



Volume 1 / Issue 1

Highlights

May 2010: Meeting with pastors & women's ministry leaders to share our vision for pro-life ministry in Odessa.

September 2010: Steering Committee formed of missionaries and Ukrainians to develop plan for pro-life ministry.

March 2011: Accepted as partner with Baptists for Life (now Life Matters Worldwide)

December 2011: Carolyn Rice leads group of seven ladies through "Forgiven and Set Free" Bible study and leads seminar to introduce post-abortion ministry to our churches.

March 2012: Leadership Training for post-abortion ministry

April 2012: Ukrainian leaders begin their first "Forgiven and Set Free" small groups.

March 2013: Second Leadership Training seminar for post-abortion ministry

July 2013: "Choose Life" registered as Ukrainian non-profit organization

September 2013: Luba Abramova approved as assistant director of pregnancy care center

Ministry Update

Our mission: Help people learn to value life from conception to death and receive God's love, forgiveness and gift of eternal life.

Praise the Lord for a wonderful beginning to the new pro-life ministry in Odessa, Ukraine! Your prayers and gifts have made it possible. Thank you for investing in a ministry that will protect the lives of future generations of Ukrainian children. When Miriam Wheeler, MD, arrived in Odessa in August 1998, she saw immediately the great need for such a ministry. As she began to see patients, she heard heart-breaking stories of women injured by abortion and grieving their lost children. The ABWE team of missionaries started praying for additional help to initiate a pro-life ministry. God answered this prayer by calling nurse practitioner Holly Friesen to Ukraine, after she had served at a pregnancy care center in Lima, Peru, for two years. With Holly's arrival to Odessa in January 2010, we were able to begin strategizing for the future. You can see from the highlights how God has orchestrated our progress to build a solid foundation. We are delighted to share our continuing progress with you through quarterly updates.

Our Ukrainian partners on our steering committee have caught the enthusiasm for the ministry. One of our pastors coined the name for our organization, "Choose Life!" This is the umbrella organization for all of our pro-life activities, and Dr. Wheeler is chairman of the Steering Committee. The first ministry we developed is "Forgiven and Set Free"-- the small group Bible study for women suffering from emotional trauma related to abortion. Dr. Wheeler is also director of

Over forty women have completed the "Forgiven & Set Free" Bible study.

the post-abortion ministry. This has given us a solid foundation for the entire pro-life organization, as these women receive God's healing and become our most effective advocates. Listen to some of their testimonies:

"I was 18 years old when I aborted the only child I would ever conceive. For years I was depressed about my infertility, seeking relief from alcohol and drugs. God wonderfully saved me and delivered me from these addictions, but I was still discouraged and feeling much pain and guilt from my abortion. After going through the course, "Forgiven and Set Free", the Lord took away all my guilt, healed relationships with my mother and husband, and gave me great joy and assurance of forgiveness!"

"I had been a believer for many years, but still dealt with anger, irritation, despondency, problems with my relationship with my husband, and fear of doctors. I had asked God's forgiveness for my abortion when I was saved, and was sure of my salvation. When I heard about the post-abortion Bible study, I agreed to go because I wanted to help other women. Then God revealed to me that many of my own problems stemmed from my abortion! The Lord helped me find full healing and restored relationships."



The pregnancy care center is the second aspect of "Choose Life", and the most appropriate name in this culture is simply "Women's Center". Holly Friesen is director of this center and is eager to share God's love and hope with women facing a pregnancy that seems too much of a burden to handle at a difficult juncture in their lives. The Center will also offer prenatal and parenting classes, evangelistic Bible studies and discipleship courses. We thought it would take a couple of years of the center functioning to identify a woman who could become the Ukrainian director of the "Women's Center". We were thrilled when God pointed us to a member of our steering committee who was looking for work

this spring and ideally suited for such a position. Our steering committee voted unanimously to name Luba Abramova as the assistant director of the Women's Center. Holly will mentor Luba for at least two years before turning the full responsibility over to her.

Specific Prayer Needs

Office: We plan to rent an office for 1-2 years, while we raise funds to purchase our own facility. Pray that the Lord will give us a good relationship with an honest landlord and that potential clients will be able to easily find our office.

Volunteers: We have presented the ministry of "Choose Life" in more than 16 churches this fall. Pray that God will call out gifted individuals, both men and women, to fulfill the mission of "Choose Life". Pray that we will have wisdom as we process applications, to place volunteers into positions where they will be most effective.

Volunteer Training: February 13-15, 2014. "Life Matters Worldwide" is sending two PCC directors from Grand Rapids, MI to teach our first volunteer training seminar. Pray for Bev and Carolyn as they teach in a different culture and for us as we prepare for the seminar.

Advertising Plan: It is crucial that we find the words most appropriate for this culture that will grab the attention of pregnant women considering abortion. Pray for us as we create a website, develop flyers, and decide on other advertising venues.

Post-Abortion Ministry: Pray for the leaders facilitating four small groups going through "Forgiven and Set Free" now, that they will have God's wisdom to help these ladies find Biblical answers for the problems they are suffering secondary to abortion.

Do you want to know more about "Choose Life"?

Check out our website: ukrainemedical.abwe.org

Sign up to receive this newsletter by e-mail by writing Holly at esperanza@abwe.cc

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