



THE HUNGARIAN UNITARIAN CHURCH

BISHOP'S OFFICE

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Dear Susan, Dear Alicia, Dear Partners of Faith!

The tragic events happening in Ukraine in the past week have shaken the entire world, reminding all of us about the fragility of the peace that we had previously enjoyed. We do not know what the future will bring to us, but we are certain that it will be very different from the past. We fear that social instability and the subsequent uncertainty will become part of our daily mindset, deepening the rift between people, countries and cultures. After two years of a pandemic that put a terrible pressure on our communities and tested the strength and optimism of all of us, we are facing now another threat, one that is induced not by an unconscious virus, but by humans. We are watching as millions of people, who used to live only a few hundred kilometers from us need to leave their homes, their belongings, their life and search for safety in other countries. We see the sorrow, the fear and sometimes even the desperation in the eyes of children who have lost everything that meant the world to them. Families ripped apart, with some of their members staying back to fight, while others set out to find – if not peace – then at least safety.

We would like to embrace our fellow Hungarians, living in the South Western parts of Ukraine, persecuted by war and earlier by the always hostile and mistrustful gaze of the majority. We feel their loneliness and sense of abandonment and wish to help them. But in these hours of uncertainty, we also want to open our hearts and homes to all who need shelter. Even as we formulate these sentences, we are waiting for two families who will spend the night in the guest rooms of our headquarters. Indeed, it is not much, but maybe this way we will be able to bring some warmth, some safety to the spirits of these people who have lost so much.

But we do not wish to open our doors only. We also wish to open our hearts, to feel their sorrow, and let them in the rooms of our life, in order to reassure them that humanity has not died under the rubble of bombed buildings or in the frozen hearts of the ones in power.

In these hours of need we feel strengthened by the thought that you are with us in prayer and action. We urge you to remain so, and – albeit not with your physical presence, but – with your compassion and care help us in helping. Our church, through its social action organization, has volunteered to help those in need. Many of our congregations are ready to house the refugees coming from Ukraine. We have pledged to raise and deliver money and food to the Ukrainian side of the border, because these are the most necessary elements during this catastrophe. We hope that you will join us in prayer and action, supporting the efforts of many churches and organizations that wish to help the ones in need.

Indeed, it is finally time for humanity to prevail over aggression!

Kolozsvár, March 4, 2022.

Kovács István

Bishop

Best wishes,

Farkas Emőd

Lay President