

Christian Radio for Russia

Sponsor of the New Life Radio Satellite Network—Odessa, Ukraine
Serving the Slavic world with Christian truth through Biblical programming



SPECIAL REPORT 8/7/22

www.CRFR.org

NEW LIFE RADIO (NLR)—Carrying on the mission despite the actions of men and nations

Psalm 33:10-12 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...

164 days of war have passed since the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and New Life Radio continues its service of proclaiming Christ and Him crucified to warring nations and suffering people. We have the privilege to carry out Christ's command to proclaim the Gospel via radio, but as in every generation, such service often calls one to extreme challenges, and for the NLR radio missionaries, this summer is proving to be a time of great challenge, but also, new opportunities!

Ever since our relocation from Moscow to Odessa in summer 2019, leaving the restrictions of Russia for the openness of Ukraine, our staff has devoted all their efforts to providing listeners with outstanding Bible teaching, Christian music, and encouragement to develop and strengthen disciples across the Russian-speaking Slavic world. We had a nice facility in Odessa and simply focused on our daily routine of radio air shifts, recording, contacting Christians, collating information, and programming it all to the best of our ability. We just minded our own business and went about the task of putting New Life Radio on our telecom networks.

Then February 24th came and the world started to change. We quickly organized an alternate studio for NLR in Romania, while keeping our operations going in Odessa. In June, NLR added new staff, even as the intensity of the war heated up against this city. We thought perhaps it would be a Russian bomb that would end NLR's Odessa operation. But strangely enough, it was a Ukrainian law that did the job, and this brings us to today.

In July, President Zelensky signed a restrictive mass media law that essentially bans the use of Russian language and music on radio across Ukraine. Part of a *derussification* war policy, this act will force CRFR to relocate NLR's broadcast transmission facility outside of the country.



NLR radio building in Odessa



*site of Russian attack on Odessa port 7/23
--1 mile away from the NLR radio building*

FORTUNATELY, the remote NLR studio in Iasi, Romania is able to fully program the radio network, bypassing the restrictions this law imposes on us. We also have time to plan and work out a long term solution to this dilemma. CRFR has determined that **Budapest, Hungary** will be our next site to house a transmission and studio facility for NLR's Russian service. Our team will begin the technical setup there by September 1st and connect it with our Odessa studios.

Because CRFR is the legal broadcast entity that transmits over the *Hotbird* satellite channel and controls www.NLRadio.net, we should be able to isolate the Odessa production center from legal entanglements forced by this media law. This will increase our cost of operation somewhat (estimated at \$2000 more per month for studio space, telecom payments, and two staff persons) and may cause additional organizational changes, but we believe our mission partners will step up to help us in this crisis.

We are confident that the Lord will show us the proper solution to continuing our radio service to listeners across Russia, Ukraine, and the former Soviet Union, while staying in our current Odessa studios. But that could change as well, as the city is undergoing constant attack by Russian bombing.

As some doors close, God opens up others, and even as we deal with the problems of operating a Russian service in a new way, we are gearing up to develop a new version of NLR in Ukrainian, called *Радіо Нове жумтя*. This is an opportunity to broadcast in two languages to serve Ukraine independently from Russia, and the 43% of the population that speaks Russian.

NLR Ukraine: A progress report



In our last report, we provided a fairly comprehensive overview of how a Ukrainian network could develop, eventually transmitting over satellite radio as a prelude to developing local FM radio affiliates across Ukraine.

Two aspects of this--financing and programming--are still in the early stages of our strategy that includes supporting 3 to 4 new missionary staff; and compiling teaching and music resources to fill a 24/7 broadcast schedule. While we need new sponsors for the staff, we have gone ahead and committed funds from our NLR-Russia budget to hire one program director for the new station, who will be responsible for all aspects of programming. A radio automation system is now being built that will be used to organize the daily radio format into broadcasts.

With the advent of this new media law, we will need to step up this process dramatically, in order to get a minimal Ukrainian broadcast transmitting on the Internet by October or November while affording us time to complete the staffing and program acquisition. In the meantime, our staff will remain in Odessa and work as independent missionaries and Ivan will stay in Iasi to oversee all network functions for the Russian service. The law states that restrictions on media will last until Ukraine recovers all of its territory, including Crimea, so we don't expect to get back to normal any time soon. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian government is taking excessive actions against Russians and anything connected to Russia, so we hope our new Ukrainian broadcasts will cause local officials to relax their guard and leave the NLR staff alone.

We don't know how things will turn out, but we know the Gospel needs to be communicated to Russia and Ukraine, and the Church in these lands can greatly benefit from access to solid Christian instruction and a clear teaching of basic Christian doctrines. It is time for meat, rather than milk, and proclaiming HOPE rather than the pessimism that is felt everywhere in a nation being systematically destroyed. Our staff will gladly dish it out soon in both languages, the Lord willing!

CRFR has a proposed minimum budget of \$5200/month to have a three staff satellite/internet radio operation from our Odessa studios.

REACHING BACK IN TIME OF WAR: comments from listeners

Pasha: *THANK YOU! We are in Kharkiv, and we feel your prayerful support! May the Lord richly bless you and your labor which is very precious for us, especially in this difficult time.*

Maxim Zhirkov in Astrakhan: *I am delighted with your broadcasts! I like everything! I get edified from healthy teaching, the music format, and well organized themes!*



Kirill on the air

LISTENERS continued...



PAVEL: *I spend a lot of time on my job unfortunately, and every night going to bed I turn on your radio and even in my rest, I get edified! Big thanks for your labor and to all who labor for God's glory!*

Maria Bender: *Good day Brothers in Christ! MY FAVORITE New Life Radio! Praise the Lord for all of you!*

Irina Filipenok: *Huge thanks New Life Radio for your ministry in this uneasy time. I find lots of comfort in your reading of the Psalms and God's Word and in sermons you are broadcasting! One big plea: to pray about ending this war, and for my beloved city, DONETSK. God's blessings on your labor!*

CRFR is pleased with the work of our staff to be a Christian bridge between believers in Russia and Ukraine, and how good NLR sounds and the teaching offered! Listen to them on the air at www.NLRadio.net and go to CRFR.org for our other news updates!

FROM our team in America at CRFR:

We need your prayers as we seek guidance and the Lord's counsel on how to take NLR through this dangerous period in their work. If you know of potential mission partners who can help with the new Ukrainian station, please direct them our way, and we can send news or a video presentation to them so they can see for themselves what NLR is and does. **Thanks to everyone for your faithfulness** to keep our missionaries equipped to do the work of an evangelist even in the midst of war! **GOD IS GOOD!**

Contact:

Christian Radio for Russia

Box 428

Jamestown, NY 14702

Email: CRFRoffice@gmail.com

web: www.CRFR.org



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