



A Voluntary Charity working in Ukraine and Moldova

with roots going back to 1990



Voices from Ukraine - *One Country but Two Worlds* –

An Introduction

During my times in Ukraine, I have been deeply moved by the countless brave, resilient, and inspiring people I have met—each carrying a story that deserves to be honoured and shared. Though there are far too many to include in one newsletter, please know that every single story matters.

Whilst in Ukraine I have listened to many powerful stories: stories of heartbreak and hope, of courage and kindness, and of the extraordinary ways your support has brought light and relief to people's lives in their darkest moments.

To all those who support our work, thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for standing in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. Your compassion is truly helping to change lives.

Crossing into Ukraine at the peaceful Unguri border is a moment that stays with you. As I walked over the bridge that spans the gentle Dniester River—marking the boundary between Moldova and Ukraine—it was hard to believe this country is at war.

Entering Ukraine the scene around me was serene. Birds sang in the trees, the water flowed quietly beneath, and the surrounding landscape seemed untouched by conflict. There was a stillness in the air, a deceptive calm that made the front lines feel impossibly far away.

And yet, not far beyond this tranquil moment lies a very different Ukraine—one marked by resilience, hardship, and extraordinary courage. It's a powerful reminder that war doesn't always shout. Sometimes, it waits quietly in the distance, while life goes on around it.

I was met with a familiar and reassuring sight—my friend Andriy waiting patiently on the other side. His kindness set the tone for the journey ahead.

In a generous gesture, Andriy had offered to lend me his car again so I could travel independently across the country. Thanks to his trust and support, I was able to move freely and meet with the many individuals and communities we're working to help. It reminded me how much can be achieved when we support one another, one simple act of kindness at a time.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE IS A VOLUNTARY CHARITY AND RELIES ON DONATIONS

If you would like to support this work, please make cheques payable to **cr2ee** or direct transfer to Barclays Bank, Exeter. 20-30-47 account number 20902446

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Continued

Driving alone gives me space to breathe—to process all I’ve seen, all I’ve heard, and all I carry with me. It’s a time for reflection, but also for wrestling with the impossible decisions ahead. How do we choose who to help, knowing we cannot reach them all? How do we face the heartbreak of those we may not be able to reach?

It is easy to feel overwhelmed. The weight of it all presses down in the silence between towns. The sorrow is not just in the stories I’ve been told—it’s in the eyes of the children I’ve met. So many of them have lost that bright spark, that light that belongs in every child’s gaze. The laughter that once echoed in streets and homes has been replaced by a heavy stillness. War does not just damage buildings—it steals innocence.

Increasingly there are moments when the sadness creeps in quietly—when the silence feels too loud, and the helplessness too heavy. It’s in those quiet moments I remember the faces of the children. So many of them. Eyes that once sparkled now stare with weariness far beyond their years. The light has faded. War has stolen more than homes or comfort—it has taken away childhood. It breaks your heart.

I try to hold onto their personal stories, their names, their dreams—because each one matters. And though I may not have answers for everything, I do know this: even in the darkness, we are called to be light. To keep going, to keep showing up. Because if we can help bring back even a flicker of joy... if one child can laugh again, can feel safe even for a moment... then it is worth every minute. Somewhere, not far from the road, a child is still waiting to be seen. Still hoping to be heard, and if we can reach just one more, if we can help the light shine again, then all of this—every mile, every tear—is worth it. The problem is, there is always one more but only 24 hours in a day.