

600,000 Russian-speaking people in New York City need a church that speaks their language...



Dan & Sherry Hyden

32 Whitehouse Ave.

Roosevelt, NY 11575

(516) 408-0756

hydens2russianworld@gmail.com

Sent by Grace Baptist Church of Urbana, Ohio, through Baptist World Mission -
PO Box 2149, Decatur, Alabama 35602 - (256) 353-2221 - www.baptistworldmission.org

Dear friend,

June 2025

Three days. The "special military operation" that Russia launched against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, was supposed to last for three days. But it has now raged for more than 1,200 days, and the winter of 2022 has already become the summer of 2025. Combining casualty figures from both sides, at least 300,000 soldiers have been killed, and another 1.2 million injured. More than 10,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed. More than 8 million others were internally displaced, and another 8 million fled the country.

These are the easily observable statistics. The economic devastation can be calculated, or at least estimated. But other damage is harder to spot and harder to repair.

Valentina is the grandmother of a woman in our church. Her granddaughters brought her to America after the war started. She had lost everything, and she would not talk at all — not a single word to anyone. Please pray for her, as she is supposed to come to our church soon, and we want to tell her about the Prince of Peace, Who calls all that are heavy laden to come unto Him so that He can give them rest, joy, and a new life.

Another lady who suffers from the war is Tatiana, Sherry's newest ESL student. Unlike Valentina, she is not withdrawn or quiet at all. On the contrary, she is very smiley and outgoing, the kind of person who can energize a whole room. She works enough for three people, studies like she's in college, and sleeps sometimes in between those things. Unfortunately, after an initial short burst of faithful attendance, she has little availability for church or ESL. Although she has lived in America for years and has prospered in the land of the free, she isn't really free. Not only is she unsaved, but she also has a secret and lives in fear. Why? Because she's Russian.

That's her dangerous, shameful secret. But to protect herself from judgment and hate in an ardently pro-Ukrainian nation and city, she tells everyone that she is from... Ukraine. She has no connection to the Kremlin and no responsibility for the invasion. But she feels tainted by it. Others scorn her for it, so she denies who she is and claims to be what she is not. She has been wounded by the war, although she is over 4,000 miles away from it.

We share these stories to ask prayer for these individuals to come to Christ, for peace in these countries, and for the unique ministry opportunities and challenges that this war presents to us here in a church blend that includes both Russians and Ukrainians.

We had a tremendous outreach in May at BayFest, our community's annual outdoor festival. As we usually do each year, we had a literature booth at the event. It's a joint effort between the English church and our Russian church, and this year we had great interest from passersby as well as probably the most significant participation from both churches that we've ever had. In addition to having a children's craft table and invitations to our Vacation Bible School, we passed out Bibles, tracts, and over 1,000 bottles of water (in three hours) that had labels from our church on them. One woman (Julia) came to our table and cried as



she spoke with us about some painful things in her life. As we invited her to church, she replied, "I'm from Russia. Is that a problem?" We, as well as a Ukrainian couple who were part of our group, assured her that she would be welcome. Please pray for Julia!

We secured our permit for August's Brighton Jubilee, which is a much larger event than BayFest. We are also excited about the visitors who have come in recent weeks. We were blessed with a spiritually uplifting visit in June by some of our family, and we are very happy to announce some new births: twin grandsons in April, and the new birth (after three years of prayer) of a young man named Andrew! All three are growing in their own way. May that be true of each of us, too!

Serving our Savior,

Dan, Sherry,
Shastya, Gabriel, Emma, & Kelsie

