

## Merry Christmas from Holly December 2018

To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace. Luke 1:79

I enjoy this time of year when we reflect on Christ's coming to earth as a baby in order to work out God's plan of redemption and bring the hope of light and peace to a dark world. Current events continue to highlight the sinfulness of mankind and our desperate need for hope beyond what this world has to offer.

You may have noticed Ukraine in the news again recently. There was an incident in the Black Sea between Ukrainian and Russian naval vessels on November 25th. The Ukrainian naval vessels were fired on by the Russian vessels and then seized, resulting in 6 crew members being wounded and 24 Ukrainian soldiers being detained. In response the Ukrainian government decided to institute martial law for 30 days in all the regions of Ukraine that border Russia and the Black Sea, which includes the Odessa region where I live. So far, all that has actually happened to our knowledge, is increased military readiness. There have not been any visible changes to daily life in Ukraine and it has not impacted my life or ministry. Ukraine is scheduled to hold presidential elections in March and there is concern about how these current events could impact that. Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine and that these events would not hinder the preaching of the gospel in our part of Ukraine, but would instead cause more hearts to be open. Life has gotten increasingly difficult, especially for believers, in the rebel held territories in the east. They are no longer allowed to openly meet as churches. Pray for protection and wisdom for the believers who continue to try to minister there, and that this conflict could be brought to an end so that the gospel can again be freely preach in these areas.

Thank you for your prayers regarding my application for a visa. I was granted the visa and have submitted paperwork for a temporary residency permit. Pray that it will be granted without any difficulty. I did enjoy the chance to visit teammates in Moldova during my visa trip and enjoyed visiting the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday service of the new church plant they are involved in.



Praise the Lord we finally got the gas turned on for heat at the Women's Center. Thank you for praying about this need! This past month Luba, our Women's Center director, and I have been visiting area churches to seek more prayer and financial support and to recruit new volunteers for the ministry. We have been encouraged by the response and are praying for a good group of new volunteers for the volunteer training we plan to conduct in February.

I am looking forward to many special events over the next few weeks as we celebrate Christ's birth and the start of a new year. This Saturday we will have a Christmas party for all of the volunteers who serve with Choose Life.

Pray that it will be a time of encouragement and blessing for them. My church will be having special Christmas services and events, as will the village churches that we work with through the medical ministry. Pray that those who visit these services will have hearts open to the gospel. I have a friend who serves in North Africa visiting me for a couple of weeks over the holidays. Having her here will certainly make this holiday more special! Pray that it will be a time of encouragement and refreshment for her as well. May your heart be blessed by the celebration of our Savior's birth!

Praising God for light & peace through our Savior!  
Holly Friesen

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**Donation Info:** Gifts can be sent to ABWE, PO Box 8585, Harrisburg PA 17105-8585 or online [www.abwe.org](http://www.abwe.org)

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- Holly's ministry account # 0139523
- Pro-Life in Ukraine, account # 0757353