

Joyful, Patient, and Faithful at Christmas

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Romans 12:12,13

A few months ago, Pete Wooding from the UK and I visited these faithful missionaries in the eastern Ukraine war zone, just a couple of miles from the frontline in Donetsk Oblast. Seeing their resilience and joy in the midst of affliction is a very real example of the scripture in Romans 12.

As part of our Christmas project, we hope to send funds to the war zone for needy families there. These missionaries are church planting, visiting the poor, teaching the youth, sharing the gospel, and waking up at night from active mortar fire.

Today, the families still living in Avdeevka are there because they have nowhere else to go. Buildings were shelled, children traumatized, and today there is no hot water or heating in winter. This group of missionaries chooses to stay there with the people of this region, praying for them, and sharing the love of Christ this Christmas.



Missionaries pictured top L-R: Our chaplain Sasha A., church planters Sasha, Kolya & Masha, Jeff, Sveta. Bottom L-R: Peter, Pastor Igor, Andriy, MP Ukraine, and assistant Pastor Vadim.

Christmas Joy Project Update

As a quick status update: The Firewood for Poor Families, the Hearts of Love Winter Heating, and the Winter Bible Camp for Teens have all been fulfilled. Thank you very much for your help!



600 Christmas Presents - \$25

The shopping in Ukraine has started for blankets, bed sheets, and chocolates. Our diverse group of 15 family-care coordinators from different regions of Ukraine will distribute these presents during the holidays from December 20 – January 15. We also plan to deliver presents by train to the eastern frontline in the Donetsk Oblast. **Mercy Projects will pay for all transport expenses, but we still need a total of 500 more presents or \$12,500 to complete this project.**



A Tractor for the Armenia Dairy Farm - \$15,000

Funds are in the bank for the cows. Now that we have a green light from the government, we are saving for a used tractor. We recently started plowing to prepare for spring planting, and are starting construction on a few buildings. We are looking for a used John Deere tractor in Armenia or a neighboring country. The approximate budget is \$15,000 and we are thankful for any help toward this goal.

Armenia Dairy Farm Update

We had beautiful weather during my November visit to the farm. I can report that all formalities have been settled with our purchase and we are moving ahead with construction. The first day, however, was marked by a delicious Armenian barbecue of lamb kebabs.



Zaven (m) is project manager. Ahvik (r) construction manager. Sargis is our farm manager.

The next several days were filled with activities such as choosing an architect, visiting other farms, looking for tractors, and investigating other land parcels that may be available. It was a very productive trip!

I shared last year that our goal for this investment is to provide jobs and future support for our summer camp ministry. Our construction manager Ahvik, whom I have known many years, is a war veteran and was previously unemployed. Today, he and three others are working everyday to make our vision come true. The farm staff in Armenia are so thankful for your support of this project. Not only do they have jobs this Christmas, but they have a wonderful purpose for going to work. They plan to start purchasing cows this February.



The farm is 17 acres but we hope to acquire more land nearby.



Future team house for guests and the farm office.



Freshly plowed fields ready for spring planting.

From Armenia to Ukraine and Kosovo, we are excited and blessed to be able to share the joy and love of Christ. Your trust in the ministry at Mercy Projects is something we cherish and do not take for granted. Thank you for making miracles happen in the lives of the poor this Christmas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J.B. Skemp". The signature is written in a cursive style.