

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Luke 15:10

November 2, 2017

Dear Prayer Partners:

Isn't it wonderful how **God cares about every individual** who needs salvation and causes all of Heaven to reverberate with joy when just one sinner repents?! This is a blessing to those of us who serve in **resistant cultures** where we do not see large numbers of people getting saved. I do not keep statistics of how many clinic patients make professions of faith, since only God knows whether they are truly born again, and low numbers could be discouraging. We rejoice over each person who turns to Jesus for salvation! Please join with me in desperate prayer for many who have heard the Gospel in the last few weeks and several who seem very close to a decision. Tuesday Pastor Lonya, my two clinic assistants and I made our **circuit of three tiny villages** to shine Jesus' light in dark places. The temperature was in the 40's but the wind chill made it feel like low 30's. Many were reluctant to walk to the clinic site in the strong frigid wind whipping through the fields that they were calling a "hurricane". I was sitting in my Honda CRV seeing patients and could feel the car rocking with the **wintery blasts**! Several conversations were blessings, even in this setting. Maria, who has been a believer for a few years, recounted how she has been witnessing to her neighbors and relatives. Another lady promised to come to the next service. It was sad that a woman who had seemed to be growing in her spiritual understanding was now unwilling to listen to Scripture. But **Alla was excited** about a book she has been reading that her son received at our camp in July. She wants to share that with the children in her village, even though she herself has not made a public profession of faith. I challenged her to repent, trust in Jesus alone for salvation, develop her own personal relationship with God so she could teach the children. Pray for Alla and others.

Bruce and Carol Bagley served with ABWE in Odessa for 10 years. They returned the last week of September with a **medical team, including 3 optometrists**, one PA, two nurses and two helpers. We treated about **600 patients in 9 villages in 5 days** of exhausting ministry and hours of bone-rattling travel over rough village roads. Many heard the Gospel! The eye team gave out hundreds of eyeglasses. What joy lights up faces of those who receive glasses and see the words of Scripture clearly for the first time in years! The PA's heart was deeply touched by home visits she made, as she witnessed the poverty and despair these villagers endure. We gave out invitations to all the Zhatva celebrations at local churches. Each church picks a Sunday in September/October to thank the Lord for the harvest. Our pastors working with clinics reported many patients visited their Zhatva services. *Praise God for the ministry of this team!*

We started a new clinic in **Shurino** in April, where Pastor Sasha is thrilled by many patients being open to talk to him about spiritual things and visiting church. Pastor Anatoliy is seeing growth in **Limaniy** and wants to start a clinic in another village! He baptized 5 new believers a few weeks ago, a couple of whom came through the clinic. Pastor Lonya had a good talk with **Maria in Kubanka** who is faithful in services, tells everyone about Jesus, but has not publicly professed Jesus as Savior. She was not ready to make that decision and be baptized this summer, but she's close!

It took me all of October to recuperate from the week with the medical team. 😊 It is impossible to count the hours necessary in organizing and preparing for such a team, then the intensity of the actual week of ministry. But it is worth it all as we meet many new patients and share the Good News with them! My **vertigo** has been much worse this month, but that is typical as it waxes and wanes. This throws me on the Lord's mercy to trust Him to accomplish His purpose in my life, whether I am healthy or ill. A **banner event** in October was sending the final revision of "Facilitating Biblical Healing" in Russian to Life International for printing. I have spent hundreds of hours on that project the past couple of years along with translators and ABWE colleague Doug Phillips. This is the manual for leading "**Forgiven and Set Free**" small group post-abortion Bible studies. May God continue to bless this ministry of healing the emotional trauma women suffer after doing abortions. Several women are currently going through that study.

Please intercede for me as I seek **God's wisdom in planning my schedule for the next few months**. I need to teach a seminar for new Choose Life volunteers, direct leadership training for *Forgiven and Set Free*, prepare for a Christian Medical Association conference, and more. We would like to close one of our village clinics and **open a new site**, but are waiting on the Lord's guidance to the site of His choosing. So many needs surround us!

Pray also for Dr. Tim Murphy as he prepares to bring his wife Angela and their 3 children to Odessa April-June 2018 to serve in the village clinics and in ESL ministry. Tim has served in Ukraine many times; Angela has been once; but this will be their first time as a family. This will be a huge help to me while Holly is on furlough.

Please pray for these major upcoming events:

- ✠ Nov. 16: Meeting of pastors' advisory committee of **Ukraine Crisis Fund**, which I administer, for determining disbursement of funds. Many churches and refugees are fearful of the winter, as heating fuels have doubled in price and scarcity.
- ✠ Nov. 25: meeting of **Choose Life Board of Directors**, of which I am chairman. We will be adopting a policy manual to begin functioning as an official board, rather than a simple steering committee. Pray for me as I lead the discussion, to have wisdom and clarity in answering questions and making this a smooth transition.
- ✠ Dec. 2-10: trip to Lugansk oblast in eastern Ukraine to do **clinics for refugees** from the ongoing war in the southern part of Donbass. The conflict is at a low level; we are hearing of few casualties, but there is no progress on peacemaking or restoring the rebel-occupied territory to Ukraine. Continue to pray for peace in Ukraine!

Thank you so much for interceding for me before God's Throne of grace and mercy! He is able.

*Clinging to The Rock,
Miriam Wheeler, MD*