



Hand of **HELP**

June - August 2024



School's Out



As millions of children worldwide prepare to have the summer off from school, some, in certain parts of the world, have been unable to attend for quite some time. For the children from many parts of Ukraine, books have been replaced with bomb shelters, and playgrounds are full of casings from ammunition rounds.



The life they now live is far from normal. Normalcy left abruptly going on three years now and has yet to return. While children the world over are looking forward to the joys the summer might bring, the Ukrainian young have lost the sparkle in their eyes uniquely reserved for the innocent among us and the ever-present glimmer of hope we readily associate with those not yet jaded by life. The uncertainty of their fathers returning home or the unanswered question of whether they are even alive dampens any sparkle of joy they might otherwise possess. They no longer anticipate returning to school but wonder if their country will even exist come fall. It's almost too much for a fully grown adult, never mind a child.

Few places are more telling than the school I visited in the Kherson region of Ukraine. There, remnants of normalcy were scattered among piles of rubble caused by a direct hit. It's a painful reminder that things were different not long ago, and getting back to some semblance of normalcy seems improbable, if not outright impossible.



The local children reminisce of a time when pop quizzes and upcoming spelling bees were the greatest stressors of their lives; now, they are easily startled and start running to safety even before they decipher what noises they are hearing. They've become reactionary to any external stimuli, choosing between fight and flight. Since there's no way of fighting a rocket strike, they flee to the nooks and crannies that provide illusory safety.



The Lord hasn't blessed us with children yet, but I can't imagine being a parent in a war-torn country.

We grew up in Fullerton, California, and our grandmother insisted that we be walked to school by one of our parents or grandparents because of the dangers that lurked. It was as nonnegotiable as attending church every week. That area of Southern California was certainly not nearly as dangerous as it is now. Though Michael was already in his teens, we would be escorted to and from school every single day without fail; needless to say, we were never among the cool kids.



School's Out (cont.)

If we were raised in that manner in a safe area, imagine what our lives would have looked like in present-day Ukraine. I doubt we would have ever seen the sun.

While we cannot in any way change the outcome of this war, we can certainly help alleviate the compounded pain those children are living day after day.

It is incredible to see children who have suffered such incredible trauma at an early age open up, tear up, and even let out a smile as songs are played, the Word of God is preached, a food parcel to settle their hunger pangs is given, and most of all, Gospel hope is extended and, in some cases, restored.

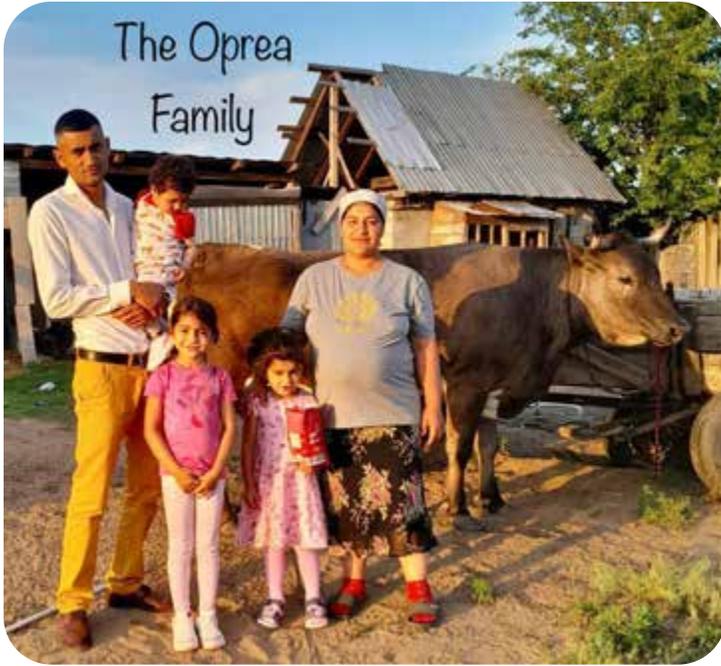
Thank you for allowing us to continue being the ones through whom God pours out His blessing on the heavy-laden and downtrodden. We could not do what we do without you!

For His glory,
Daniel Boldea



Herds of Blessings

The Oprea Family



The Berbece Family



The Miri Family



The Relis Family



The Lutu Family



The Milencianu Family



The Work Continues



Destinations

It takes an almost herculean effort to keep from going down one rabbit trail or another with everything happening in the world, seemingly all at once. I say this as someone who is not overly interested in global machinations and who's never claimed to have his finger on the pulse of the national and international landscape but can't help but notice patterns emerging and events taking shape that herald a great shaking. I know what I know, I see more and more pieces moving into place, and usually, I nod my head, thinking it was bound to happen. I'm not trying to be mysterious or cagey, but if you've been with this ministry for any length of time, you know of what I speak, and there is no point in rehashing what has already been said.

Lately, things of import for the nation and the world have been happening so frequently that you barely have the time to process the one before the second and third events that would have been deemed earth-shattering in a different time take place. It's like trying to take a drink from a firehose; only the water is information and events with global implications, and the firehose is the internet. It doesn't stop with the information or the event per se, either. For every one event, there are a thousand different theories, interpretations, and viewpoints, all vying for your time and attention.

It can be overwhelming. There is so much coming at you on any given day that you run the risk of staring unblinkingly at a screen and wondering what the next shoe to drop will be. It's as though the world is sitting on a powder keg, and everyone's flicking lit matches about haphazardly. You're just waiting for one to land, to spark, and set off the entire thing.

It bears repeating that I've been in ministry for nearly forty years, first as my grandfather's translator and then later as one who was called to continue the work after his passing. I'm neither a novice nor a neophyte, and what I've learned has been through experience. I've found that there is one remedy to the feeling of being overwhelmed or becoming just another deer in the headlights, and that is to keep our destination firmly established and ever at the forefront of our minds.

We've known such things were inevitable for decades now, and seeing them come to pass in real time confirms what we're all feeling deep down: the closeness of the hour and the perilous times in which the world is about to descend.

Each day brings us closer to home. Each day brings us closer to our destination, and the events unfolding before our eyes should do nothing to diminish our excitement and expectation of seeing Him face to face. When we focus on the kingdom of God, the things happening around us hold no sway, nor does fear have an opening to enter our hearts and cause us to react like those of the world.

Because we are not of the world, we cannot react to what is occurring as those of the world do. We have the blessed assurance that He is with us, whether through the fire or the flood and as long as we remain in Him, we are safe from all alarm.

Though the nations rage, we are at peace. Though uncertainty blankets the land, and the prospect of tomorrow is a fearful thing for many, we take heart and walk boldly into a future God has already foreseen and a safe place He has already prepared for those who are His, not just in word but in deed.

The way is clear, the way is true, and there is no ambiguity about the direction in which we should proceed. Jesus Himself told us as much when He said when you see these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads because your redemption draws near.

We are seeing these things begin to happen. The direction and trajectory of the world is clear and undeniable. As such, we have a choice to make as individuals. Either we cower in fear like those of the world or lift up our heads and look to Jesus as the only true and lasting lifeline.

With love in Christ,

Michael Boldea, Jr.

Building Project



Well Project



Child of the Month

Alexandru became a part of our family in 2015. Born in 2009 in a family known in the community for the abusive behavior of the parents, Alexandru had witnessed numerous times when the local authorities were at his door, questioning his parents on the constant conflicts, alcohol drinking, long periods of time spent away from the children and total neglect of their parental duties. His father refused to work the land around the house in order to obtain some financial resources, while his mother was impassible at her children's basic needs.

As no close relatives willing to take Alexandru were found, Hand of Help became his new family.

When he moved to our center, the pain and suffering in his eyes were evident; Alexandru was eager to share his story with everybody, happy to have finally found people who would give him the opportunity and listen.

Alexandru is passionate about cooking. A family in a nearby city has become involved in his life during one of our center's projects, where families from around the city are invited to meet and spend time with our children.

Alexandru is now spending his school breaks with them and learning a lot from them. As the wife works in the restaurant business and organizes many food festivals, Alexandru often helps her and progresses not only in his cooking skills but also in his business skills.

He would like to attend a cooking school and continue his passion as a professional.

Alexandru received a chance at a new, changed life and we thank you for being a hand of help for him. Please keep him in your prayers and may our Father amply bless your faithfulness!



Dear Brethren,

Psalm 86:11, “Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.”

Some days, it is easier than others not to get distracted. Everything seems to be going swimmingly, and we have our eyes firmly affixed upon the race before us. We are surefooted and full of zeal, pressing onward toward the prize, knowing it is near.

Then, every four years or so, the barrage commences, and it seems as though every distraction known to man comes out of the woodwork, hoping to draw our gaze, our attention, and our energy away from the singular purpose of growing in Christ.

I’ll be the first to admit it’s easy to get distracted. When every day is a fresh iteration of some grotesque blend of circus and horror show, and situations we never deemed plausible become common fare, you must strive to keep your focus and determine in your heart that you will not turn to the left or to the right no matter how tempting it might be to do so. What is happening in the world today, and when I say the world, America is by no means excluded, is a spiritual battle, and so must be confronted on a spiritual plain.

If we hope to affect the spiritual in the natural, we’ll end up spinning our wheels and wondering why no progress is being made and everything around us is going from bad to worse. To an extent, what we are witness to in the world was foretold in the Word of God, and we knew that these days were bound to come. It may have seemed improbable when Isaiah penned those words via the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but we are living the fulfillment of his prophecy in real-time, and much of what calls itself the church has decided to go along to get along. Men call evil good and good evil, scoff at righteousness, and celebrate sin while maintaining that they are walking in His ways and obeying His precepts.

This is also unsurprising since we were warned that in the last days, perilous times would come, and men with a form of godliness would live according to their own flesh, denying the power of God to save, redeem, transform, and sanctify.

Through it all, there remains a remnant. Through it all, there remain those who have been set apart who see what the world has become, see the plan of the enemy for what it is, and are busying themselves with building up their most holy faith and learning to walk by it rather than by the things they see in the physical.



It is these, the ones who remain focused on Christ and clinging to Him, that will be living witnesses to the fulfillment of God’s Word as it relates to the end times. It is these who will be living testimonies to the power of God to preserve, protect, and provide, as He did for those who came before us. While everything around us seems to be a reason for alarm, the Word of God tells us to be at peace. While worry is layered upon worry, and fear for tomorrow has become the kitchen table issue of the hour, Jesus said that we ought not to worry, fret, or be concerned about tomorrow, for it comes with its own troubles.

What we are seeing unfold in the world ought not to be a reason for fear or concern to the children of God but rather one of joyous anticipation and expectancy, knowing that we will see His hand guide us, protect us, and make a way for us even when there seems to be no way. Our future is secure in His hands, and this should fill us with hope and eagerness.

We serve an omnipotent God who knows the end from the beginning and promises He will be with us during the seasons of trial just as readily as in the seasons of ease. The onus is on us as individuals to cling to Him just as tightly during the time of plenty as in the time of famine, determined that our relationship with Him would not be some situational endeavor contingent on whether or not we need supernatural intervention, but because we love Him, from the depths of our hearts, and because we have made Him Lord thereof. Take strength, dear ones, be still, and know that He is the God of all and has you in the palms of His hands. What have you to fear if He is with you? Keep your eyes on Jesus, and He will see you through the storm. Be satisfied in Him, and walk boldly into tomorrow, knowing He is already there.

Isaiah 41:10, “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous hand.”

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.