



EFM COVID-19 UPDATES PRAY FOR UKRAINE



Abe and Diane Bible are connected to Evangelical Friends Church-Eastern Region and have been partnering with Ministry Developers Network in training church leaders in Eastern Europe since 1978. Their main emphasis the last few years has been motivating leaders to do evangelism and church planting in Ukraine. This includes monthly workshops and resources to help the men in their spiritual lives as well as equip them with ministry tools. Faithful men trained by Abe are expanding this ministry into Russia.



How is COVID-19 affecting those who live in the area where you live and minister?

- New restrictions come regularly. Anyone over sixty is not to leave their home except for necessities. Everyone must wear a mask any place in public. It is creating financial crises for churches and Christian ministries as people are not meeting to give.

How is this situation affecting the ministry you lead?

- All of the workshops have been canceled and we may not hold another one until next fall. If restrictions are lifted, people are going to be very busy with survival and trying to get things back to normal, so we doubt there will be opportunity. Abe is mentoring via Zoom conferencing. He is setting up a schedule for his workshop people to hold their own “workshop” where they are with a co-worker. He is working on how to encourage people when contact is so limited.
- People continue to use the Financial Freedom materials. Right now small groups can still meet—under 10. And there will be a group of leaders across Ukraine who will be taking the Experiencing God course by Blackaby via internet meetings.

What are some opportunities you are seeing for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with those who don't know Him?

- As long as the church planters are still allowed on the streets (and they are) they have many opportunities to share the Gospel with needy people who are more aware than ever of the brevity of life.
- Many of the men we work with have a ministry in their own town or a neighboring town. They already have many personal contacts. It is a time when people may be even more open to the Lord. Some of them distribute food to the needy. This gives them an extra opportunity to talk about eternity. Some of them hold small Bible studies for seekers—people will have more time right now for that kind of thing. And all of this is critical as we come up to Easter. It is very high on the Orthodox calendar, many traditions (and superstitions) involved. And so that also creates spiritual openness.

And what are two or three prayer requests that we can use as we pray for you and those you lead?

- Pray for Abe as he works through how to help the men to keep their focus and continue with new opportunities in this unprecedented situation. And wisdom for determining whether there is any possibility to do something by Zoom or just sending out instructions for them to hold their own “workshops.”
- Pray as we develop materials still on the church planting track, as well as the possibility of some new resources that could be used to draw people into the Kingdom.
- Pray that God would use this pandemic as a mighty force to draw people to Him. We do not have the medical resources here that the West does. Many people will die through this, whether it is ever identified correctly as COVID-19 or not. May God use the fear of death to draw people to our Living Hope.