



Hosting Encouragement

We often get asked what it's like to host global workers, pastors, and family here in our home in Bratislava. Each experience is different – different purposes, food, interactions, conversation, activities. And yet every time we do, it is an incredible encouragement to us! July gave us two different opportunities to host families – two from the United States (dear friends and pastors who, together, came from the Bridge Church in Rancho Santa Margarita, California) and one family who are also dear friends and fellow global workers in Korçë, Albania.

Doing life full-on with fellow English speakers for a few days is a nice change of atmosphere from our usual “immersed in Slovakia” life. Yes, we pastor an English-language congregation, but it's really fun to see our city and country through the thoughts and reactions of those we get to play host to. Like we did when the Lord spoke to us about moving to Bratislava on a scouting trip in 2017, our visitors often fall in love with this city and country. We are very thankful that travel has opened up, allowing more friends to be with us in Central Europe!

Tarashcha

Our work to help and get aid to refugees both here in Slovakia and inside Ukraine continues. City Church has now hired the young woman, Anastasiia (Nastiiia) who has been managing the refugee house we're supporting not far from our home. She was in Bratislava to complete her masters degree in management before the war, and is now coordinating the Ukraine response efforts for all three of our City Church congregations here.



Nastiiia is from Tarashcha, a small town about 80 miles south of Kyiv. Her parents – Sergei & Olya – wanted to be part of our efforts to get aid into Ukraine, so we planned and undertook a 3-day trip to bring a load of food and medical aid to their home. They stored it and then lovingly distributed it (with four of their girls) to people in their city and surrounding area. I (Gary) couldn't help but think of my dad when Olya served us borscht (my dad's favorite) the evening we arrived. It was an emotional trip for Nastiiia – reunited with her family, but only for about eight hours – and also for me, the grandson of Ukrainian immigrants.

We believe this will be an ongoing channel of aid into Ukraine. We have resources to purchase and deliver the aid, and now we have a new connection in Tarashcha to get it to people who need it in this area as well. We are in awe of how God makes these connections to be His love and compassion in this beautiful country! Please join us in praying for Nastiiia's family and this new channel of aid!

Joy
Gary

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