

Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine and beyond

In the multitude of my anxieties within me,

Your comforts delight my soul.

But the Lord has been my defense, and my God the rock of my refuge.

Psalm 94: 19 & 22

June 14, 2020

Dear Prayer Partners,

I hope these verses from Psalm 94 are also your testimony through the COVID-19 crisis. The world has changed dramatically since I last wrote you March 15. If you did not receive that letter, it is archived here:

<http://www.ukrainemedical.abwe.org/miriam-wheeler-prayer-letter-archives> along with a convicting devotional by Tim Keller that speaks so well to the global stress. We are praying that this microscopic virus that has cast governments to their knees will cause all people to look up to the Sovereign King of Kings and Glorious Savior. At ABWE, we have been thrilled by stories from our **missionaries all over the world using creative ways** to share the hope Jesus gives to people cowering in fear and despair. A "stay at home" order does not keep the Gospel at home! Technology is being used to spread God's truth and peace. I have spent **many hours reviewing data from reliable medical resources** to send out weekly updates to our 1000 ABWE missionaries globally. A couple of local churches have also sought my advice.

I receive hundreds of **emails every week with questions** concerning health, medical care, travel considerations, safety in ministry venues. Our missionaries continue to deal with non-COVID health issues like cancer and need advice when they cannot go to a local healthcare provider. Many have struggled with the decision whether to return to the US if they personally are at increased risk for severe COVID-19. **Some countries locked down borders so suddenly, that some of our missionaries were not able to evacuate.** Those who did return to the US dealt with finding housing unexpectedly or healthcare locally. From mid-January through the end of May I worked through every weekend except Easter. Needless to say, I was exhausted by the time June started. As the crisis has been slowing down recently, our ABWE Crisis Management Team has been able to decrease the frequency of our meetings to weekly. That has helped my workload significantly. Thank you to those who continued to pray for me even though you did not hear much from me!

In Ukraine, Pastor Lonya took medicines to our regular patients in Krasnosyolka and Kubanka, giving him many opportunities to share the Gospel again. He even took the youth group with him to visit some elderly housebound and take them groceries and medicine. **When highways to our further-out clinics were closed, Lonya, Vova and Anatoliy took medicine packets through the checkpoints as gifts to needy patients.** Holly Friesen has done an incredible job of leading the clinic team through this difficult time of finding innovative ways to serve our patients. This past week they were able to start the regular schedule of village clinics. **The Women's Center had to close for a few weeks but continued counseling clients by phone.** The Center reopened recently with careful scheduling to limit numbers of people in the building. **Pray for many Ukrainians to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and the only Hope in despair.**

This historic crisis has interrupted all missionary reporting to supporting churches. I was able to share with a few last fall, but many of you I have not seen since moving back to the US one year ago. **How many mission medical directors face a pandemic in their first year of ministry?!** What a challenge it has been and continues to be, that has surely thrown me on the Lord in desperate prayer for His wisdom and guidance. That is a good thing! I am eager to visit the rest of my supporting churches as restrictions lift and doors reopen. I was hoping to serve in Ukraine again for a few weeks this fall, but I do not yet know if that will be feasible. **Please pray with me for God's guidance whether to make that trip in September or wait until next spring.** My calendar in July is packed with ABWE training events, then in August I am hoping to take a couple of weeks of vacation. Dear supporters, **thank you for your faithful prayer and financial gifts** that have enabled me to serve our 1000 ABWE missionaries around the globe. God is faithful!

*Clinging to The Rock,
Miriam Wheeler, MD*

ABWE Medical Director and ABWE-Ukraine Medical Ministry Founder