

Ministry Update – March 2022

Dear praying friends and partners, shalom!

I would like to dedicate this month's update not to our existing projects, but to certain ideas about the future of our church and ministry. But first I will say a few words about –

THE WAR IN UKRAINE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON OUR CONGREGATION

Even though I was born and spent my early childhood in Lithuania (which was also once part of the Soviet Union), today I truly mourn over what is happening between Russia and Ukraine. Olga and many members of our congregation **have relatives and friends who are in the war zones or have become refugees** that lost everything in one day.

When the war had just begun, I also immediately realized that in our and other Israeli congregations there would be conflicts between Russian-speaking believers – those who arrived from Ukraine and those who are from Russia. And so it happened indeed. Some believers took one side and some another, started arguing with each other and forgot about the unity the Lord is calling us to keep. **Please pray for the situation in Ukraine** and for our and other Israeli congregations to focus more on practical help to the suffering and the refugees than on political debates.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF DESERT FLOWERS CONGREGATION

As you know, in addition to taking care of Aviv Ministry, I am also pastoring a small church that I started 25 years ago. I have always seen myself more as an evangelist and initiator of new projects than a long-term pastor, that is why I thought that I would start this church, and in five years or so I would hand it over to someone else. However, so far I have not been able to do that, even though I did try and looked for different options.

Now I have a new idea and ask you to pray that God would reveal His will to us in this matter. We have another small Russian-speaking congregation in the city, and it is led by a very good and dedicated pastor who devotes all his time to this congregation and takes very good care of his people. And here's the idea I have had recently: **if we unite with his congregation**, both sides will benefit from it. Now this pastor and I are thinking and praying about this option. We both understand, of course, that uniting two different groups will not be so easy, but imagine what glory it will bring to the Lord when many congregations get divided, and we will unite! :)

THOUGHTS ABOUT A NEW PROJECT

Since Aviv Ministry has already got three big projects, I was not planning to start anything new in the foreseeable future, but recently the Lord put certain thoughts on my heart that I would like to share with you now. For many years Eduard, our Aviv Center part-time worker, has been **helping new immigrants** - those who have no relatives or friends in the Land or immigrants who are handicapped - **who need special care, advice and support** in adjusting to new life in Israel. I knew about this work, but recently I have got more interested in its details and the needs it addresses, especially in the view of the big Aliyah wave that is now expected from Ukraine and possibly Russia as well. Eduard currently acts alone, investing only his personal time and resources into this project, so we think that Aviv Ministry could step in and make it part of Aviv Ministry, take responsibility over and develop this important humanitarian work, which has got beautiful potential, opens many doors for

the Gospel and builds long term relationships with many Russian speaking Israelis. Please pray that the Lord shows us His will and helps us proceed with these ideas in the right way. God willing, next time we will describe them in more detail.

MORE PRAYER REQUESTS

1. **A book about Aviv Ministry.** I have never thought anyone would want to write a book about me and Aviv Ministry, but some time ago our Dutch fundraising organization (Stichting Aviv Ministry) decided to produce such a book, that would contain my testimony and ministry experience, history of Aviv Ministry from the very beginning, its challenges and success stories, etc. A Dutch journalist is working on the book (in English and Dutch). Please pray that it will be written in a way that will bring all glory to God and good fruit.
2. Please keep praying for **Olga's health.** The progress that happened after the operation stopped at a certain point and there has been no improvement for quite some time already. The doctors do not give Olga any plan for the future or even a clear diagnosis, while she remains limited in her movements and dependent on others for simple everyday tasks.
3. Also please keep praying that I would be able **to find a helper** for me as Aviv Ministry Director. If we do launch a fourth project in the near future this need is going to be even more vital.

Thank you for all your prayers and care and may God bless you all,

Dov and Olga



In Aviv Center - we have finally returned indoors!



In Aviv Center - no more just takeaway, hot soup is back!



Worship and Bible study night in Women's Shelter.



Eduard and an immigrant family he has been helping.