

Meisha Deane
Missionary to Ukraine

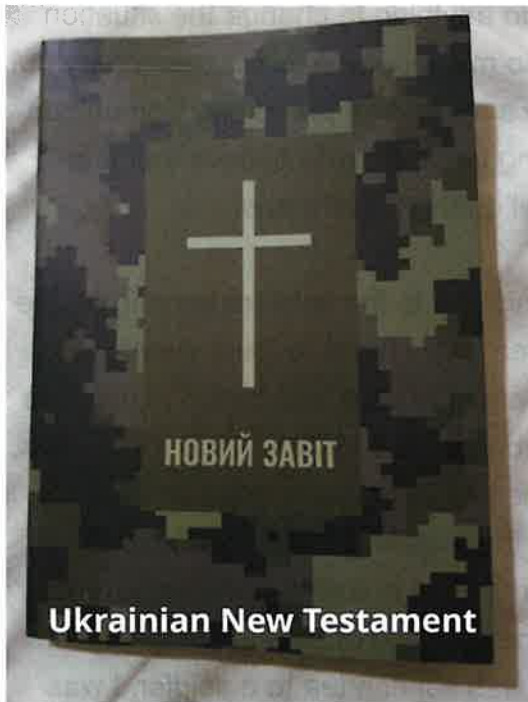


Dear Praying Friends,

Knowing you are praying for me is a great comfort these days. Winter in Ukraine is difficult. A friend in the States asked me the other day why I am staying in Ukraine. The answer came easier than I thought it would. The answer is that there is peace in my heart about being here in spite of all the bombs and blackouts. Though I cannot do anything to change the situation here, my presence seems to be a comfort to my people. A fellow missionary put it into very good words. She said we have a ministry of presence. Sometimes we think that ministry is doing something tangible, yet I believe that this 'ministry of presence' is vital during these times.

Last year I joined fellow believers in their ministry to the soldiers serving on the front lines. We go down to the Donbas area every three to four weeks for a few days to take supplies, food, and the Gospel to these soldiers. I'm not sure who is blessed more, us or the soldiers. Though it is a bit scary and dangerous, it is worth every moment we spend with them. I carry their smiles and hugs in my heart each time I leave them. Seeing them getting back on the buses or getting into their vehicles to return to the front lines is so heartbreaking. I never know if I will see them again. I have had the privilege of seeing some soldiers several different times. One time when I was serving tea to a soldier, I was nearly knocked down by a hug from the side. I looked up and it was Yura. He was so glad that I had come back. I met him on my first trip to Donbas. He was not interested in hearing anything about God. He told me that God was good for me but not for him. Yet when the chaplain prayed, he took off his hat in respect. I have had three different opportunities to talk with Yura about how God works in my life. I can only pray that the Holy Spirit will move in his heart. Sadly, I have not seen him since February. I wonder if he is still alive. There are numerous stories about the soldiers I could tell you. Many like Yura, Pasha,

Dima, Petro and so many others have been imprinted on my heart. I will never forget these brave men and women.



In September, I was able to visit the new orphanage I told you about last spring. There are fifteen children there. Unfortunately, the director said we could come occasionally and only on Sunday afternoons. I just heard about another orphanage that I hope to visit. It is important to have a consistent relationship with the children in the orphanages. This is how trust is built. The Komarivka orphanage where I have been working these past fourteen years, is down to thirty- five children and will close its doors in June. Please pray that God will direct me to the children He has for me to love and share the gospel with.

Once again, I am so grateful for your prayers and support. It is through these
that I am able to live and serve the Lord in Ukraine.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Meisha Deane

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