

Email to the St Nicholas Church Family – Friday 18 March 2022

Dear brothers & sisters in Christ

All of us will be aware of the developing situation in Ukraine. Though the advances of the Russian Army appear to have slowed, the relentless artillery fire is constantly wreaking damage and death and adding to the climate of fear and vulnerability forcing many into exile as refugees. The numbers on the move are staggering. How do we respond? Though perhaps feeling totally overwhelmed, there are things that we can do. Below are a variety of suggestions recognising that all of us are in different situations and not all of us have the same resources.

1. **Prayer:** please continue to use the [prayer of the Archbishops](#). Also, once again we have organised an Open-Air Prayer gathering at the **Vine Gardens at 4pm this Sunday 20th March 2022** in conjunction with Churches Together in Sevenoaks & District. Please join me as we publicly pray for this situation.
2. **Financial support:** there are huge financial needs to support Ukrainian refugees both in eastern Europe and within this country. [You can still donate to DEC](#) or [agencies like Tearfund](#) but there are other possibilities which are emerging.

Jeremy Marshall has a good contact in Romania who is a Pastor seeking to coordinate efforts amongst refugees. Jeremy has put together through his existing contacts a group of Ukrainian Christian refugees looking for homes and of churches throughout the U.K. offering such houses or rooms. The plan is that the first seven refugee families with 26 individuals will be based at or near All Saints Preston. Financial help for All Saints to care for them would be very helpful as this is an awful lot of people for one church! All Saints PCC bank details are Nat West Bank, Sort Code 01-67-14, Account Number 02884615 - use the reference Refugee Support.

Alternatively you can give money to support Emanuel Baptist Church Oradea in Romania which is the place where these refugees and many others who are remaining in Romania are being supported. You can also contact Jeremy if you'd like to offer homes or rooms: he anticipates having more Ukrainian Christian refugees. Please contact Jeremy with any questions

3. **Homes for Ukrainian Refugees:** You will be aware that the Government has launched the [Homes for Ukraine programme](#), and many may have already registered. If you have registered, please feel able to let us know so that as a Church family we can support you as you seek to show compassion in this incredibly practical way. You may also wish to keep in touch with [Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees](#) who are seeking to coordinate local support. Please also be aware of [The Sanctuary Foundation](#) which is seeking to be a means of sponsoring and coordinating the UK response in linking Ukrainian refugees with families and organisations.

Of course, none of us on our own can do everything, but there may be particular things that we can do to support these different initiatives. Many of us will have been studying Lamentations recently. At 3:32 it says, 'Though He brings grief, He will show compassion, so great is His unfailing love'. So often the Lord's compassion is shown through His people – may we as a Church family across our congregations be the vehicle of the Lord's compassion to many who are in desperate need in these days.

Warmly,

Angus

Angus MacLeay
Rector