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MODELS OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN THE CONTEXT OF RUSSIA'S MILITARY AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

By **Ihor Lutsan**

Ihor Lutsan, Candidate of Historical Sciences, Senior Research Associate, Inspector of the Educational Department, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Chernivtsi, Ukraine. Research interests: state-church and inter-confessional relations in Ukraine, church-religious life in Bukovyna (Chernivtsi Oblast) in a historical retrospective and in conditions of modern transformation processes.

E-mail: i.lutsan@chnu.edu.ua ORCID: 0000-0002-2341-069X

Abstract

The main focus of this research intention is to outline constructive models of religious communities' social activity in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. The subject of the study is the Protestant denominations of Ukraine and their socially relevant activities, which today, having acquired a multi-vector orientation, are most clearly expressed and most noticeable in forms of missionary work, charity, volunteer movement, and in particular, assistance to the army. This includes organizing and providing need-based social services to individuals and groups to ensure their holistic development and providing spiritually oriented social and psychological rehabilitation to military personnel, demobilized combatants and their families, and victims of war. The chaplaincy is important here, as its main goal is to provide social, psychological, and pastoral support to military personnel in the performance of military duty. It is noteworthy that such activities, embracing the entire spectrum of social life, are undoubtedly aimed at solving socially challenging issues and ensuring social justice, which is extremely important in current times.

Keywords: war, missionary work, volunteering, charity (charitable activity), chaplaincy (the institute of military clergy), social activity of the Church, constructive models, destructive manifestations.

Introduction

Since the very first days of war crimes, occupation actions, and the most cynical and relentless manifestations of aggression (torture of civilians and prisoners, rape of minors, air strikes on civilian infrastructure of cities and towns, use of prohibited weapons, abduction of children, activists, representatives of local governments, journalists, volunteers, etc.), Russia's war against Ukraine has claimed thousands of lives not only of brave and unyielding defenders of our Homeland, but also of innocent civilians, including children. Hundreds of thousands of people have lost their homes, and part of our country's territory is still under occupation. Moreover, every day we have to witness a huge number of horrific atrocities committed by the Russian military against everything that is Ukrainian--the language, the nation, spiritual values,

cultural heritage, etc. At the same time, Moscow is trying to keep itself afloat in world politics and economics through propaganda, using all the imperial and dictatorial ways it has practiced for centuries. However, the Kremlin has repeatedly proven through its inhumane actions and serious violations of international humanitarian law that it is incapable of conducting any sound diplomacy whatsoever, and at the same time, has blatantly demonstrated a real threat not only to Ukraine and any other state, but also to the functioning of the entire international security system. Ultimately, the international community continues to actively discuss this issue and is using all means (humanitarian and social assistance, sanctions, medical and military aid, etc.) to help end the war as soon as possible, return a just peace to Ukraine and protect other countries from the possibility of Russia's military aggression.

In these extremely difficult realities of war, religion is observed to play much more than a minor role. Indeed, today the role of the churches and religious organizations, which were and remain one of the authoritative segments of Ukrainian society, is becoming even more relevant. Their influence on human consciousness, which is of great theoretical and practical importance, is actualized in society as a kind of effective driver of communication. Therefore, churches and religious organizations have the ability to encourage and direct participation in social life, and thus the formation of a legal Ukrainian state and the development of civil society. That is why today it is significant that changes are taking place in the church-religious domain of Ukrainian society, which often manifest themselves in both constructive and, unfortunately, destructive forms and are closely intertwined with both religious beliefs and political attitudes.

Today, the study of issues related to models of religious organizations' social activity is essential for a wide range of researchers in history, theology, religious studies, political science, etc., and therefore is in demand. Some of the publications only touch on these issues, being primarily concerned with solving other research problems, while others quite clearly outline the essential features, effectiveness, and areas of socially significant initiatives of religious communities, their faithful, and leaders. An example of this research is *Social Mission of Orthodox Churches in the Conditions of 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine*¹ by Vitalii Turenko, discussing the features of the social mission of Orthodox churches and specifics of its implementation in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine, in particular, the key aspects of their assistance to both the military and civilians. Another scientific study

¹ Vitalii Turenko, (2023) "Social Mission of Orthodox Churches in the Conditions of 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 43 : Iss. 2, Article 3. URL: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol43/iss2/3> [accessed Jul 10, 2023].

that presents the scope of activities of Protestant Christians to assist Ukrainian refugees who have suffered from the Kremlin's war crimes is Mark R. Elliott's *Best Practices in Protestant Aid for Ukrainian Refugees: 2022*.² In one of our previous publications, *Clergy Social Activity During War Conditions: The Case of Western Regions of Ukraine*³, my co-author Iryna Horokholinska and I also analyzed the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on the church and religious life and the state of public consciousness in Ukraine, and outlined the leading trends and contradictions in public reactions to threats to life and spirituality. That study was a prerequisite for the preparation of this article.

This research is part of a series of planned studies which conceptually correlate with the scientific, theoretical, and practical tasks being addressed by a team of young scientists from Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University in the context of the research project "Social Functionality of Religion in the Context of Large-scale Threats: Ideological, Theoretical and Practical Dimensions."

Social Activity as a Key Type of Functional Activity of Religious Organizations

Of great importance is that a significant number of different churches in Ukraine, realizing the real scale and danger of the war crimes committed by the Kremlin and comprehending the importance of preserving Ukrainian statehood, are involved in the defense of their homeland in all possible and effective ways. Among the most active denominations, including Orthodox, Catholic, and Greek Catholic, are a number of Protestant churches which deserve special attention, and they are the focus of our research. Here, it is especially worth highlighting those that are not only the largest and most influential in Ukraine, but also demonstrate a high level of social concern. These include Pentecostals (hereinafter referred to as UP), Baptists (hereinafter referred to as ECB), and Adventists (hereinafter referred to as SDA). Indeed, as H. Mierienkov, a Ukrainian researcher, notes, highlighting the specifics of their church charity, "Charitable activity is one of the most striking manifestations of social activity of Late Protestant churches in independent Ukraine, and has become a hallmark of Pentecostal, Baptist, and Adventist communities. Churches that have different views on some doctrinal issues are completely united in their need to engage in charity, to help their

² Mark R. Elliott, (2022) "Best Practices in Protestant Aid for Ukrainian Refugees: 2022," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 42 : Iss. 7, Article 5. URL: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol42/iss7/5> [accessed Jul 10, 2023].

³ Ihor Lutsan, and Iryna Horokholinska, (2022) "Clergy Social Activity During War Conditions: The Case of Western Regions of Ukraine," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 42 : Iss. 8, Article 4. URL: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol42/iss8/4> [accessed Jul 10, 2023].

neighbors, especially those segments of the population who find themselves in difficulty.”⁴ It should be noted here that our study will partially address not only the above-mentioned denominations, but also a number of other Protestant movements, denominations, and groups less active in their social activities. In particular, we are talking about Jehovah's Witnesses, which Western religious scholars consider to be a Christian restorationist denomination. However, this movement is often regarded as having no affiliation with Christianity due to the fact that it does not hold to the basic tenets of the Christian faith. Others include the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), the Reformed Adventists, and others.

In discussing social activity, it is important to understand that the ongoing armed military conflict, which entered an active phase in 2022 due to the full-scale invasion from the aggressor state, has indeed intensified the activities of a large number of Protestant churches in terms of areas, forms, and methods. Indeed, their functional space, like that of the vast majority of other churches and religious organizations in Ukraine, in addition to fulfilling their main tasks (worship and other purely religious practices), is not limited solely to teaching the faith. As can be seen, various socially significant projects play an important role in their activities, which is undoubtedly a solid platform for social transformations. In this regard, the aforementioned H. Mierienkov quite reasonably states: “without a willingness to give to charity, a convincing sermon is impossible in modern society. [...] After gaining freedom of religion, especially when the era of mass evangelization passed, society could look at the church only if it pursued social activity aimed at something more than the number of baptisms.”⁵ In this regard, the well-known Ukrainian Protestant theologian M. Cherenkov rightly emphasizes the importance of social service, particularly the participation of churches in addressing acute social and moral issues of society, stressing that this is “the main direction and way of evangelical churches' socialization, overcoming their marginality and subculturality, going beyond narrow church and denominational service and entering civil society and world Christianity.”⁶ Therefore, social activity in all its multidimensionality is nothing other than the core of church life and a key type of functional activity of religious organizations.

⁴ Г. Меренков, “Харитативна діяльність пізньопротестантських церков в Україні: тенденції розвитку” [Charitable activity of Next Protestant Church in Ukraine: Trends of development]. Вчені записки ТНУ імені В.І. Вернадського. Сер.: Історичні науки. 2019. № 3. Р. 22. URL: http://www.hist.vernadskyjournals.in.ua/journals/2019/3_2019/6.pdf [accessed : Jul 10, 2023].

⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

⁶ М. Черенков, “Європейська реформація та український євангельський протестантизм : генетико-типологічна спорідненість і національно-ідентифікаційні виміри сучасності” : монографія [European Reformation and Ukrainian Evangelical Protestantism: Genetic-typological kinship and national-identification dimensions of modernity]. Київ : Духовне відродження, 2008. Р. 406.

Constructive Models of Social Activity: Essential Features and Characteristics

In the context of current events, it is important that Protestant churches, like other traditional denominations in Ukraine, such as Orthodoxy and Catholicism, take an active social position. Therefore, having acquired a multi-vector orientation, their social activity today is most pronounced and visible, in particular, in such forms as missionary work, charity, volunteer movement, assistance to the army, organization and need-based provision of social services to individuals and groups to ensure their integral development, and also to socially vulnerable groups (heating for the needy, arranging free meals, organizing summer recreation centers for orphans, disabled children, children from poor families, and displaced children, providing humanitarian aid to orphanages, establishing orphanages, treating and adapting alcohol and drug addicts, etc.). At the same time, the provision of spiritually oriented social and psychological rehabilitation of military personnel, demobilized combatants and their families, and victims of the Russian-Ukrainian war is quite powerful. Chaplaincy ministry, which has at least five main types (military, medical, prison, police, and municipal) and is conventionally distinguished in such functions of activity: spiritual, humanitarian, social, therapeutic, informational, etc., became even more visible. Therefore, it is noteworthy that these areas of activity, covering the entire spectrum of social activity, are undoubtedly aimed at solving extremely complex social problems and ensuring social justice, which is critically important. To strengthen this thesis, we turn to the statements of N. Tsymbaliuk and I. Lazarenko, who are quite specific and clear on this issue: “An important tendency of the contemporary social ministry in Ukraine is that its practices involve the entire congregation, that is, a wide range of participants in the religious community, not just clergy or pastors. Social assistance practices are carried out in various spheres of social life and are aimed at stabilizing crisis moments. At the same time, social assistance is characterized by mobility, the ability to respond quickly to social challenges, to maximize the use of religious communities' own resources, to encourage members of congregations to realize their potential.”⁷

Therefore, in this context, there is no argument that some of the most important aspects of the productive activity of any denomination for the benefit of its state are a clear and

⁷ Н. Цимбалюк, І. Лазаренко, “Соціальне служіння церков як провайдер практик соціальної допомоги” [Social service of churches as a provider of social assistance practices]. Вісник НТУУ “КПІ” Політологія. Соціологія. Право, № 2 (50), р. 43. URL: <http://socio-journal.kpi.kiev.ua/archive/2021/2/8.pdf> [accessed: Jun 25, 2022].

unquestioning awareness of its responsibility to society, a conscious fulfillment of its duties to fellow citizens, a solidarity with the community and a balanced response, especially in the face of large-scale threats and disasters. Therefore, there are indeed grounds to speak of completely new approaches of Protestant churches, especially the aforementioned UP, SDA, and ECB, regarding the perception of reality and the need for reassessment of the current events. Moreover, such dynamics of social processes in Protestant communities indicate that “most churches are developing in a progressive direction, searching for a balance between innovative effects and unavoidable risks of modernization.”⁸

In this regard, we cannot but mention a very important resolution adopted back in 2014 (September 20, Irpin) following the roundtable discussion "The Church in Times of War: Theology, Position, Mission" organized by the missionary center of the Spiritual Revival Association. This resolution, importantly, highlights the position of the Evangelical churches of Ukraine regarding Russia's war crimes against Ukraine, which in turn provoked resonant revolutionary events, gave rise to sharp confrontations, and thus brought massive casualties, repression, and genocide both among the military and civilians. Analyzing the content of this resolution, it is appropriate and important to highlight some of its most remarkable theses. They imply constructive and rational approaches:

Until recently, Ukrainian Protestants stood out for their pacifism and apolitical nature. In the conditions of the Soviet, essentially atheistic state, non-participation in "politics" was a passive form of protest. [...] the events of the Maidan, the subsequent annexation of the Crimea and the war in Donbas have become an unprecedented challenge for the Church and its social position. References to the past are outdated, and "wise" silence does not help. It is time for the Church to redefine its attitude to war and peace, the state, society, and civic responsibility. We note with appreciation that many communities are already actively helping the affected civilian population and the Ukrainian army, and that the Church could mobilize thousands of volunteers and dozens of chaplains.⁹

Moreover, this document clearly and reasonably distinguishes three key theses about Christianity's attitude to the events caused by this despicable and unjustifiable war. The first thesis states:

⁸ М. Черенков “Перспектива розвитку євангельського протестантизму в українському соціумі” [Prospects for the Development of Evangelical Protestantism in the Ukrainian Society]. Українське релігієзнавство. 2008. №48. P. 220. URL: http://dspace.nbuv.gov.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/40142/2008_48_15.pdf?sequence=1 [accessed: Jun 26, 2022].

⁹ М. Черенков, “Церква в умовах війни. Позиція протестантів” [The Church in the Time of War. The position of Protestants]. Релігійно-інформаційна служба України «RISU». URL: https://risu.ua/cerkva-v-umovah-viyni-poziciya-protstantiv_n107213 [accessed: Jul 5, 2023]

Evangelical theology does not justify a detached attitude to war, the greatest tragedy of humanity. [...] The Christian mission is embodied in forms of civic participation. The opposition of the Church and society, religion and politics has no biblical justification. Anyone who professes the supreme authority of Jesus Christ cannot say today: 'This is no concern of ours'. The second thesis clearly emphasizes the importance of the Church's position, its solidarity and activity, and along with this, the fact that it 'cannot remain a passive observer or merely 'express concern' and good wishes for peace'. Church ministers should be wherever people are suffering and dying, including on the front line. We cannot condemn those Christians who defend our Homeland with arms, but on the contrary, we find such a position fully justified by the Holy Scriptures. [...] If a Christian has a vocation to defend their earthly homeland with arms, they must follow it.¹⁰

The content of the third thesis is imbued with a rather specific approach, as it emphasizes the importance of reconciliation between the parties, which, on the one hand, can indeed solve a problem in the shortest possible time, but on the other hand, is ineffective, as this principle is often rejected or violated. Indeed, the disruption of the agreements by either party, which Russia is blatantly demonstrating today, aggravates the political situation not only in Ukraine but globally. The thesis reads:

The field of war must become a field of mission – reconciliation, restoration and forgiveness. In the face of false propaganda, the Church must speak the truth. In the face of anger, we must remind people of mercy and forgiveness. In the face of betrayal and despair, we must call for loyalty and hope. Against the backdrop of convenient indifference, we must show sensitivity and active compassion. [...] At such a critical moment in Ukrainian history, the Church must be closer to people than ever to serve them and to serve our country together with them.¹¹

To summarize, one of the most important principles and, at the same time, tools for finding effective mechanisms of socially significant activity is a conscious and balanced position of the Church, based on a consolidating value paradigm that is accepted by the vast majority of citizens.

To better understand the peculiarities of the social activity of Protestant churches in Ukraine, we will focus on the areas of their activity in the context of Russia-Ukraine war, which, in our opinion, are the most relevant. These include volunteering/assistance, community service and charity/humanitarian mission, missionary work, and chaplaincy.

Philanthropic Paradigm of Assistance: Volunteering

¹⁰ М. Черенков, “Церква в умовах війни. Позиція протестантів” [The Church in the Time of War. The position of Protestants]. *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України «RISU»*. URL: https://risu.ua/cerkva-v-umovah-viyni-poziciya-protestantiv_n107213 [accessed: Jul 5, 2023.].

¹¹ Ibid.

Undoubtedly, one of the most powerful manifestations of social activity, which is being implemented most often today and has become widespread, is volunteering in all its various forms. It is also important to emphasize that this activity is, for obvious reasons, particularly significant, transforming itself into a variety of highly requested directions. It is also quite valuable and striking that volunteering has united thousands of people of different faiths on a pro bono basis, completing varied and often difficult tasks in a short period of time. Indeed, as O. Kolesnyk, a well-known Ukrainian journalist and volunteer, wrote on her Telegram channel: “Against the backdrop of war, we are witnessing how quickly coordination and logistics processes, procurement, and information support are being established. In a few weeks of chaotic movements [since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of the aggressor country - I.L.], though-out supply chains have been built, and the efficiency of volunteers in all areas has increased.”¹² In addition, we must take into account that today the list of the main tasks and issues that volunteers are addressing through their active work looks like this: daily cooking for the military and internally displaced persons; organizing the evacuation and transportation of refugees and IDPs from the war zones; assistance in clearing the rubble from the occupiers' constant missile and other weapons strikes; providing the Armed Forces with ammunition and military equipment; donations; search for shelter and settlement of civilians in safe territories of Ukraine and abroad; search for children and their parents; assistance to lonely elderly people; provision of clothing, food, medicines and first aid items; animal rescue; information support and many other extremely important and socially useful activities. The most noticeable volunteer activity today is focused on meeting the needs of the Ukrainian army, territorial defense forces, and people affected by the war. Therefore, we can rely on the arguments of well-known American psychologists M. Olchman and P. Jordan, who, in their work *Volunteers are a valuable source*, note that volunteering is a conscious, voluntary, and unpaid activity for the benefit of others. Therefore, anyone who works responsibly and unselfishly in any area of public life where there is such a need can certainly be called a volunteer. A volunteer is a person who is able to devote their precious time and skills to voluntary work.¹³ Moreover, some studies also show that people work for free

¹² О. Колесник, “Волонтерські організації, які зараз працюють в Україні. Як їм допомогти?” [Volunteer organizations currently operating in Ukraine. How to help them?]. *Товариство з обмеженою відповідальністю «Файненс.юа» – незалежний фінансовий портал*. URL: <https://finance.ua/ua/saving/volonterskie-organizacii-v-ukraine> [accessed: Jul 8, 2023].

¹³ М. Олчман, П. Джордан, “Доброчинність – цінне джерело” [Volunteers are a valuable source]. Університет Д. Хопкінса, 1997. Р. 56.

because they want to do something useful for society, something that is in line with the values they share. Therefore, volunteering raises the level of self-esteem.¹⁴

Specifying the volunteer activity of Protestants, it would be unnecessary to argue that this activity was unfamiliar to them before 2022, and before Russia's occupation of the Crimea and parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. However, it is important to emphasize that since 2014, this area of work was reinforced and acquired a particular prominence, and 2014-2015 was often referred to in the information space as the period of the rise of the volunteer and charitable movements in Ukraine. Protestant churches are present in various volunteer organizations, both official, that is, recorded in the state register, and unofficial, those that were formed spontaneously, have no official status, and act privately on their own behalf. Here are some of the most notable examples of such activities:

M. Shcherbakov, a well-known Ukrainian volunteer, who joined the ranks of this special unit and demanded activity from the very beginning (2014) of Russia's armed invasion of Ukraine, analyzing volunteerism and charity, describes the environment of volunteer projects that provide victims with different types of assistance. In particular, he gives the following data:

[...] FrontlineHelp, HelpUA, and Save Ukraine, with the support of caring people, for more than three years [2014-2017 – I.L.] have been providing humanitarian and moral assistance to the children, the elderly, the disabled, and IDPs who live on the front line. Protestants have opened 31 volunteer centers along the entire contact line. Grief-stricken people, including 10,000 IDPs, received thousands of tons of humanitarian aid. Volunteers have rebuilt 426 houses, and 11 have been built from scratch.¹⁵

V. Lyubashchenko provides interesting facts about active volunteerism in her study. Analyzing the current state of Evangelical Protestantism in Ukraine, specifically its search for a new paradigm in society, she describes it as follows:

Petro Dudnyk, the pastor of the Good News Pentecostal Church, evacuated 4,000 civilians during the occupation of Sloviansk [2014], establishing a center for displaced persons, and its faithful evacuated 12,000 people from Debaltseve, Donetsk, Luhansk, and Horlivka. Protestant families adopt orphans and create family-type orphanages; psychologists and pastors of the All-Ukrainian Evangelical Chaplaincy work in the "hot spots" in the eastern part of the country.¹⁶

The indicators of social activity of Protestants (evangelical Christians) cited in the article *Protestants are the wealth of Ukraine* on the website of the Poklyk Association are

¹⁴ S. Schie, S. Guentert, T. Wehner, J. Oostlander, "Work engagement and autonomous motivation of volunteers: the impact of work design and organisational practices." *International Journal of Psychology*. 2012. Vol. 47. Supp. 1. P. 627.

¹⁵ В. Щербаків, "Волонтерський рух. Україна..." [Volunteer movement. Ukraine...]. *Офіційний сайт Асоціації «Поклик»*. URL: <https://poklik.org/volonterskyj-ruh-ukrayina/> [cited: 2022 Jun 28].

¹⁶ В. Любашченко, "Євангельський протестантизм в Україні: пошуки нової парадигми Церкви" [Evangelical Protestantism in Ukraine: searching for a new Church paradigm]. *Історія релігій в Україні: актуальні питання*. 2020. Вип. 30. С. 106. URL: <http://religio.org.ua/index.php/religio-actual-issues/article/view/586/585> [cited: 2023 Jul 7].

impressive: since the outbreak of hostilities (2014) in eastern Ukraine, Christian volunteers evacuated 55,000 IDPs in the first months. More than 60 charity canteens were opened. 430 houses were restored, and 400 homes were provided with firewood. More than 4,000 tons of food and 800 tons of humanitarian aid were collected. Subsequently, a bishop from Zhytomyr region delivered 120 trucks of food and humanitarian aid. Believers of Rivne region collected about 200 trucks of aid, which is about 5,000 tons. The Zaporizhzhia Relief Center provided 300 tons, and one of the international missions donated 2,500 tons of aid.¹⁷

The above allows us to state that from the very beginning of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, some Protestant denominations have indeed shown extraordinary activity and lack of bias in volunteer work, which has intensified the mission of the Church. In this way, they demonstrate their civic position and loyalty to the ideal of serving others.

Charity and Humanitarian (Charitable) Activities: Social and Humanitarian Dimensions

Along with volunteering as one of the most effective displays of social activity, charity and philanthropy continue to play an important role today, with specific areas, directions, and types of work. N. Pelivanova, however, notes: “The most common forms of charity among Ukrainians are monetary and material donations and almsgiving. Among the main recipients of Ukrainians' help are beggars, religious organizations, children with disabilities and serious illnesses. At the same time, individual benefactors are more likely to provide assistance directly to those in need than through volunteers and people who raise funds for others.”¹⁸

As defined by Ukrainian law, “charitable activity is voluntary personal and/or property assistance to achieve the goals set forth in this Law, which does not provide for the benefactor's profit, as well as the payment of any remuneration or compensation to the benefactor for or on behalf of the beneficiary.”¹⁹ It is obvious that volunteering and charity are closely intertwined, complementing each other. Therefore, we can say that volunteering is a kind of charitable activity. Nevertheless, there are still some differences between them. These can be traced to the fact that *volunteering* is mostly aimed at implementing social action, while *charity* involves collecting material or financial resources and distributing them among those in need. This

¹⁷ Протестанти – надбання України [Protestants are Ukraine's treasure]. *Офіційний сайт Асоціації «Поклик»*. URL: <https://poklik.org/projects/protestanty-nadbannya-ukrayiny/> [accessed: Jul 11, 2023].

¹⁸ Розвиток благодійності в Україні [Development of charity in Ukraine]. *Офіційний сайт Національного інституту стратегічних досліджень «НІСД»*. URL: <https://niss.gov.ua/doslidzhennya/gromadyanske-suspilstvo/rozvitok-blagodiynosti-v-ukraini> [accessed: Jul 4, 2023].

¹⁹ Закон України про благодійну діяльність та благодійні організації [Law of Ukraine "About charitable activities and charitable organizations"]. *Офіційний вебпортал парламенту України. Законодавство України*. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/5073-17> [accessed: Jun 26, 2022].

is how S. Choliy sees this difference: “Unlike volunteering, charity is more closely related to real money, as donations are usually monetary. At the same time, it also belongs to prosocial economic activity, as it is aimed at the benefit of people in need. The main difference between these two types of activity is that people donate money for charity and volunteer their time and labor.”²⁰ In addition, the researcher aptly notes what we fully agree with: “The concept that unites volunteering and charity is altruism.”²¹

Regarding charitable aspects, a convincing position that is widespread in Protestantism is that “charity, according to the teachings of Jesus Christ, is not based on having a surplus, but on the willingness to serve someone giving oneself completely, the willingness to sacrifice oneself for the sake of others, for the sake of God and one's neighbors.”²² That is why we can say that in many cases this is what significantly distinguishes the charitable work of Protestant churches from, for example, secular philanthropists and their activities. Moreover, such approaches are known to be deeply rooted in the Christian worldview system, being part of its theology, beliefs, and worldview. In this regard, one can find interesting the arguments of E. Buha, who, studying the social doctrines of Protestantism in the context of socio-cultural transformations of Ukrainian society, specifically highlighting the social service of Christian Baptists, notes that they:

adhere to the New Testament principle of always serving society faithfully, regardless of social status. Believers are encouraged to take an active part in social service, using their gifts and talents for the benefit of the community and the people. [...] The main directions of the Church's social service are determined by the range of social problems outlined in the Holy Scripture: to feed the hungry, to give water to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, to come to the prisoners, to care for widows and orphans, to teach those who lack knowledge, to comfort the afflicted.²³

Today, more than ever, the attitude to charity has become an important factor in the unity of the Ukrainian people, helping to overcome crises in various sectors. That is why, in

²⁰ С. Чолій, “Волонтерство та благодійність як види просоціальної економічної активності” [Volunteering and charity as types of prosocial economic activity]. Вісник Львівського університету. Серія психологічні науки. 2021. Випуск 9. р. 287–288. URL: http://psy-visnyk.lnu.lviv.ua/archive/9_2021/38.pdf [accessed: Jul 19, 2023].

²¹ Ibid., p. 284.

²² Г. Меренков, “Харитативна діяльність пізньопротестантських церков в Україні: тенденції розвитку” [Charitable activity of Next Protestant Church in Ukraine: trends of development]. Вчені записки ТНУ імені В.І. Вернадського. Сер.: Історичні науки. 2019. № 3. р. 23. URL: http://www.hist.vernadskyjournals.in.ua/journals/2019/3_2019/6.pdf [accessed: Jul 10, 2023].

²³ Є. Буга, “Соціальні доктрини протестантизму в контексті соціокультурних перетворень українського суспільства” [Social doctrines of Protestantism in the context of socio-cultural transformations of Ukrainian society]. Наукові праці Чорноморського державного університету імені Петра Могили комплексу «Києво-Могилянська академія». Сер.: Соціологія. 2013. № 213. р. 37. URL: http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&2_S21P03=FILE=&2_S21STR=Npchdusoc_2013_225_213_9

the face of modern challenges, *philanthropic organizations (foundations)* play an important role in charity, being able to accumulate significant human and financial resources to solve various socially important problems. Thus, speaking about the institutions of charity in Protestantism, we can confidently state that their activities in Ukraine, like those of many other organizations, demonstrate constructive models of social activity. In fact, there are quite a lot of such institutions, so let us mention some of the most progressive ones, in our opinion.

Adventist Development and Relief Agency in Ukraine (ADRA Ukraine) is a representative of the international public humanitarian organization ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), which operates in more than 130 countries and has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. The governing body of ADRA Ukraine (officially registered on February 21, 1993) is the Board of Trustees, which includes representatives of the Ukrainian Union Conference of the SDA Church from all regions. The main commitment (mission) of the Agency is to support the most vulnerable categories of the population, to help needy and suffering people (low-income, disabled, large families, orphans, people with chronic diseases, lonely elderly people, those impacted by natural disasters or social crises) overcome difficult circumstances. Of course, their priority is also to spread the idea of Christian love and mercy to others. The fundamental principles of this organization are mercy, timeliness, priorities, partnership, and equality. As for the latter, we believe that this principle deserves special attention, as it implies providing assistance to all those in need, regardless of their ideological or political beliefs, religion, gender, nationality, race, etc.

It is noteworthy that since the beginning of Russia's war crimes in Donbas, all ADRA Ukraine's efforts have been directed to helping internally displaced persons and the impacted local population.²⁴ At the same time, we would like to highlight several significant projects that are being successfully implemented by the Foundation together with its partners. Some of them are: “Assistance to residents of Dnipro, Donetsk, Kyiv and Kharkiv regions” with the support of the Humanitarian Fund for Ukraine within the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; “Multipurpose Assistance Project” with the support of the German Federal Foreign Office and the German representative office of ADRA; “Assistance Project for People Affected by the Military Conflict in Ukraine” with the support of the Canadian

²⁴ АДВЕНТИСТСЬКЕ АГЕНТСТВО ДОПОМОГИ ТА РОЗВИТКУ В УКРАЇНІ [Adventist Development and Relief Agency]. Вільна онлайн-енциклопедія «Вікіпедія». URL: https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%90%D0%B4%D0%B2%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D1%81%D1%8C%D0%BA%D0%B5_%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE_%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0_%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%BA%D1%83_%D0%B2_%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D1%96 [accessed: Jun 23, 2023].

Foodgrain Bank; “Emergency Food Aid to the Affected Population of Ukraine” with the support of the UN World Food Program and ADRA Ukraine; “Provision of food and non-food aid to the residents of Ukraine affected by the war (Japan Platform)” with the support of the ADRA office in Japan; “Providing the population with access to water in the village of Fedorivka, Odesa region” and “Providing wheelchairs to people with disabilities” with the support of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; “Providing generators for vulnerable populations in Ukraine” a project from ADRA's offices in Germany, Poland, South Korea, and the Czech Republic; “Rescue evacuation, assistance and protection” a project of the International Humanitarian Aid (IHA) and the Government of Canada; “Provision of sleeping bags to frontline regions and IDPs” with the support of KOA Corporation; “Provision of medical equipment to Ukrainian hospitals” with the support of Airlink,²⁵ and others.

It seems appropriate to provide some comments on the powerful humanitarian activity of ADRA Ukraine. For example, the aforementioned volunteer M. Shcherbakov states that since the outbreak of hostilities in eastern Ukraine, during 2014-2017, this charitable organization, together with its partners, managed to raise more than \$12 million in aid to the population affected by the war.²⁶ Also, the following information is available on the foundation's website: “since the beginning of Euromaidan and the armed conflict in Donbas in 2014, ADRA Ukraine has provided assistance to more than 950,000 people in 15 regions of Ukraine (as of 2016),”²⁷ Obviously, today this figure exceeds more than a million people. In her research, V. Kurilyak also emphasizes the powerful activity of this foundation: “The agency provides large-scale, emergency, temporary assistance in crisis situations (in areas of military conflict, during natural disasters and catastrophes), and also makes efforts to develop those regions that need such assistance.”²⁸ Thus, the charitable activities of ADRA Ukraine have now acquired a truly powerful scope, becoming an effective “bridge” and a strong support for many people in need. Moreover, the activities of this humanitarian are a vivid evidence of the basic principles of the SDA Social Doctrine.

²⁵ Благодійна організація АДРА Україна [The Charitable organization ADRA Ukraine]. *Офіційний сайт благодійної організації ADRA Ukraine*. URL: <https://www.adra.ua/contact/> [accessed: Jul 10, 2023].

²⁶ В. Щербаків, “Волонтерський рух. Україна...” [Volunteer movement. Ukraine...]. *Офіційний сайт Асоціації «Поклик»*. URL: <https://poklik.org/volonterskyj-ruh-ukrayina/> [accessed: Jun 28, 2022].

²⁷ Благодійна організація АДРА Україна [The Charitable organization ADRA Ukraine]. *Офіційний сайт благодійної організації ADRA Ukraine*. URL: <https://www.adra.ua/contact/> [accessed: Jul 10, 2023].

²⁸ В. Куриляк, “Соціальне вчення та практики церкви Адвентистів сьомого дня в Україні” [Social teachings and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ukraine]. *Вісник НТУУ “КПІ” Політологія. Соціологія. Право, № 4 (48), p. 10*. URL: <http://visnyk-ppsp.kpi.ua/article/view/232666> [accessed: Jul 8, 2023].

The Light of the Reformation Charity Fund was founded by members of ECB Church and cooperates with philanthropists in several Western European countries. As we can find on the charity's official website in the *About Us* section, it was:

created to make life easier for the most vulnerable Ukrainians—children, the disabled, the elderly, the poor and the unemployed, large and single-parent families. Our organization is a link between those who need help and those who have the opportunity to help, thus changing the future and creating a chain reaction that significantly improves the lives of thousands of people in Ukraine.²⁹

Therefore, its mission is defined by the following main activity: providing humanitarian aid to families in difficult life circumstances, low-income groups, educational, medical and social institutions, churches, etc. It is very important that since the beginning of the Kremlin's military campaign against Ukraine, several other important areas have been added to the main function of the Foundation, namely providing humanitarian aid to people affected by the war, all necessary refugee reception centers, evacuating people to safe territories in Ukraine and abroad, etc.

As we recognize the wide range of charitable activities of this foundation, we would like to highlight some of its activities in the context of war. Since many people, for various reasons, have remained in cities and villages under constant shelling (some cannot leave because of the risk of being shot by the occupiers, others cannot leave their relatives who are ill and not transportable), according to the Light of Reformation team, several trucks with food, medicines, warm clothes, blankets, hygiene products, electrical appliances, heaters, etc. are shipped to them every week. In particular, humanitarian aid is delivered to the eastern and central cities of Ukraine (Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kherson, as well as to some settlements in Donbas, etc.) Humanitarian aid is also often sent to those who have returned to the de-occupied territories and are rebuilding their war-torn homes. This is mainly in Sumy, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, and Kyiv regions. It is also sent to the regions that host refugees from the eastern, southern, and northern regions of Ukraine who have lost their homes, jobs, and stable income and need appropriate support.³⁰

In the framework of our research, we will present another, no less active charity, which, while setting itself goals similar to other humanitarian foundations, has somewhat different approaches and principles of organization. We are talking about the Christian Rescue Service

²⁹ Благодійний фонд «Світло Реформації». Про нас. Напрямки діяльності. [The Light of Reformation]. *Офіційна веб-сторінка благодійного фонду «Світло Реформації»*. URL: <https://svitlo-reformatsii.com.ua/> [accessed: Jul 9, 2023].

³⁰ Благодійний фонд «Світло Реформації». Про нас. Напрямки діяльності. [The Light of Reformation. About us. Areas of activity]. *Офіційна веб-сторінка благодійного фонду «Світло Реформації»*. URL: <https://svitlo-reformatsii.com.ua/> [accessed: Jul 9, 2023].

charitable foundation (hereinafter referred to as CRS). According to sources, this organization was founded on the basis of the ministry of The “Maranatha” Community of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit³¹ during the Revolution of Dignity, uniting an interfaith group of Christian missionary ministers, who in turn initiated and coordinated joint ministry. Their main task was to support those who stood on the Maidan, provide a common prayer space, minimize problems that arose in places of public confrontation, etc. Thus, with the beginning of the hybrid war in eastern Ukraine and the annexation of the Crimea, “Maranatha” entered the chaplaincy and Christian volunteer movements, actively participating in pastoral ministry in all areas of the frontline together with ministers of other Kyiv Catholic charismatic communities and chaplains from the Interfaith Battalion of Military Chaplains (there were more than 100 chaplains of six Christian denominations and denominations).³²

In December 2015, such a broad ecumenical ministry, which is still accompanied and combined with prayer support, evangelization, and pastoral care, was named the Christian Rescue Service--not incidentally by analogy with the State Rescue Service and, of course, with an emphasis on its Christian character. “At the start of the ministry, CRS was dominated by chaplains, psychologists, paramedics, and rescuers who could serve the military and civilians on the demarcation line and in the frontline areas, clear debris, carry out medical evacuation, deliver humanitarian supplies and perform other field work.”³³ It is important to emphasize that this service is represented by ministers of various denominations, including Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Orthodox, Baptists, Pentecostals, Messianic Jews, Charismatic Protestants, Reformed, and Lutherans. Obviously, another specific feature of this organization is that it is open to Christians of all denominations and confessions. Still, the

³¹ The “Maranatha” community of Renewal in the Holy Spirit belongs to the worldwide Catholic movement of Renewal in the Holy Spirit, which Pope John Paul II called a “sign of hope” for all people. “Revival in the Holy Spirit” in the Catholic Church is also known as the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and is not a uniform movement on a global scale. Unlike most movements, it does not have a single founder or group of founders, nor does it have a list of members. It is a very diverse association of individuals and groups that carry out different types of activities, often independently of each other, at different stages of development and with different emphases. These individuals and groups are united by the same certificate. The power of the Holy Spirit profoundly transforms human life, changing many aspects of it. This is expressed through a desire to serve others and give witness. (див. <https://www.kapucyny.kyiv.ua/parafia/communities/maranata>).

³² Про Християнську Службу Порятунку. Хто ми [Christian Rescue Service. Who we are]. *Офіційний сайт Християнської Служби Порятунку*. URL: <http://crs-center.org/pro-hrvystyiansku-sluzhbu-poryatunku/hto-my/> [accessed: Jul 2, 2023].

³³ Андрій Оленчик: “Ми входимо в каскад подій, розглядати які варто через есхатологічну призму”. Інтерв’ю із засновником та координатором Християнської Служби Порятунку [Andrii Olenchuk: "We are entering a cascade of events that should be considered through an eschatological prism"]. *Офіційний сайт проекту служіння «Східноєвропейська реформація» – Християни для України*. URL: <https://c4u.org.ua/andrij-olenchuk-my-vhodymo-v-kaskad-podij-rozglyadaty-yaki-var-to-cherez-eschatologichnu-pryzmu/> [cited: 2023 Jul 1].

headquarters of CRS is located in Kyiv on the territory of a Roman Catholic parish.³⁴ Given the difficult conditions of our time, its primary goal is to help provide comprehensive practical (spiritual, psychological, educational, social, humanitarian, counseling, human rights, educational, and informational) assistance to military personnel and civilians, people affected by war, natural disasters, environmental and technogenic catastrophes, and other emergencies and extreme circumstances.

Equally important is the fact that this charitable foundation has created specialized structural units that are flexible in terms of organization and adapt to the requirements of the times in order to accomplish their extremely important tasks. Let us list some of them. Missionary units: Corps of Military Chaplains, Center for Social Adaptation of Military Personnel, Veterans and Their Families, Center for Social Leadership, Christian Social Platform, Social and Missionary Corps, Christian Peacekeeping Corps, Christian Corps – Healing, Evangelism, Intercession; Frontline missions: CRS Centers – “Mariupol,” “Bakhmut,” “Avdiivka,” “Maryinka,” “Starobilsk”; Mission platforms: Christian Social Platform Media Ministry, Christian Social Platform Initiative, Mount of the Prophet Formation Platform, Gladiators of Life Christian Movement, Heavenly Jerusalem Mission Platform, David's Sling Prayer Platform, Social Missionary School Educational Platform, Prayer Shield Platform; Missionary programs: The program of operations for people of war, the programs “Good Master,” “Relay of Goodness and Welfare,” “Happy and Strong Family,” “Christian Apostolic Mission in the Modern World,” etc. Moreover, according to A. Olenchuk, the co-founder and program coordinator of the foundation, “Now [as of the end of 2022 - I.L.] more than 400 Christians from ten confessions and denominations are ministers of CRS - chaplains, peacemakers, evangelists, prayer leaders, social missionaries. [...] Today, CRS subdivisions are present in Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania, and the Prayer Shield Ministry involves ministers from 16 countries. CRS's activities are carried out in four spaces – spiritual, missionary, social and public.”³⁵

It is this powerful social activity of religious organizations in the conditions of war, particularly Protestant organizations, that is discussed by L. Filipovych, a well-known

³⁴ Про Християнську Службу Порятунку. Хто ми [Christian Rescue Service. Who we are]. *Офіційний сайт Християнської Служби Порятунку*. URL: <http://crs-center.org/pro-hrystyyansku-sluzhbu-poryatunku/hto-my/> [cited: 2023 Jul 2].

³⁵ Андрій Оленчук: “Ми входимо в каскад подій, розглядати які варто через есхатологічну призму”. Інтерв'ю із засновником та координатором Християнської Служби Порятунку [Andrii Olenchuk: "We are entering a cascade of events that should be considered through an eschatological prism"]. *Офіційний сайт проекту служіння «Східноєвропейська реформація» – Християни для України*. URL: <https://c4u.org.ua/andrij-olenchuk-my-vhodimo-v-kaskad-podij-rozglyadaty-yaki-var-to-cherez-eschatologichnu-pryzmu/> [accessed: Jul 1, 2023].

Ukrainian religious scholar, vice president of the Ukrainian Association of Religious Scholars (UAR). During the roundtable “Religious Freedom in the Conditions of Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine: Experts on the Experience of 2014-2022,” the professor, commenting on the humanitarian work of religious communities in the Chernivtsi region, noted the following:

In the conditions of Russia's military and informational aggression against Ukraine, religious organizations actively participated in the delivery of humanitarian aid, the evacuation of people from the territories of hostilities, and occupied cities and towns. Regional aid headquarters and hotlines have been established; prayer houses have become places of temporary residence for displaced people. Families of believers have been taking in the displaced, providing them with housing and food, demonstrating unprecedented solidarity. Religious organizations greatly assist in transporting people to safe places abroad. Despite the fact that there are no interfaith coordination centers for providing assistance, all churches help each other, without dividing the victims on a confessional basis. Prayer and social activity have grown tremendously during the war, and people everywhere are praying for peace and victory for Ukraine.³⁶

And this, in turn, testifies to what P. Yarotskii, a well-known Ukrainian scholar, emphasized back in 2008: “Socio-humanitarian activity, which is characteristic of all Late Protestant denominations, adjusts the “vertical theology” towards its horizontalization; there is a shift in accents from religious practice, in particular, chiliastic and eschatological doctrine, to the humanitarian, educational, and rehabilitation spheres.”³⁷ From this we can conclude that today charity and humanitarian activity, both secular and Christian, are becoming priority areas of social engagement, which undoubtedly contribute not only to solving urgent problems related to social protection, but also, and above all, to solidifying Ukrainian society. In terms of the specific intra-church dimension of Protestant charitable and humanitarian activity, a rather successful approach to improving the organizational basis of social ministries is evident.

Missionary-Soteriological and Spiritual-Rehabilitation Potential of the Ministry in Conditions of War

Missionary work, which for many Christian denominations has always been a vital concept, is, of course, one of the most important forms of the Church's ministry. Moreover,

³⁶ Релігійна свобода в умовах агресії РФ проти України: експерти про досвід 2014-2022 рр. [Religious freedom in the conditions of Russia's aggression against Ukraine: experts on the experience of 2014-2022]. *Офіційний сайт Державної служби України з етнополітики та свободи совісті*. URL: <https://dessa.gov.ua/roundtable-18-march-2022/> [accessed: Jul 12, 2023].

³⁷ Яроцький П. Стан пізньопротестантських конфесій [The state of Next Protestant confessions]. *Українське релігієзнавство*. 2008. № 46, p. 330.

according to A. Anderson, most Protestant movements, including Pentecostal ones, “come to exist as missionary institutions.”³⁸ And new challenges, since 2013-2014, such as the tumultuous events on the Maidan, the annexation of the Crimea, the cynical war in eastern Ukraine, and the full-scale armed aggression of the Muscovites, have forced Christian churches to rethink their mission in society and to place greater emphasis on their role in cultural, educational, missionary, spiritual, rehabilitation, and socially significant activities.

Meanwhile, in discussing global approaches to the active work of any Christian mission or individual missionary ministry in today's conditions, it is important to understand that this area of work is likely one of the most significant, because it is about spiritual enlightenment, personal enrichment, and rethinking of values, which often determines the attitude to such forms of social activity as charity, volunteering, etc. Therefore, in this context, the clear directions of missionary service proposed by Protestant volunteers T. Pinchuk, M. Shcherbakov, and Y. Pyshniuk, which in their opinion are the most effective today, seem relevant. In their article “The Missionary Work of Protestant Christians,” they outline three areas of Protestant missionary service: “*Educational (evangelistic)*. Missionaries open churches, establish Sunday schools, hold Christian events, and cooperate with local churches to convert people to God. *Social and charitable*. Believers cannot ignore other persons' pain and grief. While on mission, they care for people and provide them with spiritual, material, and physical assistance (food for the poor, household help for the elderly and sick). *Preventive*. Christian missionaries are constantly involved in educational activities, work with children and youth, conduct anti-abortion and anti-AIDS programs, explain the hazards of alcohol, smoking and drugs, and organize seminars on different-sex and parent-child relationships.”³⁹ This powerful missionary emphasis is one with which we fully agree.

However, as the well-known Ukrainian religious scholar and philosopher Yuriy Chornomorets notes, it is Protestant volunteers who, by rethinking the identity of their churches, offer effective narratives to society during the war. In this context, the researcher highlights several theses of Petro Dudnik, one of the pastors of the Good News Protestant Church in Sloviansk, co-founder of the Missionary School for the Frontline Territories, one of the founders of the Sails of Hope Charitable Foundation, founder and director of the You

³⁸ Allan Anderson, “Towards a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority World,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 8:1 (2005):31. URL: https://www.academia.edu/63385868/Allan_Anderson_Towards_a_Pentecostal_Missiology_for_the_Majority_World_p_p_29_47 [accessed: Jul 5, 2023].

³⁹ Т. Пінчук, М. Щербаків, Ю. Пішнюк, “Місіонерська справа християн-протестантів” [Missionary work of Protestant Christians]. *Офіційний сайт Асоціації «Поклик»*. URL: <https://poklik.org/misionerska-sprava-hrystyvan-protestanti/> [cited: 2023 Jul 3].

Will Be Found project, and co-founder of the Ukraine Without Orphans Alliance. The pastor, who often risked his life to save thousands of people from Sloviansk and other cities of Donbas, convincingly argues that “the population of Donbas is open to accepting biblical values in a simple and adapted form of the imperative *do good to others, and you will immediately feel better.*” Without exaggeration, this principle can truly be called the “crisis gospel of success,”⁴⁰ as it has repeatedly proven its effectiveness in the reconstruction of many cities. Indeed, as the aforementioned G. Merenkov adds: “Such a social Gospel adapts the Ten Commandments and the principles of Christ's Sermon on the Mount in a creative way to modern conditions, allowing not only human initiatives but also God's grace to manifest themselves.”⁴¹ “All of this contributes to conversion to Christianity as a side effect of the practical application of P. Dudnik's narrative,” notes Y. Chornomorets. At the same time, according to this religious scholar, certain Protestant denominations are currently most in line with the reorientation of churches from self-development to serving the Ukrainian people.⁴² As we can see, Chornomorets' observations emphasize that a true evangelical mission is possible if the goal of charitable activity goes beyond the desire to quantitatively increase one's church. Therefore, in this case, the conversion of people to God and their spiritual growth/rehabilitation is a side effect of missionary service, which is only a positive trend.

Let us look at a vivid example of a successful combination of missionary activity with charity and volunteering. Here is some data on Pastor P. Dudnik's social activity. According to Internet sources, for the incomplete 2017 year, the pastor and his team organized and carried out the following: 4,000 people evacuated from Sloviansk; 12,000 people evacuated from Horlivka, Donetsk, Luhansk, Debaltseve, Popasna and Vuhlehirsk; 35,440 free loaves of bread distributed in the frontline area; 9 destroyed houses rebuilt from scratch; major repairs completed in 136 houses with damaged walls, roofs, windows, etc.; 2 centers for IDPs built, which sheltered 76 families with children, created and provided with everything necessary. Besides, the following items were distributed to IDPs and people in need in the

⁴⁰ Ю. Чорноморець, “Сучасна криза українського християнства як предмет аналізу нарративної герменевтики” [Modern crisis of Ukrainian Christianity as a subject of analysis of narrative hermeneutics]. Релігія та соціум. 2015. № 3 (19) С. 39. URL: [file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/relsoc_2015_3_7%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/relsoc_2015_3_7%20(1).pdf) [cited: 2023 Jul 4].

⁴¹ Г. Меренков, “Харитативна діяльність пізньопротестантських церков в Україні: тенденції розвитку” [Charitable activity of Next Protestant Church in Ukraine: Trends of development]. Вчені записки ТНУ імені В.І. Вернадського. Сер.: Історичні науки. 2019. № 3. С. 25. URL: http://www.hist.vernadskyjournals.in.ua/journals/2019/3_2019/6.pdf [cited: 2023 Jul 10].

⁴² Ю. Чорноморець, “Сучасна криза українського християнства як предмет аналізу нарративної герменевтики” [Modern crisis of Ukrainian Christianity as a subject of analysis of narrative hermeneutics]. Релігія та соціум. 2015. № 3 (19) С. 39. URL: [file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/relsoc_2015_3_7%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/relsoc_2015_3_7%20(1).pdf) [cited: 2023 Jul 4].

frontline area: 36,123 food packages; 32,069 hygiene kits; 36,144 food packages for children; 38,976 baby care items; 8,854 people were fed during the evacuation from Debaltseve; 46,879 people received clothes and footwear; about 30,000 people received moral and psychological support.⁴³

Another vivid example of the combination of missionary service, charitable activities and volunteering is the combined efforts of Evangelical Protestants to help the population of frontline cities and towns since the beginning of hostilities in Luhansk and Donetsk regions. According to T. Pinchuk, M. Shcherbakov, and Y. Pyshniuk, starting in 2015, missionary centers have been actively working along the entire front line for the local population (in more than 30 settlements). This project has gathered a powerful team of Christian missionaries, including the Nehemiah Mission, the Save Ukraine Mutual Aid Center, the Emmanuel Charity Association, the Good News Church in Sloviansk, the ChristianVision international organization, the Union of the Church of God of Ukraine, and the Union of Churches of Christians of Evangelical Faith of Ukraine. Thanks to their support, “the good deeds of Christians and the ministry of 230 missionaries, more than 45,000 people in the east of the country heard the Gospel, and more than 5,000 people accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.”⁴⁴ In addition, during the mission, the Protestants realized the following:

distributed more than 160,000 food packages and the same number of loaves of bread, more than 3,000 packages of baby diapers, 48,000 packs of baby food, 4,500 packages of medicines, 90,000 women's hygiene kits, 1,890 tons of humanitarian aid, 1,450 stoves, 1,835 tons of firewood, and 11 water wells. [...] Volunteers have restored 426 damaged houses and apartments, 410 destroyed roofs and replaced hundreds of windows. [...] Missionaries are distributing wheelchairs, walkers and household appliances to people with disabilities. Children receive baby food, and backpacks and stationery for the coming school year. There are 40 canteens in the settlements, serving more than 44,000 meals. [...] 1203 children aged 9 to 17 received assistance through the Family to Family social rehabilitation program. The children had the opportunity to visit Europe and the United States. There, local Christians helped them recover from their sufferings. More than 12,000 children learned about Biblical truths through children's camps and Christmas parties organized by Protestants”⁴⁵

Thus, the analysis of the above facts of the active social functionality of Protestant churches gives us grounds to assert that the focus of these denominations is not so much on the most vulnerable segments of the population as on a true sense of humanity, i.e., philanthropy.

⁴³ Волонтер-християнин Петро Дуднік [Christian volunteer Petro Dudnik]. *Офіційний сайт Асоціації «Поклик»*. URL: <https://poklik.org/volonter-hrystyyanyn-petro-dudnik/> [accessed: Jul 6, 2023].

⁴⁴ Т. Пінчук, М. Щербаків, Ю. Пишнюк, “Місіонерська справа християн-протестантів” [Missionary work of Protestant Christians]. *Офіційний сайт Асоціації «Поклик»*. URL: <https://poklik.org/misionerska-sprava-hrystyyan-protestantiv/> [accessed: Jul. 3, 2023].

⁴⁵ Ibid..

In the context of our study, the views of one of the chaplains of the already mentioned charitable organization, the Christian Rescue Service, look original. It should be reminded that this service is represented by ministers of various denominations, including Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants. According to Valentyn Rozgon, a Catholic priest, the CRS:

was created to evangelize the territories that suffered during the armed conflict, to provide humanitarian aid to the military, the local population and to provide them with the necessary spiritual assistance. The general opinion is that these territories that were won by armed force should become Ukrainian in nature. I believe that they should become ours not only territorially, but also spiritually. [...] the general outline of the task of the Christian Rescue Service is to bring the faith of Christ, to bring Christ and little by little, with God's help, to give the Lord the opportunity to change through people the world in which we find ourselves.⁴⁶

Based on these considerations, we can conclude that any charitable organization/foundation, in addition to its active work in the areas of humanitarian or volunteer activities, places an important emphasis on missionary-soteriological, and spiritual rehabilitation ministry, in particular, the actualization of fundamental religious ideas and principles. And in the case of the CRS, we think that in addition to charitable, volunteer, and evangelistic tasks, specific ecumenical steps are envisaged.

Thus, missionary activity—preaching, dialogue and service, whose forms and methods have always been diverse and elaborate among Protestants—is particularly effective under certain conditions. Moreover, such work helps increase the engagement of believers in communities and thus optimizes intra-church life. We also have to recognize that today it is one of the most effective means of quantitative and qualitative replenishment of religious communities.

Military Service and Military Clergy (Chaplaincy)

In times of war, one of the priorities of our country is to ensure military security and the defense capability of the Ukrainian army. Therefore, the military service and the institute of chaplaincy today is of utmost importance.

As is well known, a significant number of Protestant churches have previously declared a clear position in which they strongly condemned any propaganda for war, as well as actions that could lead to its outbreak and devastating losses. Therefore, for a long time, it has been an established norm for them to support any public peacemaking initiatives, as well as, of

⁴⁶ Християнська служба порятунку: Наше завдання – змінювати світ [Christian Rescue Service: Our mission is to change the world]. *Офіційний сайт Польського радіо*. URL: <http://archiwum.poldio.pl/5/198/Artykul/398989> [accessed: Jul 13, 2023].

course, to pray constantly for peace in Ukraine and the world. At the same time, Protestants generally tried to bring up the younger generation in a sense of patriotism and love for Ukraine. We can also see their position, that if the Homeland is in danger, every conscious Christian should be directly involved in its defense, though by means that do not contradict their religious beliefs and conscience. However, in recent years, the issue of military service and direct participation in hostilities has changed significantly, sharpening the angles of view: with the onset of real hostilities, there has been a noticeable shift in the minds of believers from pacifist positions to the need to defend their native land. Here is how M. Mokienko describes this in his study on the peculiarities of the theological and social identification of Pentecostals:

The churches joined massively in helping the army, families of soldiers, victims, and in the ministry of chaplains. Although the leaders of the UCCE have not officially issued a statement on the participation of believers in the fighting, it is known that there are believers who are on active duty or even on contract in the army. Church ministers often visit the combat zone, hold spiritual talks with soldiers, and participate in the funerals of the fallen. In general, we can state that among Christians of the Evangelical faith there has been a shift from pacifist positions due to the general situation in the country.⁴⁷

In the context of the above, the institution of military clergy (chaplaincy service) occupies a significant place. This institution began its active work on a volunteer basis, and the driving force behind its restoration and development was the powerful resistance against the Kremlin's armed aggression in eastern Ukraine in 2014. However, for the first time at the legislative level in Ukraine, the concept of "military chaplain" was introduced by the Law "On Military Chaplaincy Service,"⁴⁸ which came into force on July 1, 2022, granting this military specialty an official status. Therefore, if we outline the main task (main mission) of a chaplain, it can be summarized as follows: to provide comprehensive support to military personnel. However, in a broader sense, the task of chaplains, as A. Romanik adds, highlighting the peculiarities of the phenomenon of military chaplaincy, "is to maintain a proper moral and spiritual state, to provide patriotic education, to eliminate stress, to solve moral and ethical problems, to eliminate post-traumatic stress disorder during the rehabilitation period, to support the families of soldiers, to provide advice to the command on

⁴⁷ М. Мокієнко, "П'ятидесятництво: особливості богословської та соціальної ідентифікації" [Pentecostalism: features of theological and social identification]. Дисертація на здобуття наук. ступ. докт. філос. н. 09.00.14 – богослов'я. Київ: Нац. пед. ун-т ім. М.П. Драгоманова, 2018, pp. 428-429. URL: <https://enpuir.npu.edu.ua/handle/123456789/31673> [accessed: Jul 11, 2023].

⁴⁸ Прийнято Закон «Про Службу військового капеланства» [The Law "On Military Chaplaincy Service" was adopted]. *Офіційний вебпортал парламенту України: Законодавство України*. URL: <https://www.rada.gov.ua/news/Novyny/217100.html> [accessed: Jul 12, 2023].

religious, ethical and other issues, to cooperate with military psychologists, etc.”⁴⁹ All this shows that pastors are a strong support for maintaining the proper moral and psychological state of the soldiers, and the experience of the war shows how important military clergy are in extremely difficult conditions. “That is why,” as the priest of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine V. Mykhalevych emphasizes, “the work of military chaplaincy is, if not of primary importance, then of great importance in the activities of the church. Modern pastoral care among the military cannot be ad hoc, it requires the constant presence of chaplains who not only understand the life of the military, but are able to help them exercise the best ideals of Christianity in their real life.”⁵⁰ Therefore, it is possible to generalize the idea that today chaplaincy ministry is conditionally divided into three typical functions often intertwined and complementary to each other: pastor, psychologist, and volunteer.

Speaking about the groups in military chaplaincy that have been formed since 2014, along with the OCU, UGCC, and RCC, the most active among Protestant churches, as well as in other areas of social activity, are Evangelical Christians. This is also pointed out by contemporary researcher T. Kalenychenko. As of 2015, she distinguishes three volunteer battalions that were formed on the front line with the beginning of hostilities in eastern Ukraine and in which Protestants, too, serve: “Battalion of Pentecostal military chaplains (about 60 ministers), First Ukrainian battalion of military chaplains (Protestants and Orthodox, 48 ministers [...]), Interfaith battalion of military chaplains (unites Protestants, Orthodox, Catholics - about 150 ministers).”⁵¹ It is important to emphasize that Protestant chaplaincy has often been very successful because, as it turned out, many of these chaplains have unique knowledge and practical skills in working with the most vulnerable and difficult categories of people. This is also evidenced by I. Shtorma, the commander of the Interfaith Battalion of Military Chaplains: “The matter is that Protestant pastors and deacons have experience in rehabilitation centers, prisons, they have worked with the most difficult

⁴⁹ А. Романік, “Феномен військового капеланства в зоні бойових дій на сході України (за матеріалами фондової колекції НМІУ)” [The phenomenon of military chaplaincy in the combat zone in the East of Ukraine (based on the materials of the foundation collection of NMHU)]. Науковий вісник Національного музею історії України. К. : №1(1), p. 118. URL: <http://visnyk.nmiu.org/index.php/nv/article/view/23> [accessed: Jul 8, 2023].

⁵⁰ В. Михалевич, “Духівництво у військових структурах: історичний досвід і сучасність” [Clergy in military structures: historical experience and present day]. Збірник наукових праць «Волинь і волиняни у Другій світовій війні». 2012, p. 131. URL: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/153584137.pdf> [accessed: Jul 7, 2023].

⁵¹ Капелани в АТО. За крок до формалізації [Chaplains in ATO. A step towards formalization]. *Релігійно-інформаційна служба України «RISU»*. URL: https://risu.ua/kapelani-v-ato-za-krok-do-formalizaciji_n76050 [cited: 2023 Jul 9].

people...”⁵² That is why their presence at the forefront as chaplains is a noticeable phenomenon and serves as an effective tool in solving many problematic tasks.

The following is the situation with military clergy as of the beginning of 2023, according to O. Denysov, a chaplain of the Corps of Military Chaplains of the Christian Rescue Service, an authorized representative of the Interfaith Council on Chaplaincy at the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the Military Chaplaincy Service:

Speaking of military chaplains serving in the Armed Forces, there are almost 200 people in full-time positions, not counting the TDF (there is a separate MC service.) According to the quotas from the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Policy and Freedom of Conscience, full-time positions are mostly held by the OCU and the UGCC, with some Roman Catholics, Evangelical churches, Muslims, Orthodox and Messianic Jews. But there are at least twice as many volunteer chaplains, and they are mostly Christians from Evangelical and Protestant churches and Messianic communities. [...] But most of the volunteer chaplains are Evangelical Christians from Protestant communities. After all, the chaplains of Evangelical churches are the ones who provide the most volunteer service.⁵³

Thus, we can confidently state that today pastoral care in the military formations of Ukraine shows positive trends. Further, the institute of military chaplains is becoming a natural phenomenon for our country, although in historical retrospect military chaplaincy is not something new for Ukraine. In the end, it is important to understand that neither the army nor the country will ever be strong if they are not strong spiritually and morally. This is why the popular saying “A strong army is a strong country” truly makes sense.

Conclusions

Today, the active engagement of denominations in addressing the most urgent social and moral issues of the society, focusing on social ministry, active public, Christian-patriotic, and a socially responsible position are powerful messages, main directions and ways of socialization of the Church. They lead it beyond the narrow confessional ministry into the active public life, thus bringing Christian values to different spheres of life. Being aware of the complexity of problems associated with the Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, it is important to realize that today

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Інтерв'ю з Олексієм Денисовим, капеланом міжконфесійної ради при Міноборони та Службі військового капеланства ЗСУ [Interview with Oleksiy Denisov, chaplain of the interfaith council under the Ministry of Defense and the Military Chaplaincy Service of the Armed Forces]. *Офіційний сайт Християнської Служби Порятунку*. URL: <http://crs-center.org/%D1%96%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B2%D1%8E-%D0%B7-%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81%D1%96%D1%94%D0%BC-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%BC-%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BF%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%BD/> [accessed: Jul 2, 2023].

each of us—Protestant, Orthodox or Catholic—is called to protect the borders of our Homeland, to steadfastly defend its territorial integrity by all means possible and to be able to rise to any challenge for the sake of tranquility, just peace, free will and the victory of the long-suffering Ukrainian people. Therefore, it is our firm conviction that with courageous soldiers, balanced and wise decisions and joint efforts of the state and the churches, Ukraine will definitely prevail, because every day, every hour, it fights for the right to be a sovereign, united, and strong state.

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