

# December 2013

## PRAYER GUIDE FOR LWML MISSION GRANTS

In this month's Prayer Guide you will notice that we have not put monetary amounts for each day. However, we hope that, as you use this guide, you will remember to generously give mite offerings on a regular basis.

1. Fully immerse yourself in worship and prayer today to gird yourself for the busy month ahead.
2. Is your tree up? Think of Jesus' family tree, a plan for salvation set in place so long ago.
3. Christmas is about family! Read Matthew 12:50 and rejoice in family!
4. The Christmas blessings never end. Praise God as you read Galatians 4:7.
5. Try something different this year - 50% fewer decorations; focus on adorning yourself with gladness!
6. Do not despair in the worldly affectations of the blessed season, rather be thankful for the freedom to worship.
7. As you share a "Cup with Kay" this morning at 9 a.m. be sure to ask that our missionaries be blessed in their celebrations.
8. As you worship Jesus today in His house, give thanks for your home.
9. You don't have to bake extra goodies to share. Divide what you have and you will discover you have plenty!
10. Do you take disaster preparedness seriously? Be sure to take Advent seriously also! Prepare your hearts for the coming of the King.
11. Every day is a good day, remembering that our Savior came to us in human form because He loved us so.
12. I am God's child! I am no longer a slave! Celebrate this "Reason for the Season"!
13. Can you spend a little more time today quietly doing nothing and listening to Him?
14. As you pray with President Kay this morning, please remember the missionaries who are separated from their loved ones this Christmas season.
15. Yes, we give more during the holidays. Consider this a good thing and pray for continued ministry during the rest of the year.
16. Never let a full schedule be a burden to you. Change your attitude or change your calendar. God will help you!
17. Consider a gift of Christ-centered Christmas cards and stamps to those in need and praise God you can help.
18. Christmas is only a week away. Enjoy the anticipation as you pray your way through your own preparations.
19. Do not feel rushed; make a plan and stick to it. Baby Jesus was sent to bring us peace with the Father and we can cling to that during these days.
20. Ask for renewed assurance of the promises that come with the tiny Babe of Bethlehem.
21. Fix your eyes upon Jesus during your prayer time with Kay today. Calm your heart and spirit even though there may be caffeine in your cup!
22. Give thanks for the faithful workers at church who tithe extra time during the Christmas season.
23. Pray that the Prince of Peace will be known among the nations and that the LWML continues to support that very prayer with its goals and actions.
24. Celebrate and praise the Gift given!
25. Merry Christmas!
26. Pray that you can keep your spirits high throughout the season of Epiphany - Jesus is born!
27. Pray for contentment. Be glad in the gift you have been given - salvation through the Baby Jesus.
28. Continue to greet the world with the Christmas message!
29. Take care of yourself so that you can continue to be a blessing all of your days.
30. Pray that your witness in public is joyful and hopeful among the throng of people who have neither hope nor joy, especially during holidays.
31. Praise God for a good year! Every day has been one created by the Lord! All are days of life in Christ!

[www.lwml.org/missions](http://www.lwml.org/missions)

PLEASE FOLD OR CUT THIS GUIDE ON THE DOTTED LINE,  
AND KEEP PRAYER GUIDE IN YOUR BIBLES  
FOR DAILY MISSION SUPPORT REMINDERS.

# MISSION GRANT STORY

(Excerpted with permission and with added story notes from Rachel Baker, a missionary wife and mother now in Mongolia, formerly in Kazakhstan.)

## COME, O LONG EXPECTED JESUS!

In so many ways, from decorating our houses to baking special foods to buying gifts, we build up anticipation for the coming of Christmas. In America this time of year is special—it seems that just about everyone gets into the spirit of the “holiday season.” It is a time of expectation and joy.

During the weeks leading up to Christmas, Kazakhstan stands in sharp contrast to the USA. Decorations put up in Kazakhstan lack any Christian content and though on the outside some things do look similar, the preparations are for the coming of the New Year, not for the coming of the Savior.

Though it is a bit hard for us at times, in some ways the lack of Christmas preparation in Kazakhstan is a fitting reminder to our family. In America, amidst all the tinsel, Christmas music, and advertising hype, it can sometimes be easy to forget about the humble coming of the Christ Child. It was a multitude of angels, not a multitude of tinsel, which greeted the newborn King on that first Christmas. In theory, many Israelites were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, but in actual daily life it was far from what people envisioned. The Messiah's arrival was unexpected by most people—there was not even room for Him in the inn on the night He was born. According to what we read in the Bible about the birth of Jesus, Kazakhstan probably reflects quite realistically the abundant lack of anticipation of the world our Savior entered 2,000 years ago.

Among the believers in Kazakhstan however, the church family gathers around a table piled high with good things to eat. We begin with prayer and fellowship over the feast. Towards the end of the meal, as we sit having tea, the children act out the Christmas story while it is read in Kazakh. A twelve-year-old girl is asked to be Mary. She comes forward with a shy smile, trying to hide the bandaged stub of her right arm in the folds of her dress. She reaches forward with determination as someone hands her the youngest church member, an infant. She cradles the baby in her arms. Thirteen-year-old “Joseph” stands grinning proudly in his school finery—a worn white shirt, black pants, and suit vest. Other children crowd around as shepherds, sheep, and angels, with sticky mouths and hands still clutching candies. The table behind the children is still covered with leftovers and looks almost untouched. It shows just how special the Christmas feast is to these Kazakhs—the more significant the feast, the more laden the table! As a two-stringed instrument is strummed, the members join in singing a song in Kazakh about the Christmas story... “Rejoice! All of you rejoice! This is the day our Savior came to earth! It is the day foretold by prophets, the longed-for day, the day that has been promised! Rejoice!”

Our prayer this Christmas season is that people in Kazakhstan and across the globe would make ready for the coming of the Savior. There was no room for Him in the inn. May there be room in our hearts!

