

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.

Isaiah 9:2 & 6-7a

January 7, 2019

Dear Prayer Partners:

Merry Christmas! Many of you have already packed up your decorations, but in Orthodox Ukraine today is Christmas. Friday-Saturday Pastor Lonya and his team at Fair Haven Church in **Krasnosyolka** led a **day camp** for about 30 kids from our Sunday School, then had a special presentation for their parents Sunday, Christmas Eve. May the Lord continue to work in their hearts through all that they learned! Today the church has two services for Christmas, then **tomorrow will be services in New Kubanka and Shamanovka.**

I have been meditating on Isaiah 9 during this Christmas season. What an amazing prophecy hundreds of years before Jesus' birth. A **great light has illuminated us** who previously walked in the darkness of sin. That light is the Messiah, our Savior: *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* (2 Cor. 4:6). He is indeed **wonderful**, the **Creator** of this awesome universe and **Almighty God**, eternal with no beginning or end. He is our Counselor, the **fount of divine wisdom** available to us for the asking. He is the **Prince of Peace**, now giving us that all-surpassing peace in our hearts, that calms us in the midst of turmoil. Someday He will reign on the new earth, wars will cease, and peace will continue forever! **Be encouraged in this New Year.**

As the **war drags on in eastern Ukraine**, we long for that peace now. Dec 26 the president decided **not to continue martial law**, instituted on Nov 26. We are grateful for that, though martial law really did not impact our daily lives. I just got a note from a **pastor in the rebel-occupied territory**, that the natural gas for heating will be turned off January 9 in all protestant churches, regardless of their registration status. He wrote that this is another way they are trying to strangle the evangelical witness there. **Continue to pray for them!**

A few weeks ago, Pastor Lonya, Holly and I traveled to the village of **Zarya**, just ½ hour from my apartment, to meet with **Pastor Roma**, a young seminary graduate sent out by Grace Baptist Church to revive a struggling church there. They already own a prayer house, ideal for a clinic. They have no health care or pharmacy in their village. There are two other villages close by where Roma knows many needy people. Impressed by Roma's vision, **we agreed to start a monthly clinic January 28.** Please **pray** for this new endeavor!

Ben (senior medical student) and Holly (nurse) Snyder are coming to Odessa January 16 to serve with us for 2 weeks. Pray for their travel and for their ministry here. May God teach them much about medical missions and bless their patients through them. **Pray for me as I am sick** with bronchitis this week and need strength for the packed two weeks of clinics with the Snyders, as well as covering ABWE Missionary Healthcare questions while Medical Director Dr. Tim Hepworth serves at our hospital in Bangladesh for 6 weeks. Our God is able!

Emmanuel: God with us.

Miriam Wheeler, MD

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