



Chinese International Missions, Inc.

04.01.2022

While There's (Still) Time...

~Theresa Poon
CIM board member

Ukraine—Where I started my short-term missions journey, in 2004.

As the second largest country in Europe, Ukraine is a land with old-country beauty and many dome-shaped orthodox churches. Kiev, its capital, also aptly named the “City of Domes”. The people I met there seemed reserved and cautious at first. After all, the country had only gained independence in 1991 and many were still trying to find a job and adjusting to the post USSR way of life. But when interacted, they are ready to engage and are full of life. The majority of the population identify themselves as Christians (87% as of 2018). I was called there to share the gospel to students and business people from China.

There are about 10,000 Chinese in Ukraine with several Chinese churches in cities of Kyiv, Kharkov, and Odessa. When I was there last in 2007, there was a church in Simferopol as well, but the Crimea region was annexed to Russia in 2014 so it has been no more. Most of the Chinese believers I met, and prayed with to accept Christ, were university students who returned home upon graduation and some continued to serve Him in various capacities. A few who were called by the Lord to stay in Ukraine to reach out to the Chinese students who came after them, as well as the Chinese diaspora.

Fast forward to February 24, 2022, when everything changed.

In early February I began to contact a Chinese Ukrainian pastor, who was a university student and worked closely with me at the evangelization camp in summer of 2007. Together we witnessed the baptism of about a dozen brothers and sisters in the Black Sea. He told me everyone was praying and hoping that the war would not materialize but all felt a sense of peace in their hearts. I kept my cell phone close by daily ever since to and prayed that the invasion would never happen, then to pray that they would be given the discernment to decide whether to stay or leave; for them to organize groups of brothers and sisters and the logistics of the driving entourage smoothly; and lastly for them to safely cross the border of Ukraine. Many still have trouble accepting the reality.

By now, most of the Chinese believers and gospel seekers have left for countries nearby. Praise the Lord they had been warmly greeted by Chinese pastors and church brothers and sisters in the cities they entered. China scheduled charter flights to fly their citizens home. But because the passengers are responsible for the airfare, those who cannot afford, like many families with children, had to stay in their new host country as refugees. Some countries are not as refugee-friendly, and only offering a 30-day stay, so they have to seek asylum status elsewhere.

My pastor friend's family of seven—his wife, their three children, and his parents, have decided to stay in a country in western Europe. In the time since they left Ukraine, their home of the last 17 years, he had been sending spiritual articles to encourage his church members electronically, no matter where they might be. He was even able to cross over to another country and visited with the Chinese pastor and brothers and sisters there. After he receives clearance for his family to stay in their host country, he will work with believers in his city to reach out to the Chinese university students and continue to follow God's calling since almost two decades ago, in another corner of His Kingdom.

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Whatever the outcome of the war, it will take at least two to three years for Ukraine to be back to some normalcy. In the meantime, grounds need to be plowed, seeds need to be sown, and fruits need to be harvested. However heartbreaking this atrocity has become, it is perhaps the beginning of what's to come in this end time. May we remember to lift up God's servants who continue to take up the cross and follow Him, no matter the place and no matter the circumstance.

As is said in John 9:4, "As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. The Omicron variant of the COVID virus in South Africa has not stopped. The number of daily infections is around 1,000~3,000, and the death toll is also jumping up and down in single and triple digits. Winter is coming here in the Southern hemisphere, please ask God to quell and stop the outbreak.
2. Pray for Rev Wu and his church congregation to welcome resuming in-person gatherings and for online gatherings to be discontinued smoothly. Ask the Lord to grant them grace and allow them to have enough energy to balance their servicing. Currently the evening service at Rustenburg Church is dscheduled to resume at the end of March first. Please pray for the Johannesburg worship service to resume, and ask the Lord to keep the meeting with the pastor of the host church smoothly.
3. Pray for Whitney Wu's appointment for an abdominal examination, and for Rev Wu to arrange a liver re-examination both in early April. May the Lord grant them peace.
4. Please pray for the Lord to encourage more brothers and sisters to come back to worship together in person after the in-person worship at PECCC resumes.
5. The South African government's anti-epidemic policy is gradually loosening. Please pray that the pandemic will not have a major rebound in the country.
6. Pray for Rev Jorge Loo and his wife to go to *Belem* and *Sao Luis* for short-term missions in April.
7. Pray for Rev Loo's heart health.
8. CIM Canada's partner, House of Mercy (HOM), is caring for about 300 refugees mainly from eastern Ukraine. Their local church has turned into a refugee meeting center; their homes opened to refugees' their orphanage is housing children and families; their camp site is caring for about 80 children from the war zone. Life is hard and difficult for many refugees especially for children and elderly as some are sick or too weak to walk. Please lift them all up for God's protection and provision.
9. Pray for CIM supporting Roma pastors and their families.
10. **Pray for the recruiting effort underway to fill job vacancies in CIM for a Director of Ministry to oversee STM and daily operations**, and an Executive Director successor. If you know of anyone who is interested and qualifies, please contact us.
11. Pray that God will move more brothers and sisters to join the ministry so God's kingdom would be more prosperous. Pray for God's abundant provision for all the financial needs of CIM.

NOTE

Please call 408-596-4567 to contact CIM for questions or comments. Thank you for your continual support.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Feb 2022

| | <u>Income</u> | <u>Expense</u> | <u>Balance</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| General * | \$11,519 | \$3,728 | \$7,791 |
| Missions | \$18,918 | \$25,504 | -\$6,586 |
| Total | \$30,437 | \$29,232 | \$1,205 |

To contribute to CIM ministries:

1) Make checks payable to "CIM" and mail to: P.O. Box 700185, San Jose, CA 95170-0185, USA

2) Donate online via credit card, go to: www.cimusa.org Click on "Give" and follow directions. Thank you!



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