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Canopy of Prayer



"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves." Proverbs 31:8a (NIV)

An Unexpected Ceasefire

In recent days, news outlets around the world have been flooded with reports and photos from Oleshky, a small Ukrainian town. At our most recent European prayer gathering in Dublin last month, we also discussed the humanitarian crisis afflicting the town and prayed for the people. According to the Ukraine Prayer Update, more than 2,000 residents, including 300 children, have been trapped in the town. Located a few kilometers from Kherson, the small town has been under Russian occupation since the start of the war. Since May of this year, no humanitarian aid has been able to reach the town, which is caught between two fronts. Based on reports trickling out, conditions in the town were appalling: unburied bodies in the streets, bombed-out houses, and starving people—including children—eating grass. The ceasefire was brokered by the U.S. First Lady, Melania Trump. Residents were evacuated by buses and were allowed to choose where they wanted to go: 17 full buses departed for Ukraine, while 4 headed for Russian-occupied territories—a figure that speaks volumes. We dare to believe that our prayers at the Dublin gathering also contributed to this unexpected ceasefire.

The City That Briefly Came to Life

The ceasefire covered the entire Kherson region for four days. With this, the city of Kherson—which has been under siege for four years—was able to breathe a sigh of relief for a few days. Many of the displaced residents returned to the city, and those who had remained began venturing out onto the streets again. Although the weather was rainy, they felt as though they could breathe freely once more! Their feelings, however, were mixed as they saw the devastation that had befallen their city.

After the Ceasefire

The ceasefire ended at midnight on November 1, and all hell broke loose again in Kherson and the surrounding area. Visitors have left the city, the streets are deserted, and the bombings continue. About 300 drone attacks targeting civilians are recorded in the city every day. The term locals use to describe this—“human safari”—has already spread to the international press. Because of this, nearly the entire city is under a drone-defense net. Three months ago, the power plant that provided the city’s electricity was destroyed and residents were urged to flee to safer areas before winter, if they could.





Growing Need, Dwindling Aid

There are only a few places in Kherson where locals can get help. Aid centers, aid delivery vehicles, and aid workers are prime targets for Russian drones. As a result, the amount of aid has dropped dramatically, and distribution centers have nothing left to give to people. Delivering aid into the city is life-threatening, yet some persist in carrying out this task: aid workers, local volunteers, pastors, and chaplains are trying to bring relief to the mostly elderly residents who remain there. We would like to ask the readers of these lines to pray for these people! Let us keep in mind Solomon's words quoted at the top of this letter: "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV)

Our Own Humanitarian

As we prepare to send out this letter, the author Csaba Szakály from Hungary is on his way to the city of Kherson again on another of his regular humanitarian aid missions. Over three days, he will drive into Kherson many times, his vehicle filled with the aid that is desperately needed by the residents, mostly food. Csaba feels called by Jesus to this and he has been going most months since the war started.

Please pray for protection for Csaba, that the drones will not see him and that his vehicle will be reliable. Pray that he will be 'a light in the darkness' to the residents of Kherson that he meets, and an encouragement to the Christians that he often prays with. Pray also for safety on the long drive across Hungary and Ukraine, and the long journey home again.

If you would like to donate to Csaba's next humanitarian mission to Ukraine, please let us know: info@hebroneurope.org

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