

# the Gazette

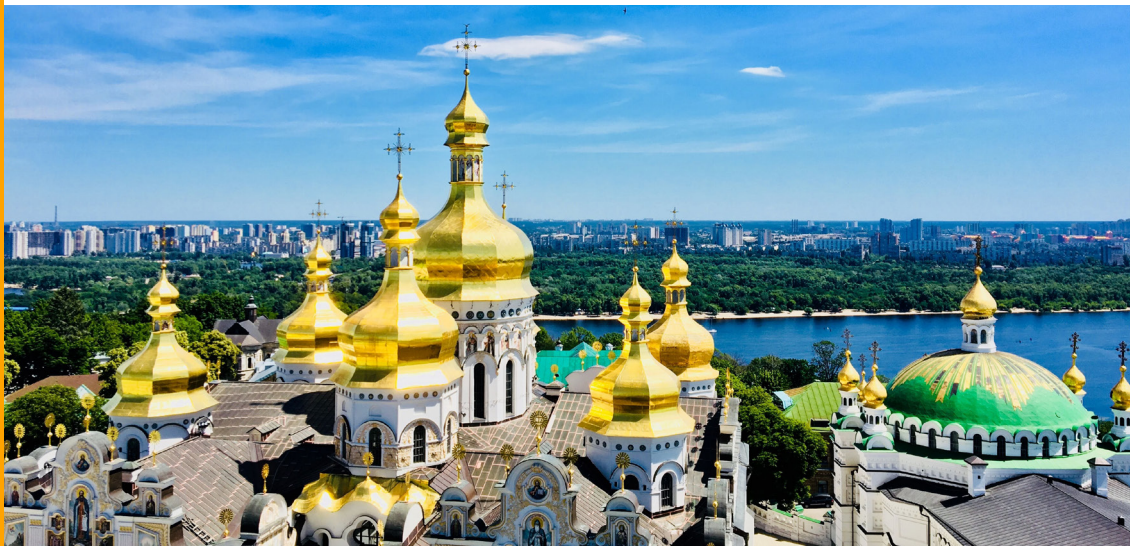


An Update  
from Ukraine

PAGE 2

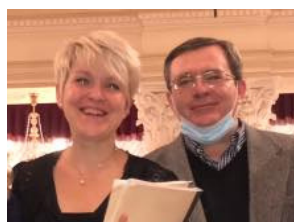
# An Update From Ukraine

## RUSSIAN AGGRESSION



*By Serhiy Basarab, VP of Ukrainian Operations,  
with Vika Konchakovska, Creative Director of  
Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus*

I have often been asked these days about my perspective on the current situation from inside Ukraine.



*Serhiy & Vika*

Obviously, Vika and I, and our colleagues, are concerned about the military buildup on our borders and the scaremongering whipped up by our big neighbor. But we do not allow these concerns to paralyze us.

We continue to work and plan for the future. Interestingly enough, this terrible escalation coincided with a very beautiful and peaceful Christmas concert that the KSOC presented at Central Baptist on January 17. It has also coincided with a wonderful trip to Stara Basan and the successful relaunch of St. Paul's Children's Club. I would call this the "escalation" of positive activities.



*Music Mission Staff celebrates Unity Day*

Every day, we are reminding ourselves that—no matter how grim the situation may appear—the ultimate outcome will not be decided by missiles or bombs. As Zechariah 5 stresses, “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord.”

We commit ourselves to the power of His Spirit and express our deepest gratitude to our friends and supporters in the United States for their constant prayers (the most powerful weapon in this particular situation). We also are praying and asking God to intervene, avert a potential war, and establish peace between Ukraine and Russia.

Please join with us in praying for peace in Ukraine and protection from the aggressive threats from Russian leaders. God bless Ukraine!

*Women from the Eastern warfront*



# Christmas in Ukraine

## MAKING GREETING CARDS WITH MILITARY WIDOWS

Every Thursday during December we met with the military widows for fellowship and to make greeting cards to send to our ministry partners. Handcrafted with supplies provided by our friends at Christian Military Fellowship of Ukraine, the ladies enjoyed a relaxing time of fellowship, unity, and creative inspiration. Through these greeting cards, the widow's expressed gratitude to their sponsors who support them.

During their time together, the widows shared from their own lives and discussed how the Bible encourages us to seek wisdom and to pray for one another's burdens. We give thanks to the Lord who has united us by His love. We are all different people from various ministries and countries but have one heart—the heart of Christ!



## TRIP TO DONBAS

Irina Donchenko shared how we surprised our widows, widowers, and IDPs from the occupied territory of Donbas with special Christmas gatherings at both Design of Christ Church and Light of the Gospel Church.

Our team always looks forward to our Donbas trips and this time they were particularly excited to share part of the Christmas holiday with their family in Christ. Our greatest desire is to tell them more about Jesus, who saves us. Many parts of Ukraine are in the so called “red zone” because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are anxious about the future and there is no better time to tell them about God's love and the importance of reconciliation with Him.



*Our team at Light of the Gospel Church*

Our team also invited the widows from the You Are Not Alone Bible study group to the church in that area. They praised God, prayed, discussed a Bible lesson, then praised God again! Irina shared “It was like anointing oil pouring into our hearts! It’s such a joy for us all to be together in Christ!”

As Irina was looking out at the group, she remembered the first time she went to Donbas five years ago. “They were skeptical of us at first, but now many of them go to church and actively participate because we come back each month and are building relationships with them. They often stay after service to share their troubles and pray with one another.”

Our team wrapped up the time by thanking God for His care, both for each other and our mission. The group was incredibly touched by the gifts brought and were thrilled to receive the food vouchers, enabling them to put something tasty on the table for Christmas.

*Irina speaking at Design of Christ Church*



# KSOC Christmas Concert

BY SERHIY BASARAB



Boris Pasternak once said that “talent is the only news that is always new.” As I listened to the Mystery of Christmas program on Monday, January 17, I recalled this famous saying. There was so much talent on stage, and everyone was doing their job superbly.

But I also recalled that Pasternak, as a Christian, firmly believed in much bigger news—that is always new and fresh. This news—the mystery of Jesus’ birth (the mystery of the Creator becoming part of the creation, “God with us”)—was presented so clearly by the KSOC led by Vika Konchakovska.

Kudos to Vika for this jewel of an artistic project. It was great in conception and execution. The songs and instrumental pieces were interspersed with the Scriptures and Christian poems, which accentuated the main theme—the mystery of Jesus’ birth. A lot of credit also goes to the second conductor, Serhiy Golubnichy, whose artistic skill brought great joy to the audience.

I sat in the third row. All the people around me were ecstatic about the whole program, from the beginning to the very end.

We are thankful to Central Baptist Church for their partnership and especially for providing the live stream. It expanded our audience exponentially. There were about 800-850 people in the room. And according to YouTube, the live stream had over 5,000 views. That's one telling sign of success!

IDP (Internally Displaced Person) from Crimea, Oleksandr Y., who watched the live stream, wrote to me immediately after the concert, "It was so beautiful even at a distance! Thank you!" I am sure many other people would echo Oleksandr's sentiment.

Praise be to God for everything. His name was proclaimed and exalted in a great way.



## Watch The Concert

SCAN QR CODE WITH SMARTPHONE CAMERA

OR GO TO [MUSICMISSIONKIEV.ORG/CHRISTMASCONCERT](https://musicmissionkiev.org/christmasconcert)

# The Portrait

## MEET ANASTASIIA FEDORENKO

*Watch our latest KSOC interview with Anastasiia, from our YouTube series called, "The Portrait" (Episode #8), which we post on our Ukrainian website to share our mission with others there. Listen as Anastasiia shares her love for the KSOC.*



Watch  
Video

SCAN QR CODE WITH  
SMARTPHONE CAMERA OR GO TO  
[MUSICMISSIONKIEV.ORG/ANASTASIIA](https://musicmissionkiev.org/anastasiia)



# Children's Music Club

RESTARTS AFTER NEARLY TWO YEARS



One of our goals from the annual Giving Tuesday fundraiser in 2021 was to restart the Children's Music Club. We are pleased to report that after nearly a two-year absence, the Children's Music Club met for the first time in January. The turnout exceeded expectations and we now anticipate the word will begin to spread, bringing even more children to the club. The photo above shows Irina with twelve children who attended this initial meeting.

The group has been renamed the St. Paul's Children's Club as it now meets on Sundays, with the time split between Bible lessons, musical training, and singing.

## Trip to Stara Basan

ORPHAN BOARDING SCHOOL

We were excited to put on a Christmas show for the children at the Stara Basan Orphan Boarding School in the Chernihiv region. Oksana shared, "Trips to Stara Basan are special to us as they unite several ministries

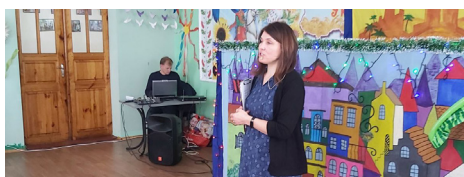


working together to serve the school. This trip included the MMK youth group (Marta, Evelina, Myroslav, Daniil, and Kiril), Iryna R., a military widow from our widow's program, our friends from Christian Military Fellowship of Ukraine, and others who love caring for the orphans at the boarding school."

The kids were eager to see us. We began by playing games and singing songs together, but the most important part of our program was the performance. After all, we use it to share Biblical truths with the children and they were enthralled with their former camp friends helping in the puppet show.

Oksana engaged the children, asking them to pay close attention to the play to understand the central meaning. The children were all ears during the performance. Afterward, they summarized it stating that "the landlady was evil, but then she became good." When Oksana asked the children what had changed the landlady, there were different answers.

Ruslan, a student who is known for being disruptive and fighting, raised his hand and said, "the meeting with little Jesus changed the landlady." His words impressed Oksana "because he was able to understand that a personal encounter with Christ can change lives and melt even the most evil and selfish hearts."



# Visit with Larisa C.

## WIDOW VISIT



Larisa has been in our Widow Sponsorship Program for over 20 years. She was first invited to Holy Trinity Church, our first church plant, by a missionary friend. Larisa has been a faithful Stephen minister and is currently awaiting a new homebound widow assignment as a result of the death of her prior appointment. Still, she has already asked Lena if she could continue serving and requested a new homebound widow assignment.

Larisa was born shortly before WWII started. When asked what life was like in Kyiv during that terrible time. She said, “I was left in Kyiv with my mother. Most of the people left in Kyiv were women with children. In order to get some food, women would get together and walk to nearby villages. Though I was little, I remember my mother making skirts of our old curtains. She would trade the skirts for wheat from village women.”

We were curious about what happened to Larisa when her mother was gone. Larisa shared, “My mother would leave for a day or sometimes two days. She taught me to hide under a bed if someone would walk into our apartment.”

Larisa recalls the worst part of that time was finding food. Since they lived in the lower part of Kyiv, they had to go to the central area, which required walking a long way on the only street that led to downtown. “I remember one episode very clearly. Women of our neighborhood took their children and got together to walk up along that street. When we made it to the top, we saw a German officer with a gun. He told us we could not pass. When our group of women with hungry children tried to pass him, he took his gun and started firing into the air. Women and children started yelling and crying and running back. All except my mother and me. I remember the face of that officer. He let my mother and me go downtown. As I look back at that time, I see how God was protecting me.”

Larisa had a good childhood overall and after the war her sister was born. Her family continued living in a small apartment in the southern region of Kyiv. Later, she graduated from the Polytechnical University and worked in a factory as a technical engineer for many years. In 1968 she gave birth to her son. Unfortunately, her marriage lasted only a year. Fleeing from an abusive husband, Larisa and her son lived with her parents for the next ten years. At this time, she met and fell in love with a good man. They married and had a daughter together.

When her husband died of brain cancer, Larisa’s son was living in Russia, leaving her alone in Kyiv with her daughter. It was a difficult time in Kyiv, and a week after her husband’s death, Larisa was told she was going to lose her job. She recalls, “I remember I was praying all night long asking God to help me keep the job. And He heard me. The following morning I was told that I was the only elder worker in our department whom our factory leadership chose not to fire. I knew it was God’s answer to my prayer. I learned about Christ from my missionary friend, and when I came to Holy Trinity Church I was amazed by the music. I joined the congregation choir and began serving as a Stephen Minister. I am so happy I know Jesus.”

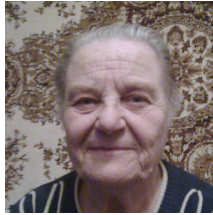
Larisa now lives with her daughter. The photo shows Larisa with a handmade blanket that Greg brought along with other presents during his visit to Kyiv in September. We are happy and honored to serve widows like Larisa with you.

# Widows' Memorial

DECEASED WIDOWS, WIDOWERS, AND PENSIONERS  
JANUARY 2021-JANUARY 2022



Valentina Zhdan



Esmeralda Drikina



Ludmila Krol



Natalia Surikova



Lina Kravchuk



Viktor Djevago



Klara Grebneva



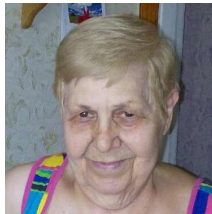
Olga Zerbitskaya



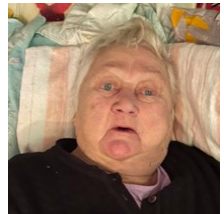
Anna Shevchenko



Valentina Pluschay



Maria Ochkina



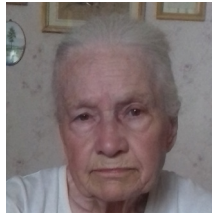
Antonina Nikonenko



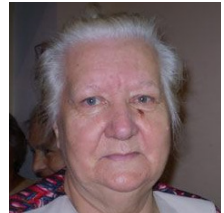
Daria Plachinda



Ivan Rudenko



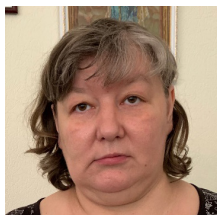
Vera Maslennikova



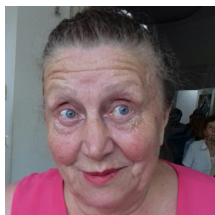
Yevgenia Torgashina

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- ROMANS 8:38-39



Alla Kalinichenko



Larisa Smoley



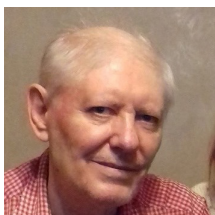
Luisa Krivosheyeva



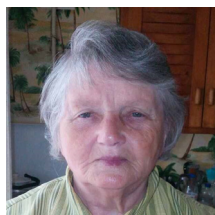
Maria Shostka



Nikolay Matviyenko



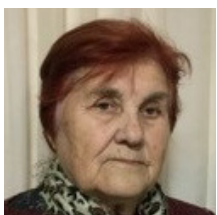
Valentin Yenichek



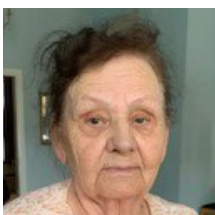
Nina Karachevtseva



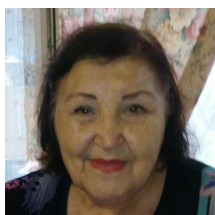
Ludmila Shumovskaya



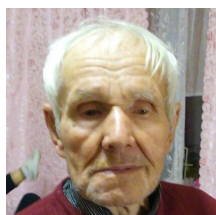
Yelena Zakrenichnaya



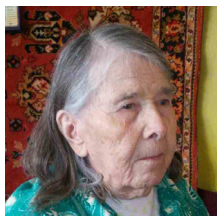
Katerina Kozachko



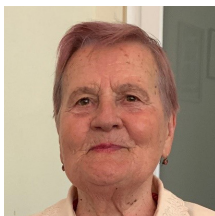
Alla Lemeshko



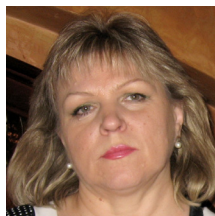
Ivan Tatarchuk



Maria Davidenko



Sofia Tkachenko



Olga Pasternak

Without pictures:  
Agnesia Levchenko  
Anna Vedernikova

# 2021

## Year In Review

**\$15.5K**

RAISED ON GIVINGTUESDAY  
FOR ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.  
This surpassed our \$14,650 goal.

**338**

WIDOWS RECEIVED  
HELP, this included  
(prescribed medicines,  
blood pressure and sugar  
monitors, financial help,  
glaucoma medicine, etc)

**12** TRIPS  
TO EASTERN  
WAR FRONT

**1,630+**  
PEOPLE SERVED

**5** EYE  
SURGERIES  
PERFORMED

**129**  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
UPDATES, totalling  
53.9K impressions  
(how many times our  
posts were viewed).

**850**  
ATTENDED KSOC'S  
CHRISTMAS CONCERT,  
along with over 5,000  
views on YouTube.

**200+**  
ATTENDED KSOC'S  
MESSIAH CONCERT

**520**  
WIDOWS SERVED

**1.6K**  
PHONE CALLS  
TO WIDOWS

**12.6K**  
WEBSITE VIEWS

# Overcoming Challenges in Ukraine

A WORD FROM THE CEO

We see many challenges, but the Gospel continues to spread through those we serve. I believe we make plans too often, thinking we are helping God's plan rather than preparing to join in with what God is doing. Therefore, as we prepare for another year of ministry, we are keeping our hearts open to what God would have us do in Ukraine.

*We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We do not know what to do, but we do not give up. We are persecuted, but God does not leave us. We are hurt sometimes, but we are not destroyed,* - 2 Corinthians 4:8-9

This verse reminds me to prepare and move forward with a hope built on faith. We know our circumstances do not define us, and He protects and directs our path.

When we face a God-sized problem, we are often tempted to start chipping away at a solution. We miss the whole point. It is a God-sized problem, and we cannot fix it. Psalm 127 is attributed to King David writing to his son, Solomon. The first two verses say, "If the LORD does not build a house, then those who build it work in vain. If the LORD does not guard a city, then the watchman stands guard in vain. It is vain for you to rise early, come home late, and work so hard for your food. Yes, he provides for those whom he loves even when they sleep."

This is the truth in which we place our confidence. This edition is just a glimpse of all God has allowed us to do in the past couple of months. We prepare, knowing God knows the plans He has for us. God is going to take care of the things only He can take care of, and we are going to be His people on mission with Him.

Thank you for your continued financial support and fervent prayers for our work in Ukraine. Music Mission Kiev cannot exist without your partnership. Your giving helps those we serve become part of the change they want to see in Ukraine.

We all have God-sized challenges in our lives. What things do you need to relinquish in your life that only He can fix or change? Give them up to Him and ask for the faith, strength, and courage to help you on this crazy journey we call life. This is how I am going to live this year, and I hope you will too.

Grace and Peace.



Greg

Greg Kannon  
CEO





PO Box 161849  
Altamonte Springs, FL 32716

Website:  
[musicmissionkiev.org](http://musicmissionkiev.org)

Office Phone:  
**407-699-7172**

E-mail:  
[info@musicmissionkiev.org](mailto:info@musicmissionkiev.org)

Visit Us on Facebook:  
[facebook.com/musicmissionkiev](https://facebook.com/musicmissionkiev)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PRAYERS AND SUPPORT!**

Music Mission Kiev  
is a member of the

