

# PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

Training National Leaders for "Ministry"

Ray and Pam  
Trantham

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

**Winter is coming:** In our last newsletter, Regina and I had just returned from a short trip to Ukraine. The Christians in Ukraine were saying with one voice, **"We need heat."** While in Odessa, I left available funds with regional church leaders and told them that I thought American churches would be glad to buy portable propane heaters for Ukrainian churches. I was right, ... American churches have been generous in providing funds for portable heaters and winter supplies. Thank-you for your continuing generosity.

**Winter has arrived:** That was the situation six weeks ago. Sasha was buying portable propane heaters, while people and churches were beginning to stockpile winter supplies. Two things have changed: 1. Winter has arrived, and supplies are now scarce, ... 2. Russia began to attack the electric, heat, and water supplies. The winter was expected to be difficult, before Russia began to target the heating and electrical system. The situation is now far more critical than anyone was anticipating.

**Odessa:** The city of Odessa is located on the coast in the southern part of Ukraine. This means it is warmer than most of the rest of Ukraine. The city of Odessa has remained under Ukrainian control, while experiencing regular Russian missile strikes. During the past six weeks, Odessa has experienced missile and drone attacks which have targeted electrical stations and other civilian infrastructure. While I was there, I saw a drone being shot down over the city. Although Russia's main focus has been on destroying the electric grid, electricity is necessary to control the heat and water supply. These attacks began, at the onset of winter as temperatures began to drop.

**Cold weather supplies:** When we were in Odessa, six weeks ago, we were specific about buying portable gas heaters and heating supplies. The situation on the ground has changed. We are now saying, "Buy cold weather supplies, ... buy whatever is available." Six weeks ago, there were no shortages of electricity, ... now Sasha says he has power, and heat, three hours a day. Supplies of flashlights, candles, batteries, ... have all been exhausted. Sasha was partially prepared, but things have come to the point that he is requesting we ship him batteries and electrical supplies, because these are no longer available in Ukraine. (Sasha and his brother have now been able to buy a generator, which allows them to keep the heat on for longer periods of time.) Our Bible college wrote today that friends in Germany were shipping a large generator that would help keep critical systems operating at the college. We have sent funds for a generator to help at the Women's Center and area church. This will allow them to remain open and allow them to offer to recharge cell phones for people in the community. (Note: The current shipment of supplies to Ukraine, from the US, is not realistic except for certain specialty items.)



Ray and Pam Trantham  
Missionaries in Odessa, Ukraine since 1995.

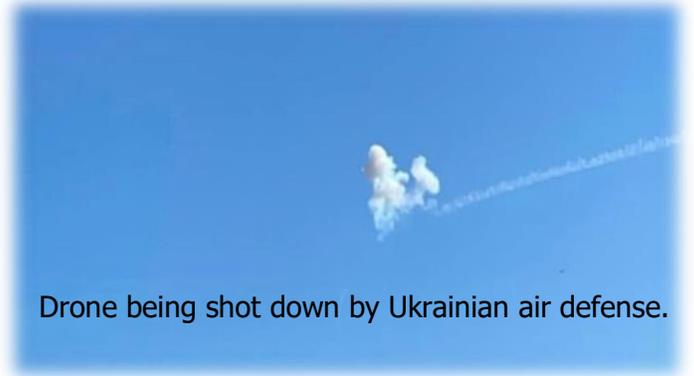
ray@partnersinmissions.org <http://partnersinmissions.org>  
Phone: 662-872-0748 662-286-2502

Tax-deductible contributions:  
**PARTNERS IN MISSIONS**  
P.O. Box 212  
Fulton, MS 38843





Sasha sent Regina a picture of him in the house, during the day, trying to keep warm in a sleeping-bag.



Drone being shot down by Ukrainian air defense.

**Church and Schools:** Many churches have become places of distribution for humanitarian aid. In rural areas, churches are often a social center for the community as well as providing a civic meeting area. The current crisis is an opportunity for Christian ministry. This is an opportunity for local Christians to show the love of Christ in action. Money has been sent for a generator to be used to assist the church in maintaining regular church services, but also by serving the community and helping to charge local cell phones. When we asked how we could assist the local churches in this time of difficulty, ... It was explained that one rural church was now hosting the local school. Without a bomb shelter, schools are not allowed to open. It is estimated that only about 30% of schools have been able to open with in-person classes. It is common for churches to be constructed with a basement. This rural church was now using its Sunday School classrooms for secular school classes in the community.



**Reflections back on our trip:** Our recent trip to Ukraine was intended to be short, but it was very informative. One of the first things about the trip was that it was longer and more difficult, due to the absence of flights into Ukraine. We flew into the neighboring country of Moldova and drove into Ukraine. Because of connections and border crossings, the return trip took 70 hours. We noticed about half the usual number of people on the streets in Odessa, and I imagine this is even less now that winter has arrived. We noticed more large trucks on the road, as Ukraine continues to try to export grain, and because seaports, airports, and rail systems are not being utilized. The cost of everything in the market and stores was rapidly rising. There is an ever presence of military, even in an unoccupied city, like Odessa. There are troops in dug-in positions, 160 steps from my house. In spite these disruptions to daily life, the need of the gospel remains. The situation is very different than it was a year ago, but the opportunity to proclaim the gospel remains. We are currently hoping that Ray will be able to return to teach a class in person, in late winter or early spring.



As we come to the end of this year, we continue to thank God for your **PARTNERSHIP** with us in this ministry.

Ray and Pam Trantham  
Missionaries in Odessa, Ukraine since 1995.

ray@partnersinmissions.org <http://partnersinmissions.org>  
Phone: 662-872-0748 662-286-2502

Tax-deductible contributions:  
**PARTNERS IN MISSIONS**  
P.O. Box 212  
Fulton, MS 38843

