

Home and Overseas Paper – September 2022

I have just returned from Salem Moravian Church's final service in their church building, from now on they will continue their journey with God alongside the Moravian Church at Royton. At this service, the address reminded us that God is with us on our journey and that he waits to welcome us when we arrive. Some of you will know that Phil and I have recently moved from Fairfield Moravian Church to join with two congregations in the Yorkshire District – Wellhouse and Gomersal and the knowledge that God goes with us as we journey on is something which I am currently holding fast to.

This journeying, even though we are aware of God's presence can still be difficult. Imagine, therefore the difficulties faced by people who have to leave not just their church and home but their country. Although the war in the Ukraine and the plight of the many people who have fled their country has slipped out of the news headlines lately, the difficulties Ukrainians are facing have not gone away.

At MWA Central Committee in the Spring, a decision was taken to support Moravians in the Czech Republic who are assisting Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in their country. Prior to the war, the Moravian Congregation in Nova Paka had links with a Christian school in Kyiv. The congregation own a hotel which was in need of renovation. When war broke out on the Ukraine, the congregation decided to complete the renovation and use it to provide accommodation for Ukrainian families fleeing their homeland. MWA sent £500 to support this work and the hotel is now home to several families – mainly women and children. The families live in the former hotel, free of charge. The children are able to attend school in the Church and the Ukrainian families join with the congregation at Nova Paka for Sunday worship. There are some families whose fathers travelled with them. The congregation has helped them find accommodation, essential items for their homes and employment for the fathers.

Other congregations in the Czech Republic are assisting refugees from the Ukraine – a family with three children are currently living in the church house in Usti nad Orlici and the congregation at Mladá Boleslav has opened its doors to be a contact centre for Ukrainian refugees.

For those of you who receive this paper electronically – if you click on or copy and paste the link below into your internet browser, there is a video – some of which is in English which will show you the renovated hotel and some messages from Ukrainians who have been given sanctuary by the congregation in Nova Paka.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bSKAJevDiSr2FW0k7A6rZhEaMmcNmLP/view?fbclid=IwAR2s_bGQHxQW4Y7DTSAfJ3iEWP0rGj9JalIE3KnpzOR_IR1A73idV5laP6o

It is good to know that God is with us and the Ukrainians on their journeys but it is good also that the love and presence of God is demonstrated by the love, care and practical help from Christian people.

Sr Janet Cooper