



A MEANINGFUL LIFE

As stock markets crash, grim economic figures and forecasts occupies news bulletins and we have to tighten our budgets, we might be tempted to believe that God does not care and does not deserve our praise. The prophet Habakkuk was one who had come to an understanding of the goodness of God. He wrestled with the question of good and evil. His book ends with a tremendous testimony of faith, "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour" Habakkuk 3:17-18 (NIV).

What a testimony to the grace of God! You could put that testimony into modern English this way, as J. David Hoke translated: "Though the stock market crashes, and there is no money in the banks; though the oil wells dry up, and there is no gas in the car; though I am fired from my job, and there is no food in the house; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour!"

This testimony sounds remarkably similar to that of Ol'ga Zhuravs'ka in Ukraine, a woman who has endured a number of tragedies in her family and is still willing to say, "Praise God, we are still alive!" Ol'ga's husband, Ivan is 72. He served as a merchant marine in the navy his entire working life. He has travelled the world and was highly respected by his fellow marines. For years, he dreamt of owning his own car. For years Ivan worked towards this dream, by working hard, scrimping and saving, despite the harsh economic times that plagued Ukraine. In 1993, his dream came true. After buying the car, he invited his wife Ol'ga to go for a drive. Their dream come true was soon shattered by tragedy. They were involved in a serious accident that wrote off the car and left Ol'ga and Ivan injured in hospital. It is a miracle they survived! However, serious health complications left Ivan with precarious health. A year later his toes had to be removed and then shortly after he lost one leg and then the other.

As if tragedy had not overwhelmed them enough, they then lost their son-in-law to a sudden and fatal illness. Their daughter then moved home and currently works as a teacher. Then, just six months ago they lost their daughter-in-law to a fatal illness. Their son, overwhelmed with grief but also now shouldered with the burden of caring

for their son Denys, now works in Moscow trying to eke out a living as a taxi driver. Denys having lost his Mum, now tries to endure life separated from his Dad.

As you can imagine, the entire Zhuravskiy family was continually overwhelmed by grief and had forgotten how to smile. Regardless, Ol'ga, through her tears, keeps smiling and thanking God for keeping them alive. Ol'ga has a hard time doing everything to care for herself, her husband and her grandson, but she is a fighter! She manages to run the household, look after her handicapped husband, and spend time with her grandson. At 68, she cannot imagine life without her bicycle. Her bicycle is indispensable for shopping, Denys' transport to school or to go to the chemist for medication for her husband. Ol'ga never stops – there is too much to do! Her greatest desire is for her remaining family to be healthy and happy!

Ten year old Denys is such a blessing to his grandparents. We first became aware of this family and their struggle through Denys. He was corresponding with Mission Without Border's Bible Correspondence Course (BCC). He pleaded for our assistance, knowing without it they could not survive. He also spoke of his grandfather's lack of a wheelchair. We happily met this need immediately.

Denys loved the English Course at our Sarny Training Centre this past year, and loved participating in the BCC. Answering the course questions is his favourite part. One of the most interesting question for Denys was "When did God appear?" He took his time, asked his grandparents and neighbours and has found out the right answer, God is Eternal! He is the Beginning and the End!

Ol'ga loves the transformation of her grandson, from a boy lost, with the weight of the world on his shoulders, to loving the Bible Correspondence Course, English Course and the contact with their MWB Coordinator Sasha. This summer, for the first time in his life, Denys attended the MWB Summer camp. I don't know about you, but I look forward to hearing all about his adventures – adventures of a boy who very much needs that time of a lifetime; a chance for fun, laughter, food, fellowship and more opportunity to hear of His Heavenly Father!



A Meaningful Life Despite Tremendous Hardship...



When first enrolled in our Family-to-Family Program, the Alushi family of Albania felt abandoned, downtrodden and without hope for the future. The environment in which this family lives is depressing and suffocating but with the help and assistance this family now receives from MWB, they now see life from another perspective, have the strength and fortitude to carry on and see a future filled with hope. A bunker like dwelling with bare concrete walls, surrounded by filth and garbage— this is their home... It is situated in an infamous former swamp area considered uninhabitable because of the extremely poor hygienic conditions.

A canal drain nearby compounds the difficult situation. This drain was supposed to collect the water from the swamp and funnel it through pipes into the Sea, but it has instead become a garbage dump for the inhabitants of the area. They throw in everything from household garbage to dead cats and dogs, releasing suffocating smells. This is the Alushi's environment and living conditions. They also must survive without running water and electricity. The government authorities are indifferent and do not care about the inhabitants as it considers the area uninhabitable... But what if you had nowhere else to go?

Kimete Alushi lives in this house with her three children. As there is no running water during the day, the children had to help their mother search for water by pushing a cart full of empty bottles and cans, walking long distances to find water and fill them. Kimete often also filled the cart with clothes that need washing and set off in search of a broken water pipe. She suffers from multiple illnesses, with serious heart and high blood pressure problems. "I am so tired of this miserable life", shared Kimete. "We live in Durres but it often feels like we may as well be living in the middle of Africa, when in summer we are desperately thirsty and in winter we are drowned in sewerage from the sewerage drain situated just 10m from our home. We can't even open the windows because of the suffocating smell. Good hygienic conditions are important but it is impossible without running water".



"I am so happy and deeply touched by your generosity that made it possible for us to have our own water tank..."



Mission Without Borders was very aware of the unacceptable living conditions and accessed funds from the Urgent Needs Fund to provide the family with a 1000 litre water tank that is now providing them with water during the day. The family fiercely guarded their new possession until it was securely placed on their roof for fear another poor family would steal it. "I am so happy and deeply touched by your generosity that made it possible for us to have our own water tank. I often dreamt at night about having our own supply of water. Often I would be so worried about the lack of water that I would go in the middle of the night in search of it. But now, thanks to you, I have a water tank and I am extremely happy! Having running water throughout the whole day now gives us the opportunity to keep up an acceptable level of hygiene."

Further blessings have followed when generous Special Projects supplied a hot water boiler, a fridge, a single bed and blankets.

The tangible help has made the world of difference, but as Kimete's husband abandoned the family years ago, she was faced with raising the kids on her own. "As I struggled to raise my kid alone, the Mission Without Border's staff became my only counsellors and encouragers. My relatives never come to my house 'fearing' I will 'beg' for something from them... **But God answered my prayers and offered His help through you.** You are the only ones who answered my call for help, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you have done for my family so far. **Through providing material and spiritual help you made my life meaningful. More importantly, your help provided us with what we had the least of- hope.** I am deeply touched by your love and compassion and often wonder how much love you have to donate to us impoverished people. Thank you once again for your help and everything you have done for us," Kimete said, with tears in her eyes.

Although the economic and living conditions are still difficult for this family, it is obvious that MWB's assistance through the Family-to-Family program and Urgent Needs Fund have made a difference in their life. They are very appreciative of MWB Albania's work and very grateful to their sponsors. A ray of hope now rests deep



in their hearts and they are playing their part to improve their lives. In spite of their poverty, they now radiate joy and peace.

When people ask about our ministry and can we honestly make a difference to families dealing with tragedy and burdened with extreme poverty – these are just two examples of how we, with your support, are changing lives for today, tomorrow and for eternity!

How can you help? Our ministry can only function with your support! **Families are assisted through our Family-to-Family Program – financed through Family Sponsorship, and also under the umbrella of Family Care – where we assist families, those enrolled, as well as those affiliated with our ministries - endeavouring to meet their critical and ongoing Spiritual, Emotional, Educational and Material needs (The MWB S.E.E.M. Framework).**

We have families in Albania, Bosnia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine waiting for sponsorship now!

The Alushi family has blossomed in our programs and is sponsored by 4 Australian sponsors. In order to provide for the needs of the families in our F2F program, we find 4 sponsors contributing \$35/month. Perhaps it is on your heart to support a family in need, please contact our office for details about families waiting or visit our website for families in need now (www.mwb.org.au)!

In addition to our Family-to-Family Program, we offer comprehensive assistance to many other families, meeting their needs spiritually, emotionally, educationally and materially. Medical needs, Urgent Needs

and ongoing needs for families not enrolled are increasing at an alarming rate and we would like to not have to turn families away. With drought, disaster (like the March explosion of an ammunitions plant in Albania) and massive inflation having drastic affects on the economies of all 6 field countries, they daily have people on their doorsteps begging for assistance. Your donations today will ensure we can meet the needs of those crying out for help.

Just recently Mykola Bogdanets, our Ukraine Field Manager, shared with me how this partnership of Family-to-Family ministry is transforming families. Poverty is overwhelming, but the feelings of rejection and isolation are having tragic affects on the poor. EVERY family enrolled in our programs now enjoys the blessing of concrete assistance, but most importantly sees the love and care that they have all been crying out for is finally being met and their lives are being transformed – praise the Lord!

Our supporters say from time to time that, "I can only give \$5 or \$10 and can this make a difference..?" The answer is, Absolutely! Every dollar counts! Any donation, large or small is used to support families in need. We never take your generosity for granted - every gift is appreciated! We know that times are tough for many and greatly appreciate any support you are able to offer.

Finally, never underestimate the power of prayer! The stories we share often talk about our emotional and spiritual ministry to families. We need your continued prayers for this vital ministry. When families are encouraged emotionally and spiritually, the difference is amazing! Thanks for praying!

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PURPOSE – Melbourne Dinner

You are invited to join us for an evening to learn more about the work of Mission Without Borders, and how in partnership we can achieve so much more for children and teenagers who need someone to care for them and make their dreams come true.

Two areas of focus for the dinner will be:

1. Children with disabilities suffer terribly in Eastern Europe. The Children's Homes that house them are often drastically under-resourced. MWB Australia is responsible for the sponsorship of the Cluj Children's Home in Romania. We would like to raise the funds necessary to cover the remaining support needed for the Home. They desperately need our help.
2. Vocational Training and Scholarships are changing the lives and future of thousands of teenagers! The Courses and students need our help to make their dreams come true!

Melbourne: Partnership Dinner

September 20th, 7pm
Churches of Christ Theological College
44-60 Jacksons Road, Mulgrave. 3170 (Mel.Ref 80 K3)

Cost: \$25/person
RSVP: 5th September 2008
Jenny Grainger, (03) 9795-6141
Email: jenn.mwbvic@internode.on.net



'Gift in Kind' with 'Operation Cover-Up'

As we experience colder weather we know thousands are making the most of the weather to knit and crochet. We are continually receiving your generous donations – thank you so much and keep them coming! Our field countries love your hand-knitted items – for they not only keep the poor warm, they convey so much love and care to those suffering the effects of poverty.



The items we are now able to accept are the following:

All knitted items:

- Blankets – large and small. The ideal blanket is made with Size 8 needles, 8-ply yarn, and 40 stitch x 80 rows to make 56 squares, for a blanket 1.6mx1.4m.
- Jumpers – Crew neck patterns are best for the harsh climate. All sizes are great, but teenagers & adults are most in need.
- Scarves, beanies, bed socks

If you would like some guidance, knitting patterns are now available on request - contact Jenny Grainger (details below), our office or visit our Website (www.mwb.org.au) for patterns now!

All items for knitting, sewing and embroidery: material, wool, needles etc.

COORDINATORS AND COLLECTION POINTS

This is an ever-growing list – we are sure some of these additional collection points will be exciting for supporters. Any others willing to assist please contact us:

For details on collection you are welcome to contact our office, alternatively listed below are coordinators and collection points we have organised (we are always looking for other volunteers!):

Sheryl Rumball is the Australia-wide Coordinator of our 'Gift in Kind':

71 Hastings Road
WARRAWEE NSW 2074
Phone: 0432 952 762
Email: sherylrumball@hotmail.com

Jenny Grainer is our Victorian Coordinator based in Melbourne:

3 Exner Drive
DANDENONG VIC 3175
Phone: (03) 9795 6141
Email: jenn.mwbvic@internode.on.net

Leila Lydeamore in South Australia:

33 Ina Close
CRAIGMORE South Australia 5114
Phone: (08) 8255 0092
Email: Leila@chariot.net.au

Debbi Wilson in Western Australia

5 Collier Street APPECROSS WA 6153
Phone: 0417 926 695 - to arrange drop off
at warehouse in Claremont.
Email: wilsond@westnet.com.au



We would like to mention the generosity of Schenker Australia Pty Ltd in shipping our containers for a reduced rate - freeing up valuable giving for our other vital ministries! Thanks for the generosity Schenker Australia Pty Ltd, it was an unexpected blessing that we really appreciate!

Thanks for your partnership,

Michelle Dorey

Michelle Dorey
National Director