Your help is needed now to save vulnerable lives!

Dear MCC members and friends around the world:

Our hearts are breaking with the people of Ukraine, as they deal with life-or-death decisions in response to the Russian invasion. We want you to know that last week, MCC (on all of our behalf) immediately contributed an initial 1000€ to our partner organization, ACCEPT*, in Romania. ACCEPT and our other MCC-allies are on the ground to assist LGBTQ+ people and their families as they rush to evacuate the violence in their homeland.

As you are no doubt aware, queer folx and those living with HIV/AIDS are particularly vulnerable right now (and in Eastern Europe, generally), and MCC is in solidarity with them as they seek safety. In fact, we know that they are us.

We know you are praying with us for a swift and peaceful resolution to this conflict, and for those who are experiencing life-threatening realities every hour of the day. We urge you to back up your prayers with tangible support, as much and in as many ways as you are able.

There are many worthy charitable organizations working to assist the people of Ukraine, to provide medical care, food, shelter, and other life-sustaining essentials. For our part, we are trying to help our friends and allies who are often un- or under-served in these situations. Specifically, we are trying to save the lives of LGBTQ people, and those who live with HIV/AIDS or other
debilitating conditions.

Right now, there are several queer people who have been traveling several days and are now trying to cross the border to Romania, Moldova, or other countries. Most of these are transit (vs. destination) locations. There is fear, of course, that the current aggression may enter these other adjacent countries which are not as equipped as Ukraine is to resist. **It is essential that we act quickly and decisively.**

Thus far, at least one trans person and their pregnant spouse have been successfully received across the border and are currently safe, for now. Others are very close to the border tonight, and hoping for refuge. ACCEPT has funds to continue their courageous efforts for another week or so. Beyond that, they are counting on our support to fund their ongoing efforts, even as the situation changes and needs shift.

If you would like to contribute financially to MCC's efforts, in partnership with ACCEPT, there are a variety of ways in which you can do so:

If you are in the US and are able to donate by credit/debit card, please visit: http://weblink.donorperfect.com/mccdisasterrelief

If you would like to donate via PayPal, please visit: https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=XGFV7SCBL7ARQ

If you would like to transfer funds electronically, from anywhere in the world, here are the relevant banking details:

Bank Name: Lloyds Bank
Sort Code: 30-90-54
Account #: 00150202
Account Name: Overseas Projects (UFMCC UK Project)
IBAN: GB14LOYD30905404391875
BIC: LOYDGB21090

MCC will cover all costs associated with the administration of this fundraising campaign so that **100% of your donations will directly benefit the LGBTQ+ people of Ukraine**, and their extended families.

**Thank you for your compassion and your generosity.**
**ACCEPT** is the first non-governmental human rights organization in Romania to defend and promote LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) rights. ACCEPT is working with partner organizations in Moldova, Ukraine, and other neighboring countries. They are establishing new relationships with other countries in Europe who are receiving refugees.

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An MCC Prayer for these times:

*God of love and peace,*

*we give thanks for your abiding presence with all of your people,*

*in all places at all times.*

And right now, we join our hearts in prayer for:

the people of Ukraine as they face the reality of war,*

those who are fleeing their homes and homeland in search of refuge;*

those who are grieving the loss of family members and friends who have perished;*

those who have sustained injuries and are in pain;*

those who are afraid, in distress, full of doubt;*

those whose families are separated by borders or policies that we have created;*

the other creatures of the earth who are in need of care and shelter,*

the pets left behind and disoriented by the abrupt changes they are experiencing.

We pray for the people of Russia who likewise face the reality of war,*

those who are protesting against the actions of their own government, and facing danger because of their courage;*

those whose families and heart-connections are across an arbitrary border,*

in danger because of the actions of their own country’s leadership;*

We pray for the volunteers, aid workers, medical personnel, journalists, and others whose vocations and convictions put them in harm’s way;*

We pray for our queer siblings in all of these situations, and those who are
otherwise marginalized, those whose fear, pain, grief, and sense of danger are increased because of who they are or whom/how they love;

We pray for the entire human family, the interconnected web of all life, as we grieve this current situation of unnecessary conflict and violence.

And for all of the prayers we do not know how to articulate or voice, may your Spirit intercede for us with sighs too deep for words.

Continue to guide us in your ways of compassion and peace.

In your mercy, O God, hear our prayers.

Please share this with others who are trying to decide how to help.