

PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

Training National Leaders for "Ministry"

Ray and Pam
Trantham

 **Odessa Missions**
Training National Leaders for "Missions"



Winter: The Apostle Paul writes in 2 Timothy 4:13 and says, "When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments." And a few verses later he says, "Do your best to get here before winter." The Apostle Paul is asking Timothy to bring his coat, and to do it as soon as possible, because winter is coming. Regina and I just returned from a short visit to Ukraine, and this was the same request the Christians in Ukraine made of us, ... **"We need heat."**

Regina and Ray traveled to Ukraine to assess the situation first-hand, and to prepare for winter. Sasha will be staying in Regina and Sasha's house, and a family from the church will be staying in Ray and Pam's house. As soon as we arrived, some of the first conversation was the coming winter and the expected shortages of heat and electricity. We had already discussed these concerns with Sasha and thanks to special gifts, Sasha had already begun purchasing heating supplies for us and for a rural church and school. I had also been sent with designated funds for a local minister and for a widow named Valya. I met with him the first Sunday, and he immediately told me that he was already planning to take firewood to Valya the following day.

Humanitarian food aid, ... but we need heat: Our Bible college campus hosts several volunteers which work to coordinate shared ministry activities among churches in our area. Shipments of humanitarian aid are received and stored on our college campus, distributed to area churches, which then distributes it to those in need. While meeting with the church leader overseeing humanitarian distribution, I asked him what was being done. He responded by describing the many tons of food-aid that were distributed each week. European countries have been especially willing to ship food to assist Ukraine. As we continued to discuss the ongoing ministry, I asked him, what was still needed. He immediately said, "but we need heat." I pulled out my phone and showed him a picture of the propane tanks and heaters that Sasha and I had just purchased. He exclaimed, "That is exactly what our churches need." I explained where you could buy propane tanks, propane heaters, and cooktops, ... and that the cost was about \$200 for each unit. I then asked him how many he



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needed for area churches, and he said, at least 30. I suspected he actually needed closer to 50, for a total cost of \$10,000. I told him that I thought American churches would be glad to buy portable propane heaters for Ukrainian churches. I gave him the \$2,000 I had in my pocket and went to the bank to pick up more.

The week before our trip to Ukraine, a supporting church asked me what was needed. I said, "I do not know, ... but after our trip to Ukraine, I will be able to tell you." **We are now able to tell you that we need money for portable propane heaters and cooktops.** Food aid is arriving from Europe, and while we were in Ukraine, portable heaters were still available for sale. I suspect that the supply is limited and will rise in cost as winter approaches.

Note: As we prepared to travel to Ukraine, a special gift was given to help Regina and I prepare our homes for winter and to assist with ministry needs we encountered along the way. Most of these funds were sent to Sasha in advance and we were able to use them to help with needs. The need to buy 50 propane heaters is an additional need that we encountered a few days before our return.



The rural minister and Valya are pleased with their load of firewood, although the minister complained that he would now have to go back and split the firewood for her.

While I was in Ukraine, I cut down a tree in front of my house that had died during the summer. My neighbor came over and asked if he could have the wood.

The church leader overseeing humanitarian distribution in our area, immediately went out and bought the below heaters and tanks with the first money that I gave him. More is needed.



Regina and I are reflecting on our trip, as we continue to assess the current and developing situation in Ukraine.

Pray for the winter.

