

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine

David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life. And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph in a forest. Then Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the woods and strengthened his hand in God.

1 Samuel 23:15-16

April 9, 2016

Dear Prayer Partners:

As I read this familiar story of David and Jonathan this week, I was struck by parallels with the refugee crisis in Ukraine. David was at war with an enemy who was also a countryman. In great fear, David left all his possessions, homeless and moving from place to place. Jonathan found him and encouraged him in God. What do you think Jonathan said to David? He must have reminded him of God's unchanging character, how His peace casts out fear, how He promises to accomplish His good purpose in each of our lives. Would you pray that missionaries and Ukrainian believers would be a Jonathan to a refugee David? How desperately they seek peace, both internally and externally, a safe home, someone to trust. Only God can fulfill those needs! **Monday and Tuesday (April 11-12), the Ukraine Crisis Fund is sponsoring a conference in eastern Ukraine to train pastors and mature believers to counsel emotionally distraught war survivors from a Biblical perspective.** ABWE-Ukraine team leader Mike Gustafson wrote this about the conference speaker: *"Pastor Zee was an officer during the brutal Yugoslavian wars in the 1990's. After his salvation, he studied for ministry and earned a second doctorate in how families are affected by traumatic events. Currently he is helping Syrians in the refugee corridor in Europe. He comes this weekend to Ukraine to share his testimony and give some practical advice for refugees. Pray for Pastor Zee and the hundred people we expect to come to this conference."*

Since July 2015, we have been doing clinics every other month at the **refugee center at Sergeevka** on the Black Sea, alternating months with the Kuyalnik center. This sanitarium was built in Soviet times for only summer use. It has fallen into disrepair and even after moving several hundred refugees here, including many disabled, the Ukrainian government has done little to make it livable. It is very hard for the refugees to stay warm in the winter. They have nothing to do, and boredom leads to alcohol and friction. Our Crisis Fund would like to buy books to open a library here and in Kuyalnik. God is at work in these people's lives! Sergei is a deacon at a church in the city of Belgorad-Dnistrovsk, 1 hour away. He leads a Sunday afternoon Bible study at Sergeevka and begged us to come hold a clinic there. He reports about 30 are attending the Bible study regularly and 20 have trusted Jesus as Savior! As I have treated refugees at these two centers in the Odessa area and in eastern Ukraine, several have said, *"I am sorry it took a war to bring me to Christ"*.

You can tell my heart is still tugged toward Ukraine, even while I am on home ministry assignment. This week I spent about 20 hours reading requests from people and churches tormented by war and preparing for our **Crisis Fund** meeting Wednesday. It took 4 hours via Skype with our pastors' advisory council to consider prayerfully these requests and disburse funds. May God continue to give us the means to feed the hungry, clothe the needy, shelter the homeless, and share the Gospel with these hurting people. I was in another Skype meeting last week with our ABWE-Ukraine team for 8 hours, praying together and planning for the future. Pray for wisdom as we seek God's guidance in how to best use our limited resources! **We need more missionaries!** We are delighted that God called a young lady graduating from Liberty University in May to work with us for one year. **Please pray for Rebekah Carley as she prepares and raises support.**

The family physician who was planning to come cover our village clinics in June has had to cancel out. **Could YOU meet this need?** Do you know someone who could? Please write me at mrwheeler@abwe.cc with contact information. I am looking for dentists, primary care physicians, and nurses to come on a team for 1-2 weeks to serve our destitute villagers and refugees. Please write me if you would like more information about such a medical team.

Praise God for a wonderful answer to prayer: He has provided all of the monthly support that I was lacking! He has moved His people to be so generous to the ministry in Ukraine. *Thank you to all of you have given to the medical ministry, the Crisis Fund, the pro-life ministry!* Your funds and prayers are enabling these ministries to move forward and change lives for God's glory! Continue to pray for my travels April-July. Lord willing, I will return to Ukraine August 1.

Holding Fast to The Rock, Miriam Wheeler, MD