

September 6, 2020

Scott's Thoughts



“For me long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you” (Romans’ 1:11, ESV)

You may have heard by now that the mission trip to

Ukraine that Ava and I planned to go on in September has now been postponed. However, we have rescheduled it for October. The government of Ukraine, in order to combat the spread of the virus, closed their borders to all foreigners from August 29 until September 29. That may seem like an odd or arbitrary selection of dates, but one of the web sites says there is a small town that attracts 10,000 foreign religious visitors each year. They were afraid that many people in such a small area for several weeks would result in a tremendous risk of the virus spreading.

The dates for this trip have changed about eight times now. The other day someone said to me, “Maybe God is telling you not to go.” That could certainly be the case, but I feel we must make this one last effort to go and help them all we can before winter hits. However, they may well have snow in October. I have been there before when it did snow in October. There is much to be done and some of it needs to be done in person. We support a young man who is the minister for a small congregation. It will help us to help him if we

can sit with him, see him, and come to know him, not just as a person on paper but, as the scriptures say, “Face to Face.” I do not know if there will be other obstacles to delay us. I pray there are no more, but even if there are obstacles, we will not lose heart.

I really wish everyone could have an experience like this. It is life changing. I have such vivid memories from my first trip. At that time I was overwhelmed by the poverty that existed. But in spite of their poverty, the people of Ukraine made us feel so welcome. They love family and laughter and after our Bible lessons, we spent many evenings listening to stories about their experiences and their families. The room was warmed by love, because by evening the one fire for the day was burnt down to just a few coals.

We will be greeted with reserve this year because the virus is affecting them as it is the rest of the world. The joy will be just as intense. The love will grow, in spite of this horrible disease. The Bible classes will be taught with love. And we will strengthen them as they will us. Yes, I’m anxious to go but will also be just as anxious to return.

“Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.” (Philippians 4:1, ESV)

Thanks for listening and keep on shining.

—Scott