

The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry Inc.

# GLOBAL REPORT

Spring 2020

CLICK HERE  
TO GIVE

IN CANADA?  
GIVE HERE

## A Treacherous Past, a Hope-filled Future

*Help Open Doors to Our Jewish Friends in Ukraine*

*My father was from St. Petersburg (Russia), my mother was born in Ukraine in the Vinnytsia region. My grandmother told me that all the food was taken by the Soviet government from the people who lived in the village.*

*My grandparents lost their first son. He did not survive the Red Famine – the Holodomor. Adults ate grass and tree bark. Grandmother told us that people knew incidents of cannibalism. In their village, only a small portion of the population survived. This nightmare lasted three years.*

—Tetyana, FOI Intern

The Holodomor, also known as the Red Famine, was the man-made famine in Soviet Ukraine that killed millions of Ukrainians in the early 1930s. Now, a third-generation survivor of this horrific act, our devoted Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry (FOI) intern in Ukraine, Tetyana, seeks to serve the hundreds of thousands of

Jewish people who remain.

Our entire FOI Eastern European team is a devoted group of servants who are dedicated to reaching our Ukrainian Jewish friends. The team is comprised of our native Ukrainian interns, Tetyana and Andrew, and devoted volunteer, Mariana, who work alongside our FOI Poland team, Hanya and Timothy. Together, they seek to expand their reach all throughout Ukraine by regularly connecting with their Ukrainian Jewish friends who are in great need—physically and spiritually—as well as ministering to and showing support to the local Christian churches.

By understanding the history of the Ukrainian people, their current practical and spiritual needs, and the countless ministry opportunities for the future, our FOI team prayerfully asks you to take a moment to learn about how you can help open doors to sharing the Good News of the Messiah in Ukraine.



PO Box 908 • Bellmawr, NJ 08099 • [www.foi.org](http://www.foi.org) • 800.257.7843

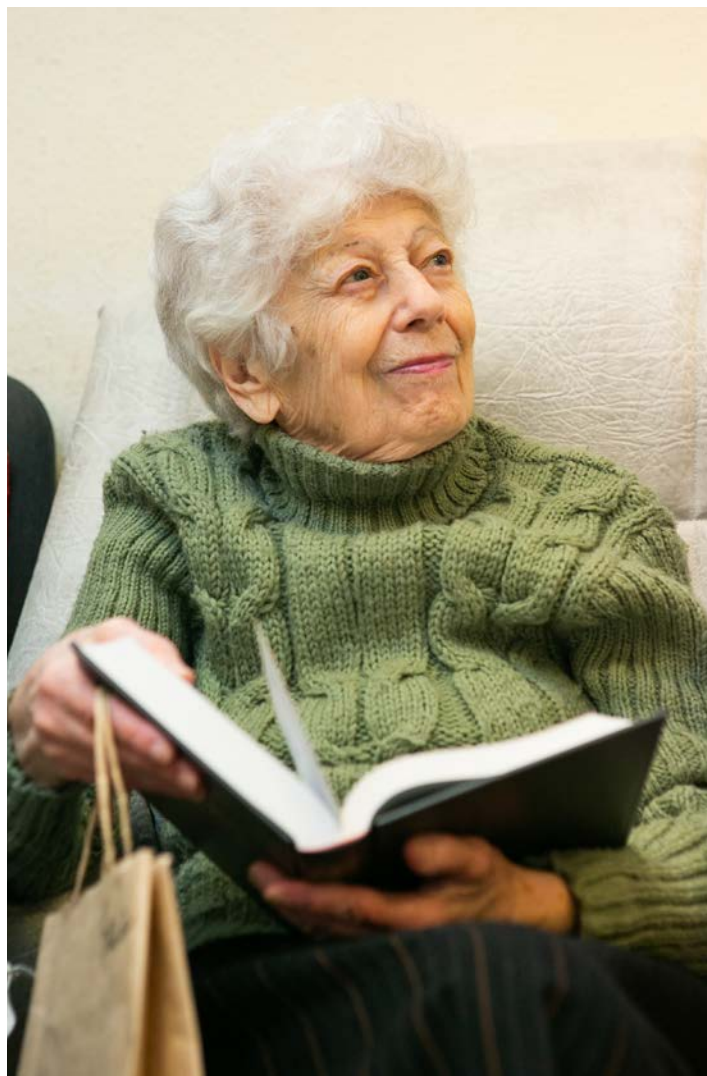
## UKRAINE THEN, UKRAINE NOW

Harboring the long-lasting impact of the Red Famine and World War II, Ukrainian history is wrought with painful memories that resonate deeply within Jewish people's minds. After the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine became independent in 1991. Its population of 40 million includes 400,000 Jewish people.

Today, in the eastern part of Ukraine, a nearly six-year, ongoing war remains, driven by a tumultuous relationship with Russia. The economic and political situation of the country is unstable. Many people suffer from high inflation rates and low paying jobs due to ever-present, post-Soviet corruption.

Despite the fact that Ukraine's constitution states health care is free, the medical conditions can be deplorable. It is not uncommon that a hospital ward would be without proper medical supplies and nourishment, including beds without linens. Surgery costs are so high that Ukrainians often deliberately forgo treatment since they cannot afford it.

Yet freedom of speech remains in Ukraine. Their religious freedom is most similar to the American model of religious freedom. The majority of the country is Eastern Orthodox, where religion is more cultural and traditional than faith-based. The people tend



to believe in God but don't believe in the need for a personal relationship with Him.

Ukrainian Jewish people are equal citizens and are fully integrated in all processes of state development: in politics, charity, culture, and business. After the 2019 election, the country elected their first Jewish president. However, many cases have been reported of flagrant mean-spirited acts of anti-Semitic vandalism. It is growing increasingly more important to show our unwavering support and solidarity to our Jewish friends.

## MEETING THEIR NEEDS WITH THE LOVE OF THE MESSIAH

The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry is hard at work to meet the practical and spiritual needs of the thousands of Ukrainian Jews who live below the poverty line and are desperate for housing, material support, and employment assistance. Our desire is to help supply medication, health care, and rehabilitation, as well as necessary products for daily living like warm clothes and shoes.

Our team regularly connects the local Christian communities to Jewish friends, and encourages the Christians to start their own outreach opportunities. Their Living Bridges program connects Jewish youth from Ukraine with Polish Christian youth. They visit Jewish parents and children who attended the summer camps in Poland. They provide FOI literature that has been translated into Russian for both Jewish and Christian communities alike.

Many Jewish Ukrainians express an interest in making aliyah (immigration to Israel). The process is challenging. Our team has made themselves available to serve those who need support.

Our team hosts many Bible studies for men, women, and the youth. Our intern Andrew helps Timothy develop youth ministry for young Ukrainians in Poland. Since the conflict in the east of Ukraine, more than 1 million young Ukrainians have emigrated to Poland. Hanya and Tetyana lead Bible studies weekly and engage in thought-provoking conversations about Christ.

Each one of these opportunities has allowed our Jewish friends to experience the true love of the Messiah. One Jewish man from Kiev, after having spent time with Tetyana, Hanya, and Gustav, said, "I used to think that Christians are closed and, unfortunately, very aggressive. But now I know WHAT KIND of people they are—Christians [who love us]!"

## A HOPE-FILLED FUTURE FOR UKRAINE

We believe God has no limits in what He can do. Would you join our team in helping expand their impact for Christ in Ukraine? With countless ministry opportunities available, there are three specifics they hope to see come to fruition.

First, is to see every door of Jewish families' homes opened—to provide a Bible and to minister to each one. Our team has consistently delivered Hanukkah and Purim gift baskets that include a Bible, which has always been well received. Our team has made new contacts with Jewish centers in several major cities in Ukraine. The most important city is Kiev, a city of 4.5 million souls. Roughly half of the Jewish population of Ukraine live in



this capital city. However, as our FOI workers go from the east to the west, relationships are developing with new Jewish families all throughout Ukraine in such cities as Odessa, Dnepr and Lviv.

Second, the team wants to create a space for free medical services for elderly Jewish friends who cannot afford the associated expenses. Presently there is one medical doctor, a very good specialist and a believer, who could serve this practice.

Finally, they have a deep desire to reach more churches in Ukraine. Taking the message of the Messiah into the churches

would help the congregants hear God's heart for the Jewish people and how important it is to bless them. Would you pray that the Lord would open doors to churches for them to hear the truth of the Messiah and His love for His people?

### **CAN YOU HELP SAVE ONE LIFE FOR CHRIST?**

When Tetyana shared about her grandparents surviving the Red Famine, she also mentioned another incredible part of her family's story that can't be left out.





*My grandfather was a sniper and was seriously injured in the Finnish War (before the start of Hitler's war against the Soviet Union). When the Nazi occupation began, he worked in the village. In winter 1942, he rode a horse past a place where Jews were shot. He saved a small, approximately one-year-old girl who crawled over the body of her dead mother. He took her, although he knew that this act may cost him his life.*

*But soon, he managed to find one Jewish family who was secured from the Nazis, and they took the little girl in as their own.*

Thousands of Ukrainian Jewish people remember their treacherous past. Scars remain for this resilient people, which ignites a passion in our FOI team to serve them and point them to the One who bears the ultimate scars. Every day, our FOI brothers and sisters compassionately share to anyone who will listen, the

powerful story of the Messiah—how God sent His Son to Earth to take on the sin of the world, so that those who believe may have everlasting life with Jesus Christ.

Would you join with us to help save a spiritual life and offer a hope-filled future? Your financial support today of any amount will go directly to the ongoing and expanding work done in Ukraine. Please help open doors of ministry for those whose wounds can be healed by the loving work of our Savior.

Thank you,



**Mike Stallard**  
Director of International Ministries

If God has spoken to you about providing much-needed support for the ministry in Ukraine, please send your gift to The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., PO Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099. Be sure to designate your gift for ministry in Ukraine.