



## THE MASTER'S FOUNDATION

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### Summer 2023

#### Dear Ministry Partner,

Greetings dear friend! In this issue of our newsletter, we hope to give some perspective on the ministry of Stan Watrich. Stan was our beloved president and the co-founder of The Master's Foundation, who for many years, gave tireless effort and dedication to the people of Ukraine. It isn't possible to count the projects undertaken by The Master's Foundation under his leadership.

His cousin and co-founder, Henry Watrich recalled, "It was the late 1980's, we were returning home on a dilapidated Aeroflot flight when Stan, with tears in his eyes, turned to me and said: We must help them! I've realized my calling!" This was a call to ministry in Ukraine which Stan passionately pursued for next 40 years.

In one of his last correspondences, Stan stated: "It has been a 38-year journey of miracles that I had never dreamed of. I am ever grateful to God that he would take a country bumkin off a farm in Glendon, Alberta and place such an amazing calling on me to serve in Ukraine. I am leaving with indelible memories that will be cherished forever! My sincerest thanks to the board of Masters for all their support and pray every success and God's will on the person that He chooses to pick up the baton and continue serving Ukraine!"

At the time of Stan's first visit to Ukraine, he was deeply moved by the crowds that pressed in, trying to obtain a Bible. He was in the country at the time of Chernobyl in 1986. He was there just after the Orange Revolution in 2004. In 2015, just a year after the Euromaidan uprising, he stood at the Wall of Remembrance in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv reading the names of the 113 people who lost their lives in this Revolution of Dignity.

Here we are, 43 years after Stan's initial visit to Ukraine and the current war continues to affect the lives, homes, and families in Ukraine. The devastation of the country doesn't look to be ending soon. The destruction of the Kakhovka Hydro Electric Station which flooded 120 villages and thousands of kilometers of agricultural land has unleashed untold ecological damage and added to the economic disruption of the country. The destruction of tons of grain in port cities like Odessa has caught the world's attention.

Recently I received an email from a pastor friend and leader in Ukraine. It was deeply moving to sense the weariness and worry that grips him as he cares for the many refugees who have found their way to his city and institution. He commented about the war and a recent battle in which the Ukrainian

troops gained an advantage but with significant loss of life. One can sense the raw emotion these leaders feel as they live out what the invasion of their country has produced.

At the beginning of this letter, I mentioned our dear friend Stan Watrich. It is at times like this that I miss Stan's wonderful insights and perspective on the situation in Ukraine. We are honored to share with you some of the memories and photos of his life and influence upon the people.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gene Clarke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gene Clarke – President



THE MASTER'S FOUNDATION

# BRINGING HOPE, LIFE & SALVATION

SUMMER 2023

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## OVER 500 DAYS OF WAR

Summer in Ukraine may have lessened some of the hardships. There was no need to huddle in the cold without heat in their homes. Some were able to plant a garden. Many returned to dig through the ruins and rubble of what was once their home and tried to erect temporary shelters.

For the children of Ukraine, summer ought to be the time for visiting grandparents in the village, going to the river or lake to swim or picking strawberries...but this is not the case as the war surpassed Day 500. Schooling has been disrupted. Fathers are at war, away from home for very long periods. Many are enduring shelling and living in fear or have been evacuated to a place of moderate safety. The daily attacks continue to bring carnage, destruction and loss of life of innocent civilians who are simply trying to make the best of the situation by "enduring".



Destruction and death have touched almost every single family in Ukraine.



This little boy sleeps with the portrait and the medals of his deceased father.

MF continues to supply humanitarian aid to the many refugees requiring shelter and sustenance. Here peas, oats and flour are being loaded and transported to a facility that treats those wounded in the war.



Masters also purchased a pallet mover to assist in handling of these heavy sacks.

In a northern region, where shelling has much increased, our contact has been told not to meet in groups (church) due to the possibility of greater loss of life if struck. In the villages, electricity is not always available, and locals cannot bake bread. He purchases it in a larger center and drives it out for distribution to families – mostly mothers and children.



# STANLEY GORDON WATRICH : DECEMBER 23, 1940 - JUNE 24, 2023

*“Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His saints.” Psalm 116:15*

In 1988, on Stan's flight home from his first trip to Ukraine, the Lord spoke to him. What God would speak to him that day would change the trajectory of his life. God told Stan clearly that day - "This is your calling." From that moment on, Ukraine was indeed his calling, and Stan began to make decisions that, we know now, will likely have results that last throughout eternity.

Stan came home and would soon walk away from a very successful printing business so that he could serve the people of Ukraine full-time. In 1983, Master's Foundation was birthed solely to serve Ukraine. Stan and his cousin Henry quickly got to work. Stan and Henry's hearts for printing was the main focus and method of the early days of Master's. Bibles, tracts, devotionals, and commentaries were translated and printed in Ukrainian and distributed throughout the country.

In the early 80's Master's printed the first ever Children's Bible for Ukraine. Over 1.5 million copies have been distributed to children all over the country. To this day, Master's continues to receive testimonies of the positive impact the Bible had on the people who received it.

As Stan's trips to Ukraine increased, the ministry in Ukraine grew. Many needs came to his attention, and Master's grew to respond and meet those needs.

The ministry of Master's Foundation has included many projects. Some of these are:

- Building Bible Colleges.
- Assisting Pastors and Churches.
- Helping orphanages that were in dire circumstances with repairs and renovations, and providing the children with much needed vitamins, clothes, school supplies, craft supplies, etc.
- Printing literature for people in prisons, letting them know that they were not forgotten, that there is a God, and he loves them very much.
- Filling and shipping massive containers of humanitarian aid with food, clothing, medical supplies to help meet the practical needs of the Ukrainian people.
- Sponsoring radio and television programs that proclaimed the good news throughout Ukraine.

Stan often said that he was honoured and privileged to serve the wonderful country and people of Ukraine. He continued to share his heart and his vision up until the weeks before he passed. Whether he was well or struggling with his many health issues, Stan's passion and calling remained the same. His heart and faithfulness to his calling can be an inspiration to all of us.

Halina, Stan's wife of 60 years, is a big part of this story. We are so grateful for her sacrifice so Stan could fulfil his calling to Ukraine. Halina would often be in the office helping, packing items for shipment, and praying for the ministry. Thank you, Halina.

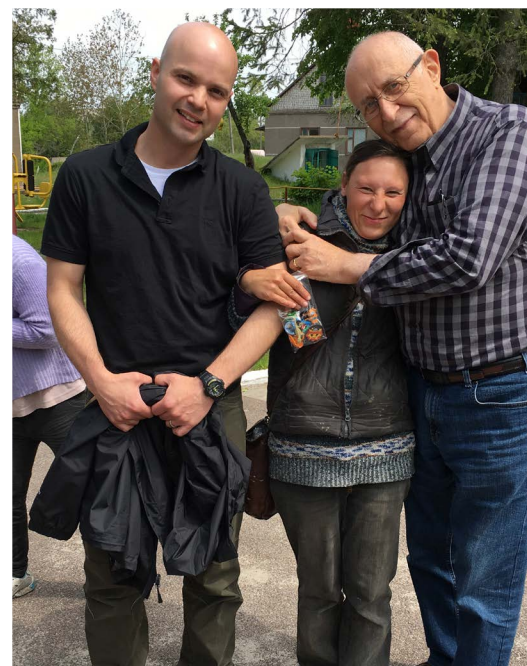
Stan's passing marks the end of this era, but the work of Master's Foundation continues. With the war that continues to rage, help for Ukraine is needed even more. Stan's calling is now our calling, and our biggest tribute to him is for each of us to continue to serve the wonderful people of Ukraine.



The Early 1980's



Visiting Stan at the hospital April 2023



Stan was grateful for his wife Halina's support



Stan's heart was especially sensitive to orphans and he never passed up an opportunity to visit them and hug the children.



Article written by Karen Milley, MF Board Member



Children at all summer camps were sure to receive a Bible

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AND THE RETURN OF SUMMER CAMPS

After more than a year of air sirens, missile attacks, hiding in cellars, MF sponsored a trip for special needs children to travel to the Carpathian Mountains where the mothers, one father and leaders wept in gratitude as the heavy burden of the previous year lifted with the knowledge that the scenery, aromas and clear air were a brief God given rest.



Much attention is aimed at the healing and support of traumatized children. Programs specifically directed at children are met with great joy by parents who carry the burden of keeping their children safe. Here in one of the Art Therapy programs MF supports, young boys are creating bagels while the girls prepare to drop varenyki into the pot.



These boys are enjoying their summer camp experience. Traumatized by the loss of their father and the war, the family experienced severe stress. Evacuated from the east, we were able to sponsor 3-months accommodation for this family of 6 boys (mother has only one hand) in western Ukraine. They, as well as many other refugee children, were extremely grateful. On the last day of camp, the children cried and requested that another camp be held the following month.



This was one of ten 3-day camps held in various villages. 80 children attended this camp. They heard the good news of the gospel, spent a wonderful time of games, contests, trampoline and slides, singing and simply enjoying themselves. The parents and local authorities expressed their deep gratitude.



Thanks to you dear donor, MF was able to extend aid and summer camp experiences to many children.



*MF will be in Glendon and Bonnyville Alberta on the November 11 weekend.*



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## Children of Victory Project



**Dear Ministry Partner,**

The ongoing war in Ukraine has placed a serious strain on its people and their families. While there are no published statistics, many have been killed and many more are seriously injured and traumatized. Mothers, grandmothers and caregivers are coping with being separated from their loved ones for months at a time. Due to the loss and destruction of their homes many are being evacuated to safer communities in other parts of the country. Many children have been orphaned and those left to care for these children are struggling financially to provide the basic needs for their families. It is a struggle to keep the lives of these children as normal as possible while the caregivers' hearts are deeply wounded because of an unjustified war.

One of our Ukraine partners describes the ongoing challenges that families are facing.

*Tatyana's 5-year-old daughter Camila, is an active cheerful princess is looking forward to attending kindergarten. Husband Taras who left home to volunteer in Feb 2022 came home only twice. He worked with reconnaissance drones. On June 30<sup>th</sup> 2023 a guided aerial bomb hit their bunker. On July 10<sup>th</sup>, the family received news that Taras is listed as officially missing in action.*

*Tatyana waits for confirmation of DNA tests and as long as there is a sliver of hope, she holds on to it. In all our discussions it was evident, there is a deep pain that is hidden behind a brave face. Life must go on and each of us must continue in their own way. Children need to be brought up, taught, protected and released into adulthood. We ended our conversation with prayer.*

And here is another interview conducted by our organizer:

*Today on the 545<sup>th</sup> day of war, I met with a beautiful young family. She, a mother of two and a widow quietly drinks her coffee and speaks of her life. "We were a happy family with two healthy children. My husband was so proud of them and so happy. When the war began he joined the army as a volunteer and was receiving training. He called often and I desperately waited for each and every call. On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, a bomb hit the dormitory where the military was housed. More than 100 soldiers were killed instantly and among them my husband, Mykola. He was only 43 years old. We have been alone for the second year now and trying to living without him. My son has become very nervous, and my daughter sometime screams. Everyone at the school and our friends understand that the children are having a difficult time. I know I must be strong and that I must be both a father and a mother!"*



**In front of a memorial board honoring Mykola**

To address the challenging needs of many Ukrainian families, Master’s Foundation is excited to announce a special fall initiative, **“The Children of Victory Project”**. With winter coming soon, it is imperative that we supply and support families that are unable to keep their children warm this upcoming season. We will be focusing on children who have either lost a parent or have a severely injured loved one due to the war.

It will be a personalized and caring event for both child and caregiver. These families will be invited to a “shopping trip” where each child will be able to choose their very own new winter coat, hat, mitts and boots, all prepared in advance by our partners in Ukraine. They will also be given a Bible and a meal at McDonalds. While the children are enjoying themselves, their parent or caregiver will be offered a time of fellowship, encouragement and prayer. This project aims to assure families that “we recognize your sacrifice, and you are not forgotten!”

The cost of sponsoring each child is \$135 CAD and our goal is to bless 500 families. Would you help us in this special project? Please prayerfully consider how many families you can sponsor for our **“Children of Victory Project”**. Together we let these families know that they are not alone.

We have enclosed a response card for your convenience. Thank you for partnering with us!

*Every war is a war against children who are in grave danger of physical harm and severe emotional distress.*



\* All photos supplied by MF contacts and partners in Ukraine.