

**EDITION 4 - KHARKIV**

# FAMILIES ON THE EDGE



Take a look at  
your map at home.  
Can you find  
Kharkiv?

## GREETINGS FROM KHARKIV

**POPULATION 1,500,000**

### Big City, Bigger Hearts

Kharkiv is the second biggest city in Ukraine, and was the third church planting in Ukraine. In July 1994, a team of 12 disciples came from Kiev (can you find Kharkiv on your map?) to plant the church in Kharkiv. To their amazement, 511 people came to the first church service! Two weeks later, 7 new sisters and 7 new brothers were baptized into Christ. The first brother to be baptized, Max Duboski, now leads the Kharkiv Church of Christ with his wife Elena.

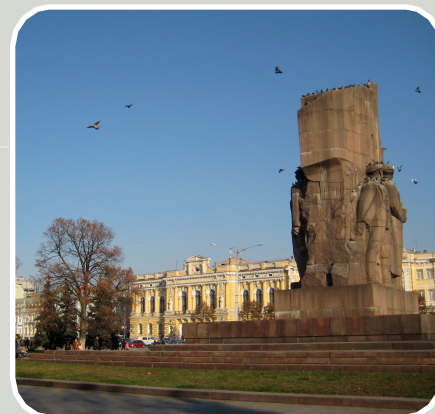
Today, we have 140 brothers and sisters in Kharkiv. Out of these, 85% are young married couples, with 45 children between 1 and 5 years old! The Kharkiv Church also takes care of 3 smaller churches nearby with a total of about 20 brothers and sisters. One of these cities is Belgograd, located in Russia just across the border. There we have three sisters: a grandmother, mother, and daughter.

HOPE worldwide is also living and active in Kharkiv, and has reached out to help build HOPE worldwide in other cities where we have churches as well. read on

### Good News and Prayer Requests

In December, a new brother and sister were added to the Kharkiv family. Our new brother had been leading a youth group at a local Baptist church for five years before getting baptized and joining our family. We ask you to please pray for the marriages and families in Kharkiv. Because our church is full of young families, and we have no older married couples, we need all the help that we can get in raising up our marriages and children.

Before you read on, take a minute to pray for the Church in Kharkiv as a family.



# OPEN HEARTS AND HOMES

## Travel Journal: Two Days in Kharkiv

### Day 1 – A Train Ride and a Baptism

It was still dark as I walked to the nearest Kiev metro station, to catch our 6:30 express train from Kiev to Kharkiv. At the train station I met my friend Tanya, a single sister from Kiev. As we traveled (the trip was about 6 hours), I looked out the train window to see the sunrise over the beautiful Ukrainian countryside.

We arrived in Kharkiv a brother named Igor met us and gave us a tour around the city center. Kharkiv is a very clean and beautiful city, with wide streets.

We came to Nadya's home, where we saw a baptism! It was a great celebration, including singing, sharing, and a table literally covered with sweets, buterbrot (Ukrainian sandwiches), and juice. We heard the amazing story of how God worked through years of Nadya's dreams and prayers for her classmate Dima, our newly baptized brother in Christ!

We stayed with a young married couple, Andrei and Virginia. When we arrived at their home we were immediately offered slippers, tea, and more food than we could even finish. That night we collapsed on our pillows after more than a full first day.



With Max and Elena



### SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK:

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

**JOHN 13: 35**

### Day 2 – Singing, Talking, Walking

The next day, we woke and prepared for the Sunday service. Church met in a small meeting hall in a local cultural center. They welcomed us during the church service, and we sang together with the disciples and listened to a great message!

After church we observed a favorite Ukrainian pastime – Walking! We spent time with the church leaders, Max and Elena, and other disciples as we visited more Kharkiv sights. This includes Freedom Square, known as the largest city center square in Europe, over 2400 feet long and 400 feet wide! We stopped for lunch and were joined by more single disciples, for more walking, of course.

Brothers and sisters took us back to the train station, where we said our goodbyes with two rounds of hugs, and they urged us to visit again soon. As we took our seats on the soviet style sleeping train back to Kiev, we couldn't help but feel a little sad leave our new family in Kharkiv. It is amazing that from the moment we came to when we stepped back on the train, we were surrounded by disciples every second.

Praise God for the Midwest churches sacrificing so that we could open churches all around Ukraine!

### DISCUSSION:

1. Have you ever visited a church in another city? What was it like?
2. What are some ways that we can love disciples in other cities?

### ACTIVITY:

**For the whole family:** Think about the last time you traveled somewhere together as a family. Make a short travel journal with pictures and stories from your trip. Who are some of the disciples you met? Say a prayer for them as a family.

### CHALLENGE:

What city would your family like to visit to support missions? Get in touch with the church there.

**Don't forget to pray for the churches in Vinnitsa and Kharkiv!**