

The Christian Family

Church Planters in Belarus



March 2022

Dear Pastor and Congregation,

We are back in America. The American Embassy in Minsk closed, and all personnel left Belarus March 1st. The State Department recommended all US citizens leave Belarus. There was no war or violence, but the economic situation was deteriorating quickly. We decided to leave because of the likelihood of not being able to access money and the involvement of Belarusian troops in the war in Ukraine.

The Situation in Belarus

Most of the sanctions levied against Russia were also levied against Belarus. Most of the banks closed because they couldn't conduct any business. There was a run on the banks and ATM machines as people converted their local currency into dollars and euros because the Belarusian ruble was losing value very quickly. Currently, you must order foreign currency in advance and then there is a two week wait before you can get money. The electronic pay system is shut down nationwide and the shelves in stores are becoming bare. Things are expected to get worse before they get better.

A Difficult Decision

We were torn as we watched this unfold before us. On the one hand we were wanted to continue to minister and encourage the folks God gave us to minister to, but after speaking to our Pastor, it was clear that we needed to leave. We were able to clear out our apartment and store our personal belongings in three days. We left Belarus by bus on March 4th and arrived in Vilnius, Lithuania, at 4:30 AM on March 5th. We spent a few days in Lithuania to clear out minds and unwind a bit before we took a flight to Warsaw, Poland, and then we landed in Chicago on March 10th.

The Future

No matter the circumstances, we never know what the future holds, but the speed at which things changed has left us in state of bewilderment. We are still processing the emotions of liquidating our home and leaving behind those that we grew to love. We are taking a wait-and-see attitude as we await the outcome of the war, and the repercussions that will follow. Our heart is in Belarus and our desire is to return and continue our ministry. We ask that you pray for us, but also for Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and the people that have been displaced and are suffering because of the war.

For Souls in Belarus,

The Jeff Christian Family

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