives.”

Friends, when you prayed that freedom and justice would prevail in Ukraine, did you pray that God would give us a godly, Christian leader as well? God answered that prayer. The man who is now our acting President, Oleksander Turchinov, is an evangelical Christian! In his speech to church representatives, *he pointed out that right now the number one goal for Ukraine is to have spiritual renewal and restoration of faith* – that will be the only way to lay the right foundation for a new Ukraine.

This is a very pivotal time for spiritual revival in Ukraine! The church has a chance to become a source of values that are so needed in the country that is torn by pain, grief, confusion, desire for revenge, and hatred. We desire to help people understand what happened when they prayed to God on Maidan -- asking for His forgiveness, mercy and protection -- and how He answered. People whole-heartedly are crying out together, Glory to Ukraine, Glory to Heroes. We need to help people understand and remember that first of all we should give Glory to God!

The Church calls the Ukrainian nation to more than just feelings of human justice – to Christian forgiveness, grace, and reconciliation.

We pray to God for repentance for the guilty. However at the same time we ask victims to forgive those who are already repentant as well as those who are still lost. In order to unite the nation, in order to reconcile its various parts, its various social, cultural, and political groups, laws and justice are not enough. Without repentance, grace, forgiveness and reconciliation, the country will remain divided and in conflict.

We need your help at this crucial time. Please, do not stop praying. God has set in motion the building of a spiritually-renewed Ukraine. There is an immense amount of work to be done! Pray for the unity of our citizens, that we can build new structures and systems that would work for the good of Ukraine. Pray that honest and professional people will be placed in positions of leadership in our government, that people continue turning to God, repenting, and submitting their lives to Christ. Pray that the church continues to be salt and light during these days of reconstruction, as we were during the revolution.

Please, consider making a special gift during this time. We want to take an active part in doing what is needed to clean and rebuild what has been destroyed. We want to be in hospitals to help the wounded with medicine, care for and answer their questions about God. We also need to purchase Bibles to give to those who are hungry to hear The Truth.

Please, tell your friends about Ukraine, about God's special work in the midst of the protests and in the post-revolution Ukraine; invite them to be a part of God's work here.

Nick and Maia will be in the U.S. on the East coast from April 21-May 4. Can you help us set up a meeting in your church or your home to give us an opportunity to share about our new ministry opportunities? Please contact us at mmikhalk@ yahoo.com; we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your faithful prayers and support during this difficult but very special time in Ukraine!

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