

**YEAR END 2016**

## Providing **Help to Widows** IN ROMANIA AND UKRAINE

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this,  
To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to  
keep himself unspotted from the world. James 1:27

The brethren in our sister churches in Romania and Ukraine have faced challenges in the past and continue to face struggles that are difficult for us living in the United States to fully comprehend.

Many of the challenges faced in the past and which continue to affect these believers center around the years the countries were under communist control. During those years, church services had to be held in secret and often children were not even able to attend services with their parents. Believers were sometimes imprisoned for their faith or in other cases sent away to work in labor camps in far off places.

In the church in Romania, 80% of the members are retired and a substantial portion of these are widows. The church in Ukraine has members of all ages and many children attending services (unlike in Romania where there are minimal children), but there are also many widows. The majority of the retired believers in Romania live on pensions of \$100 to \$150 per month while the average pension in Ukraine is \$30 to \$50 per month.

With prices for food and other living expenses not much different from what we incur, HarvestCall is thankful that through your help, these dear widows in need can be provided help to meet the ever increasing challenges

of everyday life. Examples of these programs include:

- Monthly food packages (Romania)
- General alms support for daily living expenses (Romania and Ukraine)
- Medical aid (Romania and Ukraine)
- Winter heating assistance (Romania)

During a recent visit to Romania and Ukraine, three brothers from the HarvestCall European Committee spent some time visiting with various widows, seeking to understand more fully the needs and concerns of these dear people and learn the stories behind those that HarvestCall is able to help in Eastern Europe. Following are a few of these stories.

### Staying True with an Atheist Husband

A sister in Romania is 90 years old and had 3 children. One of her sons is deceased and the other lives in the United States, but she has had no contact with him for the last 8 years. She lives with her unconverted, divorced daughter whose deaf and mute son lives next door. She has been a widow for 27 years and can no longer come to church. Her husband was an atheist, but her parents were believers.

### Home Raided by Communist Authorities

A sister in Romania is 94 years old with no children. She lives with the unconverted daughter of her husband's first wife. Her husband was a believer and died in 2000.

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Each month 440 food packages are sent to those in need in Romania, primarily to widows and retirees.



Wood is primarily used to heat homes during the cold winter months.





# Help to Widows

## CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The home where she lived was used for secret services during communist times. During our visit we were told the story by a current ministering brother that once when he was 15 years old, they were holding services in the room we were sitting



in. During the service, communist police raided the service and took the elder and homeowner away. This brother was later baptized in the same room.

### Looking Forward to Seeing in Heaven

A sister in Ukraine suffers from allergic reactions and went blind from glaucoma four years ago. She currently has moments of loneliness and despair from no longer being able to see the beauty of God's creation around her. She can't wait to get to heaven where she will receive her new eyesight.

### Keeping a Positive Attitude Throughout Life's Hardships

A sister in Ukraine is 95 years old. During the time her husband was living, he had been in prison for 3 years for his faith. Her daughter comes from a neighboring church each Sunday to be with her as she can no longer attend services. She really encouraged us with her positive attitude and good sense of humor in spite of all that she experienced during her life.



As we contemplate the faith of these dear sisters, in spite of everything that life has thrown at them and the challenges they currently experience, let's renew our own commitment to surrendering everything to our Heavenly Father. Thank you again for your donations that make it possible to provide help to these dear ones in Romania and Ukraine. May God bless you for your willingness to help.





# Helping Haitians Recover from Hurricane Matthew

An elderly woman huddled in her modest small dwelling, frightened at the sounds of gale winds and torrential rain on her tin roof. She prayed for deliverance from the violent storm. As the wind and rain intensified, the roof began to give way. Eventually it was blown completely off, leaving her exposed to the storm, as she repeatedly shouted "Save us, Jesus!"

This scenario and many similar occurred as Hurricane Matthew made landfall on the western part of south Haiti, killing hundreds of residents, leaving thousands homeless,

destroying crops and livelihoods, and leaving the populace vulnerable to starvation and disease.

One week later, a congregation of Haitian Christians gathered where their church once stood in Jeremie, dressed in their Sunday best, singing and praising God and thanking Him for deliverance. They have an unshaken faith in the rock of their salvation, and depend

on Him to see them through this dark valley they find themselves in. Their strong faith and reliance on God's provision is a wonderful inspiration to all as they practice the biblical directive to rejoice in affliction.

Haiti is a country that has experienced many heartbreaking setbacks, as the people struggle to make progress in their daily lives. Only recently, in 2010, a major earthquake destroyed much of their country, killed hundreds of thousands, and decimated their fragile infrastructure of roads, bridges, and buildings. Hurricane Matthew is yet another setback in their unfortunate history of tragic events.

Yes, the Haitian people are resilient. They will struggle on, but they need others to walk beside them, to comfort and support them in time of crisis. Even as the Good Samaritan tended to the stranger in need, God has provided HarvestCall an opportunity and an obligation to proclaim Christ and serve others through this disaster.

Many of the roofs Apostolic Christian work teams installed over the last 20 years were destroyed or badly damaged. One HarvestCall trade school was destroyed,



another badly damaged. The neighborhood of our Dairy Farm was hard hit, leaving many homeless. Many sponsored children lost their school books and uniforms. Well drilling equipment was damaged. Fortunately, our Citi Lumiere depot and housing units and Hospital Lumiere were not badly harmed in the hurricane. HarvestCall is responding by channeling disaster funds to Christ-focused relief organizations that have the necessary expertise, people and facilities to respond where we cannot. Where we have missionaries in the field, they are restoring operations and tending to the needs of storm victims directly, assisting other relief organizations and working with local community leaders to help where most needed.

The financial needs are staggering, but so too are the emotional and spiritual needs of the Haitians who are scrambling to find food and shelter. Please remember to also hold up our missionaries in prayer as they are being stretched to their limits. If you are moved to support Hurricane Matthew relief and recovery, please donate to the Disaster Fund online or one of our Haiti ministry programs. At time of this writing, it is anticipated that additional construction work teams will be needed. Plans are still developing. Watch for more information through our website, Facebook or email.



## The Missionary Experience: Common Themes

Over the past year, HarvestCall has interviewed numerous missionaries to capture their perspectives and testimonies. The videos are posted on the HarvestCall website for the purpose of encouraging and educating our brotherhood regarding missionaries and missionary outreach. You can find them at [harvestcall.org/our-missionaries](http://harvestcall.org/our-missionaries) on the right side of the page. As you watch, consider the following themes:

### Our Need and the Faithfulness of God

Missionaries frequently testify to the faithfulness of God. Several realities happen as brethren follow the call of God into the mission field. Similar to what we experience when called of God to things such as parenthood or marriage, our weaknesses become exposed. As one steps into the calling, the weightiness of the responsibility and the weakness of our flesh, are combined. This brings humility as the gap between our need and God's

provision is realized. It is from these moments that the missionary testifies to God's faithfulness and praises His name!



### Prayer

Closely related is the theme of prayer. In desperate times, prayer is of utmost importance. And, as just mentioned, unique callings of God bring a certain desperation due to this clarity of need. Missionaries will commonly ask for prayer

and openly discuss the role of prayer in their daily lives. It is not because they are more spiritual, but it is because their needs are more readily exposed. Prayer is a critical part of supporting those we are serving.

### The Church

An often underappreciated aspect of the body of Christ is the unspoken sense of support. We all recognize the more overt supports of being part of a local body, such as activities, teaching, accountability, etc. But, there

is church support that is more under the surface. To describe it, we use terms like brotherhood, unity, mission, fellowship, etc. When a missionary leaves for the field, they expect they will lose the more evident supports of the church since events cannot be attended and assembling is not possible. While those can be a struggle, they are somewhat prepared for that. On the other hand, the often unseen and underappreciated aspects of church support can be a bigger struggle because when their absence is felt, it is unexpected. Listen for these small references of appreciation for fellowship and connection or comments about their absence. And as a church, lets continue to try to reach out across the miles to help our missionaries continue to feel the realities of brotherhood, connection, and support.

### Finances

A notably absent theme of our missionary testimonies is the reference to financial support. While it may be mentioned, it is not prevalent. This is not due to an under appreciation on behalf of our missionaries. Rather, our church has a financial support model that is behind the scenes and thus not a pressing issue for the missionary. In contrast to the more common financial support models for missionaries, it is the goal of our system to allow the missionary to focus on their work while on the field, and attend to relationships when they are visiting home, not spend their time fund raising.

This support is provided via the Servant Fund. Rather than asking our missionaries to raise their own support, we support them as a brotherhood. It is requested that churches take collections for the Servant Fund and brethren also support the Servant Fund individually. The combined gifts of the brotherhood are held in the Servant Fund and distributed monthly to the missionaries. This provides for their living expenses and basic financial needs.

Consider your support of the Servant Fund and the blessing it is to take away this burden from our missionary brethren. By giving to the Servant Fund, you share in the spreading of the gospel as they share the Love of Christ with those they are serving.





## New Construction: Benefits, Opportunities & Challenges

Lord willing, the brothers intend to construct a new school campus in 2017 on the edge of town on a parcel of land currently being purchased through the financial support of HarvestCall. When finished, the students, staff and parents will enjoy many benefits:

- All classes will be held in the morning.
- Administrative areas and classrooms will meet state requirements and provide better functionality for the staff.
- The recreational and physical education area will be much larger and suited for training.
- A cafeteria will enable time together for relationship building around meals.

In addition to the obvious benefits, the brothers desire to capture the more subtle blessings that construction projects often afford. Sweet fellowship, quiet mentoring, and peaceful working relationships are common when brothers and sisters work along side of one another, exercising talents outside their normal vocation.

## Cross Cultural Mentoring

A local architect has been hired to ensure quality standards and timely completion of the new school campus. The costs are counted; the plans are drawn. After the initial site preparation work, construction will ramp up in mid-2017 and last for 6-12 months. But construction projects can be more than brick and mortar. It may be a time to build up the house of God. Some potential opportunities might include:

- A Spanish-speaking brother responsible for the liaison between Bro. Lalo and the HarvestCall Mexico Committee. Bro. Lalo will be heading up the project administration from Ixtlan.
- A brother familiar with MX construction methods and standards who would serve for many months based out of Ixtlan. He would be responsible to engage local brothers and men in work that expands their current set of skills and makes them more marketable after the project is complete. Because the gospel is never secondary, he would also be asked to pray and care for the men that he serves and to solicit brothers from the US to come down and co-labor in the work.
- Brothers from the US who are willing to travel to Ixtlan for a week or more at a time, build relationships, come alongside of other young men in the context of construction.

These roles and responsibilities are not required for project completion, but they are opportunities in which HarvestCall would be willing to facilitate. Please consider your current availability to serve, your skills to share, and God's call upon your heart.

To learn more, email [mexico@harvestcall.org](mailto:mexico@harvestcall.org)



# Serving a Community through Education

One by one, parents approached the staff with a simple request, "Would you consider extending the elementary school for our children who are transitioning to middle school?" Their concerns were valid knowing the vulnerability of middle school years. Both staff and parents understood that the many months of careful teaching and discipline could be lost in a short time if adolescent students were left to an environment without guidance and biblical teaching. A decision was made to provide middle school instruction.

Colegio de las Americas is a church-supported school located adjacent to the church in Ixtlan, MX. God opened the doors for the brothers in Ixtlan to deliver a Christ-centered influence through teaching children and reaching a wide range of families.

Due to state requirements, they added a small science lab which enabled them to expand into middle school.



Some growing pains followed. In order to accommodate these older children into the same building, the school shifted to dual sessions. Elementary classes

were taught in the morning, while middle school classes were held in the afternoon. Nonetheless, the gospel presentation remained central. Parents knowingly enrolled their children into education where scriptures were taught regularly through a "Values" class. Christ's presence is both taught and lived out. People are drawn to the light.



# Responding to Natural Disasters in the U.S.

## EXTENDING OUR OUTREACH THROUGH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

In the aftermath of a major natural disaster, media coverage brings the event into nearly every home. Video clips of the devastation, testimonies from victims and the harrowing accounts of near death experiences of those caught in the fury of the event are widely available.

Many are moved with compassion to reach out and do whatever they can to assist the victims. Often, masses of

volunteers flock to disaster areas. Organizations that specialize as first responders deploy trained and experienced teams capable of assisting local disaster response groups. People and organizations that are not properly credentialed, are turned away. This protects the victims as well as the volunteers who may not be equipped to deal with the reality of the situation.

In the early days of World Relief, the Disaster Committee was focused on the immediate response to natural disasters. This required that volunteers be available on short notice to deploy to impacted areas. A truck was outfitted as the “first response” vehicle. While this was effective on a limited scale, it was

an opportunity for a relatively small group of volunteers. Over time, our approach shifted from immediate relief to rehabilitation – rebuilding homes – and lives – damaged by storm. This opportunity comes months after the actual disaster. As time passes and the headlines turn to other events, people forget the devastation that others have suffered. The sea of volunteers that responded in the early days of the recovery has gone away. However, families are still waiting

for much needed assistance. For some, this means living in extremely unhealthy and deplorable conditions.

There are exceptions to this model as in the case of the Washington, Illinois tornado and the Oakville and Taylor floods. When these events occur in or close to our church communities the USA Committee will do all that we can to support a rapid response. These efforts are organized through local leadership and supported by HarvestCall. Tool trailers, vehicles and equipment are available for these events.

In recent months there have been numerous natural disasters across the country. Floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires have caused suffering for thousands. While we do have compassion for those who are hurting, we are not always able to minister to them directly. This does not mean that there is nothing we can do to help them. First, we can all lift them up in prayer



Photo: Anita McDaniel

asking that God would provide comfort and supply their needs. However, the scriptures instruct us to do more...

*And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? James 2:16*

We are thankful for organizations that have the capacity to respond effectively in the time of urgent need. HarvestCall is able to reach out beyond our own limited resources by providing financial support to them. During recent flooding in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Florida, HarvestCall funded the building and distribution of Disaster Boxes to these areas.

A Disaster Box contains food and personal hygiene items to sustain a family of four for 3 to 4 days. Also included in each box is a Bible or Bible Story Book.



**Our next winter rebuilding ministry project will be in Columbia, South Carolina, to help flood victims. Volunteers will be needed starting the week of January 8, 2017. Visit [harvestcall.org](http://harvestcall.org) to learn more.**



Photo: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

**STAY CONNECTED** | Prayer support is needed in every part of HarvestCall work. Here are two ways to learn about projects, how to be involved and how to pray specifically.

**Stay in touch with email updates** | Go to the HarvestCall website ([www.harvestcall.org](http://www.harvestcall.org)) and select “Join our email list” on the home page. Enter your email address.

**Free newsletter** | We will mail an Update newsletter four to five times a year with recent news regarding HarvestCall ministry programs and how to be involved.

**HELP FINANCIALLY** | If you prefer your donation is used where most needed, indicate General Fund. If you feel moved to support a specific project, include the name of the project. If donations are greater than the need for any specific project, they will be used in the General Fund where most needed.

An envelope is provided with appropriate boxes to check. Checks can either be given to your local HarvestCall Representative or mailed to:

**Apostolic Christian HarvestCall  
PO Box 3797, West Lafayette, IN 47996**

Or if you wish to donate online, visit the HarvestCall website at:

[www.harvestcall.org/donate](http://www.harvestcall.org/donate)



### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

PO Box 3797, West Lafayette, IN 47996 | 765-250-4295 Tel | [info@harvestcall.org](mailto:info@harvestcall.org) | [www.harvestcall.org](http://www.harvestcall.org)