**UNITY PRAYER DAY OFFERING 2024.**

**Support for Ukrainian Refugees in Germany and the Czech Republic**

**Germany**

The Russian war of aggression triggered a large movement of refugees within Ukraine, but also to safe neighboring countries. More than 1.3 million refugees - mostly women with their children - arrived in Germany alone as of February 2022.

Partly through personal contacts, partly because of the proximity of various congregations to the border, the Moravian Church in Germany had already recognized the responsibility to provide active help at an early stage. The first women and children arrived at the Moravian guest house KOMENSKÝ at the beginning of March 2022 during the days of the Synod meeting. Spontaneously, an information and discussion session was arranged at Synod. In the following weeks, several rooms in the KOMENSKÝ were made available for refugees. Some moved on later, for others flats were sought in and around Herrnhut. There was a great readiness to help, within the congregation and also among many people in the surrounding area who donated necessary clothing or furniture.

Like Herrnhut, several other congregations helped immediately with the most necessary items. It soon became clear that housing, clothing, and food could only be the basics of support. From the beginning, personal relationships were also important. Parishioners who spoke Russian often volunteered to help with visits to offices and doctors or started German language courses. In Herrnhut, the "Café Odessa" was founded - a meeting place for newcomers and residents, which continues to open its doors once a week. In Cottbus, the "Haltestelle", a missionary project of the Moravian Church, invited refugee children to the "Ukrainian School". Here they could learn German in a playful way, but above all enjoy hours of levity after the often-traumatic experiences of the war. The Haltestelle is still an important anchor point for Ukrainian children and their parents.

Supporting children and young people also became a task for the Moravian schools. Ukrainian classes were established at both the Zinzendorf schools in Königsfeld and Herrnhut. The goal of integrating the children into the regular classes after intensive German language courses has been achieved in the meantime. The Königsfeld Zinzendorf School also provided cost-intensive accommodation for an unaccompanied Ukrainian girl in the boarding facilities.

In addition to helping refugees in the congregations and institutions, the Moravian Church also helped directly in Ukraine. Aid transports to the war-torn regions were supported. In cooperation with other Christian organizations, almost 10,000 copies of the Moravian Daily Watchwords in Ukrainian language have been distributed since the beginning of the war. The books were distributed by pastors and staff of local church congregations, mostly together with aid packages. The soldiers at the front received the Watchwords together with the food packages.

We will continue to distribute the Moravian Watchwords to sow hope with the word of God in a country where war has devastated so many places and landscapes, in a society where joy of life and confidence are hard to find at the moment.

**Czech Republic**

In February 2022, the war in Ukraine began. Due to the war situation, many residents were forced to flee Ukraine and look for a new home in various European countries. Over 500,000 Ukrainian refugees also received temporary protection in the Czech Republic. These are mainly women and children, possibly the elderly, as the men stayed in Ukraine to defend their country.

The Moravian Church Unity Province also got involved in helping Ukrainians without hesitation: by providing accommodation, donating clothes and household items, offering opportunities for work and spending free time, practical help and support. Thanks to the cooperation with the Moravian Church Choir, the community united around the New Generation Christian elementary school in Kyiv, approx. 120 people, moved to Nová Paka - the Nová Paka choir, in cooperation with the region and other organizations, and with the support of donors from UF, managed to secure for them accommodation and spaces for teaching. During this year, some returned or moved to other countries, in the following school year the students from this school will be educated directly in our primary school.

We are still continuing this assistance: in some of our congregations, Ukrainian families continue to stay, or women with children, several women are even employed in our congregations. In our Christian schools and kindergartens, we not only provide education for registered Ukrainian pupils and students (Nová Paka, Hejnice, Liberec), but we also help them and their families, if possible, with solving their needs and the traumas that war brings, our congregations offer the possibility of leisure activities - participation of children in clubs, summer camps, involvement in various activities within the community (mothers' clubs, senior clubs), etc. If possible, Ukrainians participate in our services, which are adapted for them, a Ukrainian Christian group meets weekly in the premises of the Nóva Paka church.