

Ukrainian family at the Jihlava parsonage

Since the beginning of March a Ukrainian family has been living at our parsonage. We are still getting to know them, because they communicate only in Ukrainian and Russian. The mother Halyna is 37 years old, and her three children came with her. They come from the west of Ukraine and decided to leave for Czechia because Halyna's husband was already working here. They went to safety for their youngest, Ulyanka, who is only four months old, leaving Halyna's mother and sister and her children at home. They got to Jihlava with the help of the local Orthodox Church, where they took our offer of accommodation and handed them over to us.

The oldest of the children is seventeen-year-old Anya, who immediately started work. She was only two months away from finishing high school at home... The middle Kostya is 14 years old, started attending the nearby school this week and really likes it there.

When they came to introduce themselves on Sunday service, we were moved to tears by Halyn's request for prayers for Ukraine. They don't know what they will do next, their plans change every week, they are strongly drawn to their family in Ukraine, but safety is safety. They are very grateful for any help from us. We have not yet been able to move the family together because the father is working in another city, but probably he will soon join them as the fifth person in our small apartment.

We are very happy to have an active church member with excellent Russian among us (she lived in the USA for several years where she attended a Russian-speaking church). She also has experience working with refugees and has been a blessing to us, helping us sort out a lot of things we hadn't thought of. Others from the congregation are also helping – they got equipment for the baby right at the beginning, found clothes, donated a washing machine, contributed to the collection... The biggest expense for us will be energy (gas, electricity), the prices of which are quite unpredictable this year.

