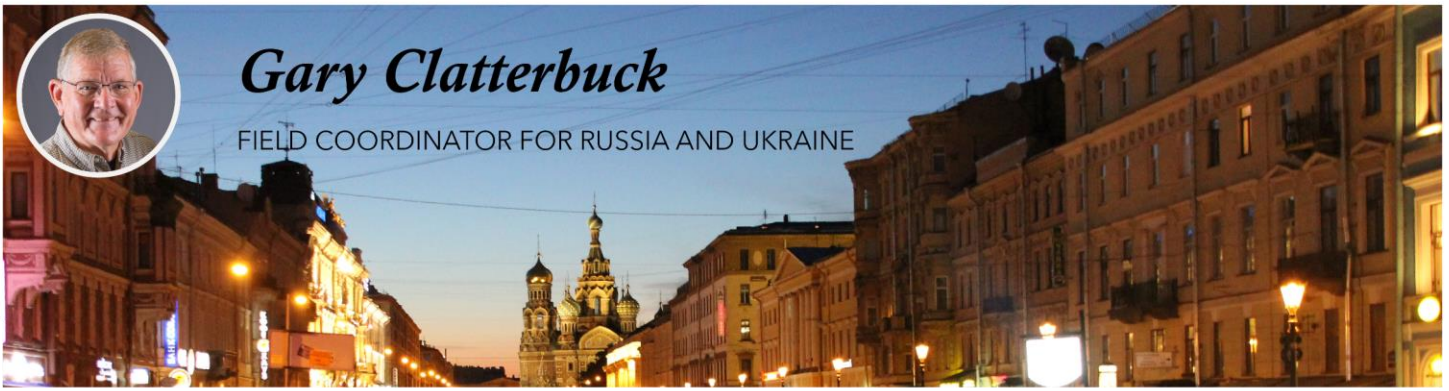




# Gary Clatterbuck

FIELD COORDINATOR FOR RUSSIA AND UKRAINE



FEBRUARY 2023

## “SO, WE KEEP GOING.”

### *Prayer*

- For additional locations for the learning centers in Russia.
- For the upcoming seminar (February 15–18) for trauma counselling hosted by the Odesa Seminary.
- For a more powerful diesel generator that can run the whole Odesa campus for half a day at a time.
- For an end to the war in Ukraine.

### *Praises*

- For a wonderful time with family over the holidays.
- For my and Joy’s recovering from a bad respiratory bug.
- For the continued work of training and teaching continues in the midst of conflict.
- For a less severe winter than in years past.

*When we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time  
(in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.*

1 THESSALONIANS 2:17 (NIV)

Dear prayer and support teams,

We as a family were able to be together during Christmas and New Years’ time. Joy and I traveled to Switzerland to be with our daughter and her husband. We spent the first part of the trip in Zurich where she lives, then Joy and I went to Zermatt and enjoyed the Matterhorn area.

Then we spent a week in a new area our daughter had selected. It was a great place near lifts to take us up the mountain. However, on Christmas Day I



came down with a bad respiratory bug, which really hit me hard; fortunately, my doctor had sent a Z-Pak with me just in case, and it really helped. After a few days, I was better, but the thing took

several weeks to completely leave my system. Joy got it on our return home and has also recovered. So, if you wondered why it has taken awhile to be back in touch, now you know.

I have just booked a flight to Regina to share the ministry at several churches.



We keep in close contact with the leaders of two seminaries, waiting for word on when we can begin sending teachers and others to help. I think that will come as soon as the conflict stops. Oleksandr, president of the Odesa Seminary, has invited us to come, and we will as soon as it seems relatively safe. I plan on meeting him in person in April, as he will be in the US and available. Pray as we discern the direction of the ministry during these difficult times. I also am in contact with several of the students we have taught and have a ministry in some of their lives via the internet.

Pray for those our teachers have taught over the years. Literally, there are over a thousand former students in Russia and also in Ukraine sharing all over these war-torn countries. They are serving where we cannot go. One is Cino, a student from the last missions class in Ukraine. When the war began, he returned to his native Tajikistan. He is serving the Lord in a place where we from the West can barely enter. He's young but enthusiastically serves the Lord working in a small church reaching the young people in his area.

Here are some notes just received from the leaders in Novokuznetsk and Odesa. I think they tell you the most recent news and things to be thankful for even in the war times. It has been an unusual time of life. The people involved in the ministry are well aware of the current situation in Russia and Ukraine. I pray daily for the war to end. I pray daily for those who are living in the middle of the whole situation. Our friends and colleagues in Russia are continuing to train new students. I received this note from Victor Federoski, the head of the Novokuznetsk Learning Center:

I sincerely thank the Lord and you, dear brother, for your sincerity and many years of assistance in our ministry of spiritual education. I am glad to call you my co-worker. Thank you for your teaching to students, many of whom remember you fondly. Thank you for your attention to our needs! May the Lord reward you, all those who donate for our service, with mercies and blessings!



*Our last day in Novokuznetsk*

Dear brother, I've been thinking about our cooperation over the past years. Thankful that in God's timing we will be able to have teachers again from the USA and Canada.

But I am sincerely glad that we got to know each other and serve together.

I want to tell you a little about our training center.

Praise the Lord, the work of education continues no matter what! There are currently 31 students in the OT-H1 group. Already studied for 2.5 years. Other brothers and sisters – applicants – are already on their way. Apply for training. Praise the Lord for the willingness of new students to learn.

We also have our own difficulties. Since there are many visiting students, we have to occupy all the church premises for dormitories, but they are still not enough. Teachers are accommodated in apartments. Therefore, we pray that the Lord will somehow consider the issue of additional premises for our training center. Pray for us too.

Once again, I want to express my gratitude and gratitude to you for being with us in ministry. If we fail to meet on this earth, I sincerely believe that we will meet with the Lord in heaven.



But we still hope to see you here on earth!  
We look forward to seeing you! Be blessed!

Your brother in Christ,

Victor

These reports from Odesa, you will notice a difference in tone; I attribute this to war fatigue. They have electricity from generators and from public sources. Praise God this has been a less severe winter than many.

First from Oleksandr, president of Odesa Seminary:

Christmas and New Year was for me personally time of rest. I felt a bit exhausted with all different demands and several travels in December. So, my family and I were altogether in Odesa, enjoying each other during Advent season and Christmas.

The seminary is back to work in spite of difficulties with electricity. Thankfully we have two different electric lines so we can switch from one to another when we have opportunity. We also have three generators. One is running our heating boilers, another a small conference hall in the basement of academic building, and still another is in the process of connecting to academic building. After we finish with this, we will have all academic department and first floor of the dormitory electrified. At this time, we normally have electricity for three hours on and for four or six hours off. Access to two lines somewhat improves our situation.

Besides sessions, we are also planning different extracurricular activities. For instance, February 15–18 we are hosting a seminar for trauma counselling. We hope to have about 50 persons. In March, we will host the second retreat for younger ministers. This is our partner project with Odesa regional Baptist association. The program is designed for three years. We

held the first event in November. I delivered a paper on the spiritual power of habits. It was a really great event. At least this is what I sensed and what other people responded. So, we keep going.

Speaking about the needs, I think the problem with electricity will remain with us and can even go deeper. For this reason, I think that the seminary might need a more powerful diesel generator (appr. 100–120 kWt capacity) which can run the whole campus for 12–15 hours if there is a need. This is a temporary solution but an important one. Another option aimed towards a more long-term perspective could be solar panels, but it is hard to think about such a project these days. Too many risks, I guess.

We are also working on reducing our energy consumption. Right now, we are replacing all lighting devices with more efficient ones. This is being done with the support of one of our partners. We also plan to replace old kitchen equipment with more upgraded and efficient. This will allow us to reduce our electricity consumption by 40 percent.

Chances are I will be in the US in the first half of April. I am planning to be in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. The trip could be for about two weeks. I am in the early stage of planning now. Appreciate if you share any ideas regarding this opportunity.

Gary, you are certainly welcome whenever you are ready to come. We will do our best to host you here. Thank you for praying for us and keeping in touch with the churches.

Kind regards,

Oleksandr

Then this note from Slava, one of the professors who was in our area last summer:





I am very sorry for the long delay in responding to your email. It's getting tougher here in Odesa by the day. The war situation makes it difficult to focus on any project or task for an extended period of time. We have electricity for only a few hours a day.

The seminary is hanging on. We have fewer students now, but the educational process is going on. In a couple of weeks, we are going to have a conference on war trauma (Bridges to Healing). This theme is very relevant for many Ukrainians who have developed PTSD as a result of their traumatic experience of war.

*Gary Clatterbuck*

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Oleksandr is extremely busy trying to keep the seminary afloat. I hope he will be able to visit our partner churches in the States this spring.

I am so thankful to you for what you did for me during my time in California last year. It's great to know you as a friend and brother in Christ.

All the best,

Slava

Hope this gives you a flavor of the ministry right now.

