

The last few days have been very dark in Eastern Ukraine. Apparently the Russians are now invading Ukraine much as they did in Crimea. Known locally as "little green men" because they have no obvious identifying marks on their vehicles or uniforms, they give themselves away with their accent and unfamiliarity with local villages. These Russian invaders appeared in Kolosky about 30-35 kilometers from the Russian border in the south of the Donetsk region. Earlier on Monday, ten Russian soldiers were captured by Ukrainian forces in Dzerkalniy. The men said they were sent there on a special mission by the Russian Military, but the Russian Defense Ministry reported that they had accidentally strayed into Ukraine. This is an outrageous and hypocritical reaction when just a month ago, the Kremlin threatened military retaliation when a group of unarmed Ukrainian soldiers were forced into Russian territory by Russian Separatist fighting in the Lugansk Region.

In the City of Dzerzhinsk, where our camp is held, local citizens are trying to prepare schools for the upcoming school year. Schools 3 and 13 sustained heavy damage when occupied by the Separatist. Many families have left the area and some 90 students from School 3 will not return this year. School number 10 is apparently undamaged, but I have not heard if it has been inspected and approved for the new year. The city was without water for a period of two weeks recently. Most stores remain open, but shelves are poorly stocked. The church in Dzerzhinsk continues to function, but its minister, Victor, may have to leave to seek employment elsewhere as the hospital where he works has been closed. On the local political scene, the Mayor of Dzerzhinsk has disappeared once again as the situation there continues to deteriorate... thank you Kremlin.

Our brother Vitaliy has finally left Donetsk after a bomb exploded in a nearby sixth floor flat. He went to Maruipol to retrieve his family, who previously left Donetsk, before traveling up to Artyomovsk north of Donetsk. His mother on the other hand remains in Donetsk to "protect" her property. On a larger scale, impacting the entire country, Russia has cut off gas supplies to Ukraine and although there has been a "reverse flow" set up thru Slovakia it will not be sufficient to make up for normal usage this winter so it will be a very cold winter for our friends thanks to the Kremlin.

From their meager resources, people all over Ukraine are struggling to feed and support the refugees and the Ukraine Military as the government has been unable to effectively do so. If you would like to support Ukraine Missions and the people of Ukraine please contact either me or John. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to everyone who share of themselves with the people of Ukraine through mission efforts.

Here at home, my friend and brother, John Kachelman, and I plan to leave for Ukraine 29 September to work with the Church on relief aid being sent by his organization. We are hopeful that new locations to receive container shipments can be identified during this journey. John is transitioning his reporting to a blog format at <http://www.kachelman.com/ukraine/blog>. Please go to the site and register to receive and read of the latest efforts to provide support for Ukraine and read the latest from his contacts there. See attachment for John's latest report.

Please pray for a growing and active Ukrainian Church, for safety of the people of Ukraine, its political leaders, please pray for democracies all over the world to come to the aid of Ukraine, please pray for Vladimir Putin that he will stop the genocide he has created with his Slavic brothers in Ukraine, but most of all please pray that God's Will be done which surpasses our understanding.

In His Service,  
Mike