

ウクライナ・スロバキアチーム

2017.9.4～2017.9.9

■ Noriko Sada (TLCCC Crown of life Fukuoka church/Pastor)

Praise the Name of the Lord!

I appreciate your intercessory prayers for the team.

I joined the team to Ukraine and Slovakia by the grace of God. It was the first visit to these countries from the Water From the Sanctuary Mission. I felt the mission in Europe from the WFSM entered new stage.

We were to serve at two Apostolic Churches in Slovakia and one New Testament Church in Ukraine, also we were planned to have street live performance in both.

We got cyber attack from Ukraine just after this mission trip was announced. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan issued travel alert for there was tense a part of East Ukraine. But the Lord gave me His word, "Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles." (Acts 22:21), so we could accomplish our mission in His protection.

The Lord opened new doors through Missionary Sally and Malek in TLCCC Prague Church. At the beginning of TLCCC, God spoke by the words of prophecies that Europe mission started from East Europe through. Decades later, I realize that this mission trip is one of fulfillment of the word of prophecies. Also, the book, "PROPHECY-Its reality and use" in Czech which is written by Pastor Paul Akimoto played an important role. Missionary Sally handed over this book to Pastor R of Apostolic church in Slovakia, so he asked us to have a seminar of the prophecy longer. Not only for that but also he gave the team more time of praise and worship time, testimonies and message. The audience listened attentively at the seminar, people came to the church one after another, finally more than one hundred got together. The message of thanksgiving from 1 Thessalonians 5:18, which was spoken by Pastor Paul Akimoto, penetrated minds of the audience. I felt the power of the Holy Spirit worked strongly through all the meeting. The 16 copies of "PROPHECY" were sold there.

We crossed the border by mini bus between Slovakia and Ukraine. The local pastor told that it took from ten minutes to seven hours. It means it is impossible to estimate the arrival time. At the early morning prayer meeting, we prayed and asked the Lord that we could get through the border within twenty minutes. The day we crossed the border, there were relatively few cars in front of us, we could pass through about forty minutes. When we looked the other side of the road, there were long line-up. Even way back to Slovakia, we could go through about one hour, the local pastors were amazed and we praised the Lord.

We planned to have street live wearing Yukata (which is a casual and single layered cotton kimono, that is usually worn in summer). But the weather forecast said it was going to rain, the temperature dropped below 10 degrees Celsius. When we prepared for the first street live in



Slovakia, it was sprinkling, but just after we started our performance, it was stopped and getting warmer. We were asked to share our testimonies and bring evangelical message, too. Few Japanese were seen in Slovakia and Ukraine, Yukata and Japanese Gospel, especially “God is love” attracted many local people, one man accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior.

The church we visited the last day was the largest protestant church, which covered all apostolic churches in Slovakia. We had a meeting with the elders, they accepted us very friendly. They gave us time freely. Some of the members of this church attended the first day’s meeting. So they knew us already. The Holy Spirit worked through the meeting strongly and touched the audience. When we left Slovakia, the pastors gave us messages to come back soon. I am excited how the Lord will do His plan in these countries. All glory back to the Lord.

■ Ryoko Okamoto (Tokyo Antioch Church)

We so much appreciate your prayer and fasting prayer for Ukraine and Slovakia mission team. All members of this team had got back to Japan in safe. Personally, it’s been a long time since the last time I joined this kind of mission team. Since started job in the company where I work now, I could not have joined mission team nevertheless having tried to ask many times to get permission for week-off from company. It is not so hard to get day-off, but getting week-off is different story, because in our company, usually they do not allow workers to have holidays which is more than a day, except official holidays set in calendar. However, God has given me the words from long ago, and that is “I will send you to the world.” I had no idea when it will be but decided to just believe that God will open the way for me to join mission teams and go to the world for God’s work. As the request I’ve been praying to God, joining the practical mission team was my wish, and I was praying, “Please let me join the practical team next time when I will be able to join mission team. The Lord answered my prayer, and the miraculous thing that all of my boss and manager permitted me to have week-off to go abroad happened. Though I had also financial problems to pay for the flight, having continually prayed to God to give me all the financial need if it’s really God’s will to join this team, finally, this problem was solved by offerings for me from some people. I really could feel the hand of God which is opening and preparing the way for me and for this mission team. Honestly, I was always blaming myself every time when I could not get permission from my boss and not join mission teams. I’ve been thought it was because of my lack of faith. I thought if I have faith strong enough to open the door, I can get week-off easily even in our company. However through this team, the Lord has taught me that God has already prepared the mission teams He’s leading us to join, and He is the One who makes it able for us to join these teams, and all I need to do is just trust in God.

Because of the cyber attacks we received from Ukraine to our church website before leaving, we needed to stop posting articles on blog on real time during street live performance and the meetings in church, not to be found out where we were and prevent any dangerous possibilities. In these situations, I have been so nervous, it was no wonder that anything dangerous could happen to us. What if someone attack us during street live performance or church service, or

what if something coup, like happened in Turkish airport, really happen to us, or what if someone points the gun to us, I imagined several situations and asked myself, “Will I keep my faith?” I just prayed to God, “let me keep my faith to God whatever happen to us.” But I give thanks to God, in such tensions, He has protected us from any danger and revealed blessings and His glorious works in this team.

Two weeks ago from this team, I happened to watch the movie “Les Innocentes”, which is about the tragic reality happened in Polish Monastery during the World War II. When I was reading the pamphlet of the movie, the words “Warsaw-the land of Martyrdom” caught my eyes, and I wondered why this words stuck so deeply in my heart. On the 4th September, the day of leaving Narita to Warsaw for flight transit, firstly I was surprised that Warsaw was the place for transit, and also amazed that we our mission team could have an opportunity to sing Japanese gospel in the airport of Warsaw. There was a great grand piano set near the gate we used, and the signs was put next to it, which says, “Please feel free to play the piano”, “It’s your show time”, so we could sing J-gospel songs freely under the suggestion of Pastor Sakaki as the praise leader. I felt God’s hand leading this opportunity in Poland which is the place where once the mission team from our church visited long ago for spiritual battle prayer. We’re so excited for His next step entering into the Western Europe from the East which is just as God told us through prophecy.

We saw a lot of God’s works and blessings through this team, however personally, it has come to my learnings to aware the weakness through this team. God told me how weak I am, how arrogant I am, and how undeserved I am, so I got to pray for repentance for each thing. When I felt my weakness the most, which was on the flight back to Japan, God gave me a lot of blessing words including scriptures relating to personal vision in life. So I praised God that I believe He sent me to this mission team to build my faith, and let me prepare for the works He’s given to me in life.

Again, thank you so much for your prayer and fasting prayers.
Give praise to His Name.