

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:
not as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

John 14:27

February 23, 2014

Dear Prayer Partners:

I appreciate so much the notes I have received from some of you, inquiring about my safety during the protests and violence in Ukraine. All of the bloodshed has been in the capitol, Kiev, which is about 275 miles from Odessa. There have been protests in other cities, but few in Odessa. President Yanokovich has disappeared and the Ukrainian parliament has appointed an interim president. BBC has good coverage of the crisis, if you are interested. There is a video at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-26312079>. All the banks were closed Friday, and limits have been placed on withdrawals from ATM's. We are not in danger here in Odessa. These financial restrictions could cause us problems though. ***Please pray for peace and for a functional government that guarantees religious freedom.*** There is a lot of uncertainty right now.

January and February have been busy with preparations for opening our pregnancy care center. Holly Friesen, director of the PCC, and Luba Abramova, our Ukrainian assistant director, have been furnishing and equipping the new office. We organized a seminar to train volunteers February 13-15 for our organization "Choose Life", which is the umbrella for the PCC, our post-abortion ministry, and the future ministry of abstinence teaching. Life Matters Worldwide sent two pregnancy center directors from Grand Rapids to teach. Beverly Zahl and Carolyn Doyle did a wonderful job of training our volunteers and giving us directors a lot of valuable insight. Now Holly and I are preparing and teaching modules to continue the volunteer training. I had the privilege of teaching a module on evangelism Saturday, and was delighted with the responsiveness of our trainees. We are doing each module twice. I will be teaching two more modules in March. Holly is planning an open house of the Women's Center on International Women's Day March 8, just for our church contacts. Then we will focus on training PCC counselors for a full opening in April. ***Please pray much for all of these preparations, so that we will be ready for God to send us women in need.*** This is a wonderful opportunity!

I am also preparing to teach post-abortion ministry in a restricted access country in May. I am going to a conference next week to equip me for ministry in that area of the world. ***Please pray for much wisdom for Carolyn Rice and me in this venture.*** I am hoping to meet with Christian doctors in the area as well.

Our ABWE Church Ministries Institute is celebrating its twentieth anniversary in April! CMI president John Taylor has asked me to speak at a ladies' conference in conjunction with this celebration in Odessa on April 5 and in Kiev on April 12. Pray that God would be glorified and that this would herald another 20 years of effective teaching for the CMI.

Please continue to pray for the ongoing village clinic ministries. We had to cancel two clinics late January because of a snow and ice storm. Some villages were without power for more than two weeks. Pastors Lonya and Anatoliy carried food, firewood, and other supplies to many needy villagers. Many people have heard the gospel as a result of these efforts and the clinics. Keep praying for their salvation! We decided not to buy a prayer house in Berdinovo at this time, but we are still looking for one in Valentinovka. *Thank you so much for your prayer support!*

Clinging to The Rock, Miriam