

## *Sharing Christ's Compassion for Ukraine and beyond*

*Knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus  
will also raise us up with Jesus...*

*For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many,  
may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.*

*Therefore we do not lose heart.*

*Even though our outward man is perishing,  
yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*

2 Corinthians 4:14-16

April 3, 2021

Dear Prayer Partners,

**Christ is risen!** Do those words resound in your hearts, producing joy and overflowing thanksgiving? Death to life, despair to hope, darkness to light, sin to salvation—all because Jesus willingly died a horrendous death by crucifixion to become our Risen Lord and Savior. Isn't it wonderful to focus on this marvelous truth while the pandemic continues?

From mid-December to mid-March, I walked with 8 missionaries in 5 different countries through significant medical emergencies. Five of these were caused by COVID-19. We are grateful that the Great Physician chose to heal each of them! One especially came very close to death. Three returned to the US for treatment. We tried to evacuate three others to the US, but that proved impossible because of flight restrictions. Being hospitalized in a country not your own is extremely difficult, even when you serve in that country and know the language. Illness makes you long for the familiar. One (unrelated to COVID) is now awaiting a heart transplant in the US. Another is suffering from "Long COVID", a debilitating condition with an unknown duration. You can imagine how hard it is to deal with that unknown!

### **Here is an excerpt from the prayer letter of one missionary COVID survivor:**

*My breathing continued to fail for the next several days. I called the ambulance several more times, each time I was denied treatment because they informed me if I was well enough to call for the ambulance, then I wasn't bad enough to require hospitalization... We were able to schedule an office visit with a doctor. Upon examination by the doctor, she immediately determined that I needed to be hospitalized and arranged for ambulance transport to the hospital... Throughout the night I continued to struggle to breathe, and could not sleep due to the need to continually focus on simply breathing in and out... The next 6 days would be a whirlwind full of torturous indignities, the grim witness of other ICU patients perishing, and more everlasting nights now also filled with the screaming and rantings of senile and incontinent roommates who tested the mettle of every ICU nurse. But also, and more significantly, a touch from the Father. As you, our dear friends rallied behind us in prayer, my condition began to very gradually improve.*

It is so frustrating to talk to missionaries like this, knowing that they are not getting the best medical care. But over and over my Heavenly Father reminds me that He is in control of each situation, that He is The Great Physician who can heal them no matter where they are located, and that I am His servant to come alongside these in need. I can explain what is going on, suggest questions to ask local caregivers, give prescriptions for treatment, provide an official medical furlough as needed, encourage the families of the patient, and pray much! What a blessing to see our ABWE missionaries respond to these difficulties with great faith and perseverance and continued love for people on their field of service!

My responsibility includes serving on the Crisis Management Team and working with the ABWE Senior Leadership Team (president and vice-presidents) to set policy for international travel and for our ABWE International Headquarters to protect our staff and guests at many training events. Thankfully, no one has contracted COVID-19 at IHQ, even though several have gotten it in the community. After a year of working extremely long hours, weekends, being on call 24/7, I am very thankful to have sufficient coverage to take a real week of vacation after Easter! Pray for true physical and spiritual rest and refreshment. *"The inward man is being renewed day by day"*. Your prayers are crucial to my ministry!

***Clinging to The Rock,  
Miriam Wheeler, MD, ABWE Medical Director***