Ukraine Update.

No. 8 New Years Eve I 2023

Christmas Angels by Oksana Drachkovska

Up date from the Ukraine

DEAR FRIENDS!

Looking back at the end of 2023, it would be nice to say: now we see hope, the light in the darkness. But the situation in Ukraine is still dramatic. Right now, at Christmas time, when the whole world is reflecting on peace and coming together in families and churches to sing and celebrate, Ukraine is being heavily bombed. On the same day that the Sophia Waldorf School in Kyiv was hit, 183 rockets were fired. It's hard to imagine what would have happened if they had reached their "targets". So our friends in Ukraine are grateful every day that the defence systems they have been given are working and that the soldiers are watching the sky day and night.
It is really difficult these days. High-rise buildings where many people live, schools, kindergartens, libraries, maternity homes, cancer clinics, hospitals and shopping centres are often affected. The cities in the east, south and centre are under fire every day: Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhia, Kherson, Mykolaiv, but western cities such as Lviv, Khmelmytsky, Lutsk, Rivne are also being hit.
Above all, however, it affects the people who lose their flats and houses in the middle of winter. Worst of all, however, is the loss of loved ones who will never return to their families. This affects our communities, schools and friends. Just one example here, representative of many others, may they all rest in peace: Perhaps you remember a Ukrainian painter who did a workshop at the Logos conference with great passion and commitment: Tatyana Myaklovska, she also had exhibitions in Cologne, Essen, Dortmund. We used to support her projects because she does incredible work helping children from the war zones, including orphans, and making them a little happier. Yes, this is Tatyana with a big warm heart for children in need. Recently, however, her

heart has been filled with much pain, because her only son, aged 28, was killed in the war. She is presently in hospital.
And there are many other destinies that we are accompanying at this time. Above all, however, our two courageous colleagues: Tatyana in Kyiv and Andrej in Odessa. They are doing the essentials with great dedication under bombardment: everyday they bring deeds of love. They themselves would certainly say: No, we're not heroes, we're just doing what we can. But I think they do much more than they can and much more than can be shown.
But they wouldn't last long on their own. That's why they keep saying: feeling connected, knowing that people sympathise and support them, that gives them the strength to carry on.
So, dear friends, on behalf of all my Ukrainian colleagues and also on behalf of all the dear people we have been able to help thanks to your donations, I would like to thank you so very much!
The old year comes to an end with great gratitude and with the hope for peace in all the wounded places on this earth, our homeland.

Very sincerely

YAROSLAVA BLACK

At the Front by Nikita Titov

DEAR FRIENDS,

Here are a few more fragments and words of thanks. They stand here only as a token for many others:

When life is ordinary in peaceful times, thoughts and feelings are so mixed that we usually see it as colourful. Now, during the war, life is full of contrasts, where the colour black predominates. During Advent, many of our friends have died in the war. Most of them - young men. At the same time, many parents who experienced the whole burden of life in impossible conditions in Ukraine also crossed the threshold. Our congregation accompanied them all in prayer. On the other side of our lives are the festivals: Advent, Christmas. But now they sound completely different in our souls. Firstly, of course, there is the great joy that we can see and meet each other, that we can share our warmth and light. In times of war, these are not pious wishes, not abstractions. For most families, meeting each other when they don't know when and if it will be possible next time is a miracle. We began to celebrate more consciously in the community, because the greatest gift at this time is meeting one another itself. Also the opportunity to talk to friends, to express gratitude, to share everyday miracles.

Many families with children come to our house every Sunday. Adults had the opportunity to

create or experience something special together with their children. Even before the war, we tried to offer something special on Sundays, but the atmosphere on Sundays is fundamentally different now. Now it's like a drink of living water for everyone who comes, like a source of strength to get through the next week.

How can you celebrate when there is so much pain and misery all around you? How can we lift our heads and carry on living? Where do we find the source of strength for each day in the unknown? We have no answers. We search for the answers every day. But the support of friends from all over the world, who support us in prayer and action, including financially, helps us to breathe a sigh of relief every now and then, to get up, to plan ahead, to support those who are in dire need and to carry on living.

We are very grateful for this in the midst of bombs and explosions, destruction and death!

TATYANA NECHYTAILO, KYIV

WALDORF SCHOOL SOPHIA IN KYIV:

We thank all dear friends of the Waldorf movement, all parents who support us financially from abroad, all friends who help us in our need so that our children can go to school even during the war! Thanks to your help, we were able to quickly replace windows and doors damaged by the bombing and commission new ones.

We wish all our friends joy and peace at the end of the year, but even more important: to contribute to a victory, to the victory of light against darkness!

Christ is born!

YAVIR WALDORF SCHOOL IN KYIV

would like to thank you very much, especially the donations from the Waldorf School in Cologne, Chorweiler for your generous support! The small school is fighting for its existence, as more than half of the parents and pupils have been forced to flee abroad.

FILM PROJECT

Another story that we have been following with support is also a good sign for the New Year: A former Waldorf school student, Alla Savytska, who also belongs to our community in Kyiv, won a documentary film festival for the students. You can see her film about the Waldorf choir here.

In pictures

Waldorf School in Horodenka

Ukrainian Confirmands und Parents meet in Berlin

Christmas by Nikita Titov

Donations to support refugees and humanitarian aid in connection with the war can please be transferred to the account of the West German Region of the Christian Community with a corresponding reference in the purpose of use:
Bank account holder: Die Christengemeinschaft
IBAN: DE96 3702 0500 0008 2597 00; BIC: BFSWDE33XXX; BLZ: 37020500
Oder:
Bank account holder: Die Christengemeinschaft in Deutschland (Foundation)
IBAN: DE16 8502 0500 0003 6204 00; BIC: BFSWDE33DER; BLZ: 85020500

Thank you for all your support, good thoughts and prayers!

Black & Black Production