

**Subject: LMM 25/07/2023 - ACKNOWLEDGING YOUTH WITH A MISSION (YWAM) NEWCASTLE'S ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE**

**MOTION:**

That City of Newcastle:

1. Notes that YWAM Newcastle, led by Managing Director David Stephenson, has recently organised three delegations of dedicated Novocastrian Volunteers to travel to Ukraine to provide assistance, outreach and support to many towns and cities, affected by the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia;
2. Commends YWAM Newcastle for their bravery and community spirit, and risking their own safety to travel to the other side of the globe galvanizing the support of their community to provide assistance to those in need in the Ukraine;
3. Appreciates the messages of gratitude and thanks to the people of the City of Newcastle from Mayor Vadim Zerdeckij, Mayor of Moschun, Kiev Oblast, and Mayor Roman Polikrovski Mayor of Zbarash; Ternopil Oblast, brought back from Ukraine by YWAM Newcastle;
4. Acknowledges that YWAM Newcastle's efforts in Ukraine delivered:
  - Assistance in building emergency housing;
  - Art activities with parents and children (YWAM Newcastle had an Art Therapist on the team);
  - Restored community assets including the Moschun main bus-stop in town centre;
  - Provided close to 100 Newcastle Jets shirts, and kitted a whole soccer team with Newcastle Jets uniforms;
  - Church services which included many families with loved ones on frontline;
  - Two YWAM Team members travelled east to Donetsk, via Kharkiv (30km from Russian border) staying near Bakhmut, raising funds for and delivering \$4,000 for tourniquets, gas masks, generators, inverters, sleeping bags and tents to front line soldiers and paramedics at their request. This team travelled to within 40km from Donetsk city and 120km from Mariupol, with two of the soldiers they assisted jumping straight back into their armoured personal carrier after breakfast and heading straight back to the front at Bakhmut.
5. Once again, thanks YWAM Newcastle for their humanitarian assistance to Ukraine.

**BACKGROUND:**

- YWAM Newcastle Media Release

**“From Kyiv to Kramatorsk, Novocastrians represent.”**

*A group of Newcastle locals are assisting on the ground. Right in the midst of the pain and carnage of war-torn Ukraine.*

Building emergency homes, running art activities for children, restoring community assets and for some, delivering relief supplies to soldiers on the Eastern front in Donetsk. This list represents some of the efforts of these local volunteers. Others at home have generously provided over 70K for a rescue van and excavator, both essential to help relieve the suffering of Ukrainians.

YWAM Managing Director David Stephenson explains: “from February 24th last year I kept seeing images from Ukraine flash across our TV screen, and couldn’t believe this was happening. I then

thought, with our international networks, I was likely one of a privileged few in Newcastle that - with a few phone calls- could get into Ukraine and help. And hopefully mobilise some local friends to go too.”



*[Above] Food Distribution in Klavdievo-Tarasove, Bucha Region*



Four weeks later David was rolling in with a food and relief convoy right in the Kyiv Oblast, Bucha region. The Russian military had left just days before, with Russian tanks and military junk everywhere. Amidst the debris, devastated women trying to reclaim their destroyed homes. People everywhere hungry, wondering whether they could live within the chaos of their destroyed homes.

*[Left] 5 days from liberation, local authorities begin the tragic search for bodies in the dormitory town of Borodyanka; Kiev Oblast.*

Fast forward six months to August 2022, and the first team of Novocastrians went all the way to Kyiv, building and preparing for temporary emergency housing in Moshchun, a village of 1500 people, victim of the battle of Moshchun, the last stand in the failed Russian military effort to take Kyiv.

Since then, a third effort [May 2023] from Newcastle has gone and returned. These Novocastrians provided emergency house building, art activities with kids and mums, restored a public bus-stop, and two team members travelled to Donetsk bringing relief and medical supplies for soldiers.



Over 100 items of Newcastle kit provided by the Newcastle Jets were distributed to locals. Team member Garry O'Dell recounts:

*"It was heart-warming to see many war-affected Ukrainians standing tall in their fresh Newcastle Jets gear. And to realise it was building a bond not only with us, but with Australia and the City of Newcastle."*

Local Moshchun Mayor Vadim Geordeski thanked Newcastle Lord Mayor Cr Nuatali Nelmes for sending the "Beautiful People" from Newcastle, who "help us understand that we are not alone." Click for video of [Moshchun Mayor and Valentina](#) [a single lady with her Newcastle-supplied house]

For more details and a solid range of video and photo media please contact David Stephenson on +61414522655 or [david@ywamnow.com](mailto:david@ywamnow.com).

<https://www.ywamshipsnewcastle.org.au/from-kyiv-to-kramatorsk-novocastrians-represent/>