

## *Joy, Peace, and Hope this Christmas*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

I love being around people who overflow with hope. I think we all do. This Christmas, in countries such as Ukraine, Kosovo, and Armenia, where Covid-19 lockdowns have decimated the lives of the poor, we are determined to share the hope of Christ in the midst of their suffering. Your help is what makes this possible.

### **Christmas Presents \$25**

Our staff in Ukraine has planned to purchase 500 sets of warm blankets and boxes of chocolates. Many large families such as the Matveyevs below will receive two or three presents. As in past years, we try to balance their practical needs with fun gifts such as sweets.



### **One Day Discipleship Camps \$60**

Our annual winter camp will not be possible due to Covid-19 restrictions, so our staff is planning one day in-person events with games, bible teaching, and worship all while socially distanced. We are taking this concept on the road and going to where the kids live! With meals, transport, and expenses estimated at \$60 per person, hundreds of teens are excited that they will be able to get together this winter. We now expect up to 100 teens. (\$6000 needed)



### **Hope In the Midst of Lockdowns**

The Matveyev family in central Ukraine is thankful for what they have. Sasha and Natasha have been married for 13 years and have 8 children.

The family huddled together in their small house with two rooms and a kitchen during our visit. They live very modestly, but you can't call them poor. Their home is truly rich with laughter and joy. The kids help their mother by washing the floor, cleaning the house, and even five-year-old Vira helps in the kitchen to knead the dough for bread. Their home may be small, but their hearts are big. Village children love to come over to play and hear Natasha tell everyone bible stories.



The Matveyev's are one of hundreds of families receiving help this Christmas.

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Her husband Sasha works part-time in maintenance at the hospital and does side jobs for other people in the village. Their dream is to expand their home and add a second level so the children would have separate bedrooms.

“We don’t really have the funds to build more rooms,” Natasha said. “So we started collecting used bricks in the village on our own. The children helped carry the bricks. I fear that we will never finish it,” she sighed.



The kids carried used bricks from the village to help build this small room. There is no window. It needs to be completed.

During the visit, the Matveyev’s did not ask us for help and they are thankful to be in the MP sponsorship program. However, we would love to help this family fix up their home and add some bedrooms. If the Lord puts this project on your heart, just let us know.

## Armenia Refugees

My recent trip to Armenia was both sad and encouraging. Young men who have attended our summer bible camps have been wounded in the fighting. Thousands of families have fled their village homes in Karabakh and into Armenia. Russian and Turkish troops now make up a peacekeeping force that the Armenian people do not trust. Their villages were bombed, and now they realize they may never be able to return. Our efforts continue to assist refugees with food and clothing this Christmas.



Refugees are grateful for their groceries, yet they mourn the loss of their father.

## Armenia Dairy Farm Project



One goal of our trip to Armenia, in addition to assisting refugees, was to find out more information about providing dairy cows. We are excited to report that the project is to start a dairy farm. Local families in the economically depressed Lori region, who attend the MP summer camps, have asked us to help them establish this farm to provide milk and jobs. This is a great plan, not only for locals whom we know, but also for returning soldiers.

the goal.

We love this project and the idea of providing jobs for those who work with us in Armenia. So far, several generous donations have been given but we are still short of



We discovered that a better dairy cow is available for \$1500 (not \$1000 as we initially thought). Thus, the start-up costs are higher than previously expected. (42 cows X \$1500) Our goal is that this investment will provide jobs now and future support for our summer camp ministry.

Your support is overflowing in joy this Christmas for the poor, the widow, and the orphan.

PS The firewood project for widows was fulfilled. Thank you!