



FamilyLife® Global

*News and information
from FamilyLife partners
around the world*

Hope for Families Everywhere

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Ukraine—Shining a Light in the Darkness of War

by Jayna Richardson

February 24, 2022 was a day Ukrainians will never forget. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has brought fear and uncertainty to much of the world, but especially to those who have been displaced from their homes and their country. As tensions and warfare between Russia and Ukraine drag on, the crisis has led many to lose hope. But in the midst of the darkness of war, light shines through. FamilyLife teams in several neighboring countries are serving and caring for refugees physically and spiritually and are reminding those affected by war that God cares for them.

In Romania, the FamilyLife team has begun a ministry to refugees in their office. One FamilyLife staff member in Romania shared, "Many of them cried at the borders when they saw so many people who waited for them with water, food, places to stay over, words of encouragement, hugs, and translators."

Working in partnership with local Romanian churches, they opened a day camp for kids and are sharing the gospel with refugee kids and their moms. One Ukrainian man received Christ because he saw the love of God shown to the refugees.

Immediately after the war started, FamilyLife and Cru staff leaders in Moldova began turning their office space into a transit center. One FamilyLife couple shared, "The lines at the borders are huge, it may take more than ten hours to go through customs. Many are walking because they don't have a car." Once the refugees reach the transit center, they're able to rest, shower, eat, and receive practical help for their next steps as they prepare to move to somewhere more permanent.

Moldovan staff families are opening their own homes too. This has given them opportunities to hear the stories

Ukraine—Shining a Light in the Darkness of War



of those who are fleeing Ukraine and pray for their many needs.

The FamilyLife team in Hungary also sprang into action quickly and partnered with a Hungarian Baptist ministry to help get supplies to those in need.

Jeremy Merillat, FamilyLife leader in Hungary, said, “We took turns with our co-workers driving to the border and working twelve-hour shifts helping refugees as they crossed into Hungary. While there, we greeted people as they arrived and brought them to a nearby elementary school where they could find food and drinks, beds to sleep on, clothes, or any other essentials they might need. Then we helped coordinate rides to nearby cities where they could find longer-term housing. While there we heard heartbreaking stories of families who were fleeing the war. A man named Ivan, who was blind, got off a bus with all of his belongings in an Ikea bag that had broken in his flight

to the border. He asked apologetically if we could find another bag for him. We brought him a suitcase with wheels instead. He ran his hands over the object, and his face lit up as he realized what he had received. He thrust the empty suitcase over his head and shook it triumphantly. He wept openly and said, ‘God bless you!’”

The FamilyLife team in Croatia has also been welcoming refugees into a center they set up to provide protection and supplies. In addition, they’ve endured miles-long lines at the Ukrainian border to bring food and medicine into Ukraine and rescue families (mostly women and children) out of war-torn areas. They’ve grieved and prayed alongside the women and children who have had to face the difficult decision of leaving behind husbands and fathers, who must stay in Ukraine and fight.

Perhaps most encouraging is knowing that ministry is continuing even

within the heart of Ukraine. Ukrainian FamilyLife leader Olexiy Travnikov has continued serving and reaching out to fellow Ukrainian families in these hard times. He and some volunteers have not only provided humanitarian aid and food packages, but Olexiy has also taken opportunities to counsel families through the strain of war, share encouraging biblical messages on the radio every week, comfort people living with PTSD, and have many conversations with people about the importance of having a relationship with Christ. Through these efforts, hundreds of Ukrainians have heard the gospel in recent weeks.

The situation in Ukraine continues to be an ever-changing challenge and a constant reminder that we live in a broken, fallen world. But God is still at work in the hearts and lives of those who are hurting and in despair, and He is using His people in Ukraine and nearby countries to shine the light and love of Christ through the darkness.

Egypt: A FamilyLife Launch Sixteen Years in the Making

by Jayna Richardson

Sixteen years ago, an American couple, Warren and Ann Abrameit, relocated to the Middle East to serve as medical missionaries. While in Qatar, they used FamilyLife materials (translated into Arabic) to also conduct marriage and family ministry, but the work was difficult and discouraging. When they returned home to the US a few years later, they wondered if they had made any difference at all.

Ten years later, they discovered that one of the couples they had ministered to, Sameh and Mona, had kept the ministry going by leading multiple small groups in Qatar and later in Kuwait. The seeds that the Abrameits had planted were still alive and healthy! However, Sameh and Mona were desperate for new Arabic resources and training, both of which FamilyLife and the Abrameits were able to provide in 2018 and again in 2020 in Kuwait just before the COVID pandemic hit.

After the successful 2020 training and launch of new Arabic resources in Kuwait, Sameh and Mona felt strongly that their native country, Egypt, greatly needed this ministry. They encouraged FamilyLife to travel there next.

Divorce rates in Egypt have exploded in recent years. In 2017, Egypt had the highest divorce rate of any country in the entire world. Sameh and Mona not only had a burden to help their fellow Egyptians, but they also had connections with local believers and churches that were eager to grow in their own marriages and help others do the same. They coordinated efforts with two FamilyLife Global representatives from the US, Jim and Judy Burrows and Greg and Janet Westbrook, who traveled to Egypt in March 2022 to launch a new FamilyLife ministry.

Over several days, the Burrows and Westbrooks demonstrated marriage talks and small groups using the Weekend to Remember®, Art of Marriage®, Art of Parenting®, Like Arrows®, and HomeBuilders® studies for several groups, including Sameh and Mona’s home church in Cairo (a 100-year-old church with over 1,000 members) and Cru staff in Alexandria.

The newly trained leaders have a tough road ahead of them. Culturally, many Egyptians won’t seek help or counseling for their marriages. And prioritizing family over work is a

struggle, even for the believers. Very few of those who were trained were able to say they have a couple in their lives whose marriage they respect and look up to as a positive example.

Even knowing these challenges, the participants were teachable and enthusiastic, eager to grasp and put into practice the marriage principles for themselves so that they can go on to influence others.

At least eight churches in two cities were touched by this FamilyLife training, and four small groups are starting as a result with more likely to follow. Egyptian Cru staff are already making plans to print 1,000 copies of Art of Marriage and 1,000 copies of Art of Parenting to distribute from their bookstore in Alexandria. In addition, FamilyLife is launching a new website, www.arabfamilylife.com, which has several Arabic resources available for free download.

“We see the website as an important way to reach areas in the Middle East that we can’t reach,” says Judy Burrows. “Even places like Iraq or the Gulf region. The site can go places we can’t.”

The Abrameits never could have predicted that their ministry efforts sixteen years ago in Qatar would produce new growth years later in Kuwait and Egypt. The launch of FamilyLife in Egypt is an important step in reaching couples in that country with the good news of the gospel—and it just might be a catalyst for reaching the rest of the Middle East as well.



2022-2023 Events Calendar

Please note that events may be cancelled or delayed due to COVID-19

Europe (Eastern)

Slovenia	Aug 5-12, 2022	Family camp	Veržej
Slovenia	Sep 24-25, 2022	Leadership training	Radenci
Slovenia	Oct 7-9, 2022	Marriage conference	Rogla
Slovenia	Oct 21-23, 2022	Marriage conference	Veržej
Slovenia	Nov 4-6, 2022	Redeemed for a high price	Izola
Slovenia	Nov 11-13, 2022	Marriage conference	Izola
Slovenia	Nov 25-27, 2022	Redeemed for a high price	Catez

Europe (Western)

Germany	Aug 20, 2022	Marriage mentor training	(online)
Germany	Oct 8, 2022	Marriage seminar	Heinebach
Germany	Oct 8, 2022	Marriage seminar	Krefeld
Germany	Oct 15, 2022	Marriage mentor training	Burgstädt
Germany	Oct 15, 2022	Marriage seminar	Schwedt
Germany	Nov 19, 2022	Marriage mentor training	Munich
Germany	Nov 25-26, 2022	2022 Marriage mentor training	(online)
Switzerland	Sep 8, 2022	Marriage course	
Switzerland	Sep 9, 2022	Prepare/Enrich seminar	Zurich
Switzerland	Sep 16, 2022	Parenting course	
Switzerland	Sep 16-18, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Wildberg
Switzerland	Nov 17, 2022	Marriage preparation course	
Switzerland	Mar 11-12, 2023	Weekend Getaway	Zurich
UK	Nov 5, 2022	A Day Together	Cambridge
UK	Nov 12, 2022	A Day Together	Hull

Middle East and North Africa

Due to sensitive nature of these countries, please contact global@familylife.com for further information.

North America

United States—Phone 1-800-358-6329 or www.familylife.com for a complete listing of conferences.

Canada	Oct 21-23, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Penticton, BC
Canada	Nov 4-6, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Huntsville, ON
Canada	Nov 11-13, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Whistler, BC
Canada	Nov 18-20, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Jasper, AB
Canada	Nov 25-27, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Hecla Island, MB
Canada	Feb 10-12, 2023	Weekend Getaway	Victoria, BC
Canada	Mar 3-5, 2023	Weekend Getaway	Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON
Canada	Mar 28-Apr 30, 2023	Weekend Getaway	Montebello, QC
Canada	Apr 28-30, 2023	Weekend Getaway	Lake Louise, AB
Canada	May 5-7, 2023	Weekend Getaway	St. Andrews, NB

Events Calendar continued ...

From a recent event in the UK:

“The day... has been like a caffeine hit to spur us on and encourage us to make more effort in helping each other grow.”

“You take a broken car to a mechanic when something is wrong or when it needs servicing, so do the same with your marriage.”

“It is highly valuable to learn the tools of communication in a non-contentious environment for use in real-life conflict.”

Events Calendar continued...

Oceania

Fiji	Aug 20, 2022	Before You Leap	Suva
Fiji	Sep 17, 2022	I Still Do	Suva
Fiji	Oct 15, 2022	Art of Marriage	Suva
Fiji	Nov 19-20, 2022	Art of Marriage	
New Zealand	Aug 26-28, 2022	Weekend to Remember	Tauranga
New Zealand	Sep 9-11, 2022	Weekend to Remember	Taupou
New Zealand	Nov 18-20, 2022	Weekend to Remember	Christchurch

New Resource

The (Nearly) Complete Guide to Better Married Sex (online course)



What if sex in marriage can be... spectacular?

FamilyLife’s Nearly Complete Guide to Better Married Sex course encourages you toward more satisfied, healing, creative Christian sex from the soul-level out.

In addition to a “How Can I Be a Better Lover?” self-assessment, each of our five sessions offers:

- Engaging video talks from experts on sex in Christian marriage
- Fun, inventive activities to rev up the romance
- Thoughtful articles and audio segments addressing issues of concern
- Couples’ devotions to bring God into the bedroom
- Recommended resources for trouble spots

To learn more, visit: <https://www.familylife.com/learn/the-nearly-complete-guide-to-better-married-sex/>

Latin America—The Journey of Spanish Translations

by Roger Dye and Jayna Richardson



“My wife and I came here with no hope. We were not going to get divorced, but we haven’t had any joy in our marriage for several years. We were just resigned to a marriage without happiness. But what you have taught us this week has given us a new vision. We leave here with real hope for our marriage, the spark of joy restored to our family.”

This quote is from a pastor in Panamá who attended a Spanish-language FamilyLife event. His story—and hundreds of others just like it—validate the need for gospel-centered Spanish events and resources for families. But the translation process is more vigorous than it might seem in order to produce resources that are usable internationally, consistent with FamilyLife’s message, and biblically accurate.

Forbes Magazine published an article in 2021 stating that “Spanish is spoken by more than 559 million people globally. Of those, 460 million are native speakers, making Spanish the language with the second largest population of native speakers in the world... In the U.S., 13 percent of the population speaks Spanish at home.”

The potential audience for Spanish resources is huge, but the process isn’t as simple as creating a word-

for-word translation from the English text. With 21 countries and dozens of cultures having Spanish as the official language, a common phrase in one country might be highly offensive in another, or it could be complete gibberish. To ensure that the resources will be universally understood and internationally accepted, every project passes through the approval process of at least three countries: a translator, an editor, and a proofreader, each from a different country.

Next, the translation returns to the FamilyLife Global office to make sure the resource is still consistent with FamilyLife’s message and that it remains theologically accurate. Although the translators and proofreaders are Christians, they are not trained theologians. Finding the most accurate word to correctly convey a biblical principle can be very challenging.

In one instance, a translator was working on a resource that deals with the story in Genesis 2:18 where God created Eve as a helper for her husband, Adam. The translator used a workplace term for “helper” instead of the biblical word. FamilyLife Global Representative Roger Dye recommended using the biblical term instead, but the translator wasn’t convinced. Finally, Roger suggested,

“Read that sentence to your wife. Let’s get her take on it.”

She was horrified. “We can’t teach women that they are errand-girls! I am your helper because I am honored to be the woman that God created me to be, but I will never be your errand-girl!”

Examples like this are one of many reasons we have multiple countries involved in the translation process, with both men and women, in addition to the Global Office providing feedback to ensure the proper tone and biblical accuracy.

The process is arduous and requires incredible attention to detail as well as discernment and prayer. But the needs are great, and the results can speak for themselves. A pastor in the Dominican Republic wrote, “I was convicted this week that as a husband, I have not been representing Christ to my wife, and that begins to change today!” These Spanish resources are imparting truth and hope, and God is using them to change lives.

FamilyLife is committed to continuing to produce Spanish resources of excellent quality and trusting God to draw many families throughout the Spanish-speaking world to Himself.