

Story from Ukranian Rabbi

offered at Global Day of Action for Peace in Ukraine, March 6, 2022

by Ellen Stromberg, Congregations Etz Chayim and Beth Am

Today I had the privilege of hearing Rabbi Julia Gris who had just recently escaped from Ukraine. Her journey with her daughter, 2 pets, and one suitcase trudging 20 miles in bitter cold was both astounding and heartbreaking. She is now in Warsaw. She is trying to stay in connection with her congregants to offer them moral and emotional support. And she is grappling with the fact that she may not be able to go back to Ukraine for a long time. The only thing she has from her home is her key. What she does have though is her understanding that the world is also made up of good people, who are kind and caring. Her hope is in the humanity of everyone reaching out, hope in how people are comforting one another.

Addendum: [Click here](#) (or use link below) to read an article in “The Times of Israel” (3/7/22) about Rabbi Julia Gris in which she says she will be celebrating Purim (upcoming holiday). The holiday celebrates good over evil.

<https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/fight-or-flight-from-odessa/?fbclid=IwAR07m6fuqJLM4aSEUps3Gub0-Q8UbeR7zA2LMYDFJxQc1srrnAXJeCXdCJg>

Ellen concluded her words with this prayer from the Chabad Community:

We pray for the safety of our Jewish brethren in Ukraine along with all people in the affected areas. We pray for a peaceful resolution to this conflict. We pray that the people affected have the strength and resources to make it through this trying time. And most of all, we pray for the day when “nations will beat their swords into plowshares ... and not learn war anymore.”