



REWRITING THEIR STORIES



Countless volunteers in Mariupol, Ukraine, have been ministering to the displaced by the war, marginalized and at-risk families as well as the elderly. Ukrainian Christians welcomed, cared and served those, whose fate was determined by governments and fighting sides, who had lost homes and hopes and lived on the verge of despair.

Valeria, her husband and their five children is one of many families that had to leave their home in Enakievo, a town in the epicenter of a horrible war that broke out in Eastern Ukraine in 2014. Having experienced shelling and fearing for their lives, Valeria and her family fled to Mariupol. Valeria came to our ministry in need for help. Our volunteers visit and deliver food packages to Valeria, while her husband is trying to find work.

Another family: grandparents, their daughter Eleonora, a single mother with her daughter, was referred to our ministry as a struggling family. Grandpa Anatoly had a stage four cancer, and two women (grandma and mother) were trying to find any work to pay for Anatoly's chemo and medicine. They spent about \$1,000 for treatments in economy where average salary is \$150! When our volunteers visited them, they didn't even have money to buy food. We helped them with food and medicine and witnessed to Anatoly. He prayed the sinner's prayer and asked God into his heart. Two days later Anatoly passed away. Now, we are taking care of Eleanora and her six-year old as well as her mom and invite them all to church.



On the first picture to the right is an IDP family with five children were trying to survive. A mother, Lilia, was trying to have their ends meet, caring for her handicapped husband and five children! When our volunteers visited her, took her and her daughter to the store to buy the food she needed to buy for her family, she burst into tears: no one had shown such kindness to her! Lilia and her family is now under the care of one of our partner churches.

Families that come to us for help have different stories: some of them are single mothers who are trying to survive while caring for their children, some families fled the war zone and now squat in dilapidated houses with no heat or basic commodities, some fathers are desperately trying to find work to provide for their families and are faced with hopeless unemployment, some are elderly who were born at the beginning of the World War II and now experiencing the same destruction as they remember as children. All of these different stories are different, yet they are also the same: all these people faced a terrible tragedy and found themselves at the brink.

With the help of International Disaster and Emergency Service we were able to open a bakery to create jobs for displaced by the war and struggling families. Our bakery employs four women and provides bread and baked goods for all outreaches at below-market cost, thus moving us toward a self-sustaining program. What a blessing to see Ukrainian Christians taking ownership of the ministries we've started!

God has opened another door for our ministry to reach out and impact at-risk, abused and neglect children. A Mother's Day Out program has just started in August at one of our partner churches. 30-40 elementary and middle school age children attend our program four times a week, where they are fed nutritious meals, receive a food packet to take home, have lessons and crafts, and have counseling sessions. Most of the children have PTSD or effects of abuse and neglect and are in need of therapy. Our workers show Christ's love to them and start the healing process in their little hearts.

In order for us to answer God's open doors in 2018 we need more partners! Please consider adding Mulberry International as one of your missions you support. Your donation of \$50 per month will provide for a food packet for one family, \$100 per month would provide a family with food and medicine, and \$300 per month would provide for one week of the entire work of Mother's Day Out program.

Would you prayerfully consider giving to sustain our new ministries next year, so that God can re-write these stories of tragedy into stories of Hope and Life?



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