

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine

*You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled;
for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet...
And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world
as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

Matthew 24:6 & 14

November 29, 2018

Dear Prayer Partners:

Greetings from Odessa! I just flew in yesterday afternoon and am now unpacking in the fog of jet lag. I wondered how the advent of martial law would affect the airport, but I sailed through passport control and got my baggage with no customs hassles. The usually crowded Vienna to Odessa flight was only half-full. Soldiers were patrolling the airport outside. But otherwise there was no noticeable difference.

I have gotten many questions about **Ukraine being placed under martial law** this week. Pastor Lonya reports that most people here are asking **why now since we have been at war for 4 years!** A war that has killed over 10,000 people, mostly civilians, and rendered millions homeless. At least 1.5 million fled Donbass for other places in Ukraine; another million or more fled to other countries. In the rebel-occupied zone, Christians are being persecuted, churches confiscated by the government, ministries curtailed. In the face of this suffering, **martial law for 30 days** does not scare us. **We are told that our lives will not be noticeably affected.** Only 10 of Ukraine's 24 oblasts (provinces) were placed under martial law, including Odessa: those on the Black Sea or bordering Russia. You can read more about this here: <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/what-martial-law-in-ukraine-could-mean-for-nation.html>

What can the Ukraine government do under martial law? Here are a few possibilities but may not happen:

- Increase security and special operation regimes for critical economic and infrastructure sites.
- Citizens could be forced to work at a defense facility rather than their regular job.
- The state could confiscate private property (e.g. vehicles).
- The state could regulate telecommunications and mass media.
- Ban peaceful protests, marches, gatherings and other mass events.
- Order a curfew.
- Limit relocation of its citizens and foreigners.
- Citizens could be ordered to host military personnel or internally displaced civilians in their homes.

It remains to be seen what will actually happen. **Pray that my clinic ministry vehicle will not be confiscated,** nor any of our medicines and supplies taken. The way to several of our clinics traverses highways which have a police checkpoint. Pray for God's protection from further hostilities. **Pray that martial law will be limited to the 30 days proclaimed this week, and that God's ministry will not be affected.** May this be another instrument of the Lord to draw more people to Himself!

*God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7).
This gospel of the kingdom will be preached! (Matt. 24:14)*

Pray for us! Pray for peace in Ukraine, both in government and in people's hearts.

*Clinging to The Rock,
Miriam Wheeler, MD*

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and ABWE Associate Medical Director