

Christmas 2011



Dear ECM family
and friends,

"...And you are to give Him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Mt.1:21 NIV. It must have been quite a shock for Joseph when the angel appeared to him in his sleep and told him that he was to become the earthly stepfather to the coming Messiah, the Son of God.

Most often at Christmastime we are reminded of angelic messages and angels proclaiming to the shepherds: *"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."* Lk.2:14. Angels have always been the bearers of significant news from God and carried out important assignments. King David says in Ps. 91:11: If you put your trust in the Lord... *"He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways."* This the apostles also experienced many times.

On a cold snowy December day just before Christmas 1990, Gloria, Krista, I set out by car to drive to Vancouver, B.C. about 1,600 mi (2575 km) away. Krista, the 20 years old student from the then Russian occupied Estonia whom we sponsored to the USA and The Colorado Christian University, had recently given her heart to the Lord at CCU fall retreat. Now she was hoping to be baptized at the closest Estonian speaking evangelical church, in Vancouver. Much of our conversation en route that evening was centered around her spiritual questions.

By midnight we had driven over 200 miles into Wyoming on a mountainous highway, which in places rises to almost 10,000' (3300m) altitude, when suddenly our car-engine died! We were surrounded by darkness with temperatures around -20F (-30c). Regardless what I tried, the car would not re-start. The temperature was dropping dangerously fast inside the car. This could result in serious consequences. There was no hope of any help coming by at this cold and late hour. Krista asked, "What do we do now?" "We pray for a miracle," was our reply... And behold, shortly, we saw headlights coming up the hill behind us and a car stopped. A warmly dressed man stepped out and spoke with a friendly voice. "I see you must be in trouble and don't know the local weather." Before I could say anything, he continued: "Your fuel-line must be frozen because of the severe cold."

He took from his car a container, poured its content of special antifreeze into our gas-tank and soon our car started normally. We learned from him that the highway had been closed shortly after we passed the last town. No wonder there was no other traffic. He continued that he works with an Indian Mission further up the road and normally does not travel this highway especially at such unusual hour. With arms around each other we prayed and he committed us to God's care and said he would follow us... Soon however, we saw him no more. Truly – our Christmas miracle – an angel from God! Krista was overwhelmed; this was a powerful confirmation of how God answers prayer. Our trip went well and Krista was baptized as planned.

We have much to be grateful for this Christmas season. God has again been faithful in 2011 by blessing Estonian Christian Ministries. Some recent e-mails from listeners to our Kuressaare Family Radio manager, Valter, and us here, bear this out: Eve writes "I am listening to your Internet radio from far away in Portugal and am much blessed by it, praise God! Thankfully, wishing you many blessings;" Alex from Kazakhstan writes: "I am a great admirer of your broadcasting. I often listen to your radio station and consider your station one of the best that I can get here... Also several of my friends now listen... Thankful to you and thanks for your broadcasting the gospel;" From Mari-Liis, Estonia: "...I wanted to thank you from my heart that you were willing to re-broadcast the youth rally in Haapsalu on "Picture Radio." While I was watching that evening, I was talking to my classmate at the same time on the phone. She asked me what I was doing, to which I answered, that I was watching a youth rally where I shared my testimony. She is not a Christian or anything, but wanted to know if she too could see it. So I sent

her the link, which of course was a big deal for her. After its end, she immediately wanted to get together with me and talk and ask questions and things... Without that broadcast, I would never have had an opportunity like that. Just want to say that what you do is a great thing. It will change many lives, young and old. You are cool. Many blessings to you and all the coworkers, and may it have many more great results." From Hiiumaa comes a scripture verse of encouragement by e-mail: "... He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed" Proverbs 11:25. 'Continue to be always a blessing to everyone and God Himself will bless you.' T.K.

From Estonian Child Evangelism, its director Ülle writes: "Dear ones at ECM. Thank you for your continued substantial support. We are especially thankful for every gift toward the children's Letter Club. At the moment we face a very big need because the postage has recently almost doubled. Every day letters go out all over the county. This is very taxing not only for us, but also for many children. The Bible Study by mail is a wonderful opportunity for families to study God's Word together. We thank God for you and send our praise to Him!"

The Eelim Church in Tallinn is most grateful for their new wrought-iron fence that they have just finished with your help. Next they need help to build some rooms for Sunday School.

Pray for the financial situation especially because Estonia is part of the Eurozone and its crisis is also becoming acute in Estonia. Prices are rising fast and many are without work.

As for us, we thank God that He has blessed our family, our children and spouses, except Dan needs special prayer right now after a serious shoulder surgery. Three of our grandchildren are studying at Universities, two are in High School, one in Middle School and two still in Grade Schools. They are all excelling in their studies, in sports, and are active in their churches.

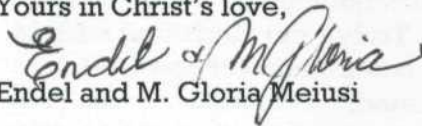
This Christmas Gloria and I expect to be home in Denver, as this year our children's spouses' families have their "turn" to be together. Unfortunately distances between our families are so great, that this is the only fair workable solution.

When home and not speaking somewhere else, we mostly attend Mission Hills Church, which during the past year has seen a great growth from 1,200. New people are coming to the Lord every week. They now have four Sunday morning Services with a total attendance of about 4,000 with very many young families. It is uplifting to see God at work!

Pray with us this Christmas season that a miracle like this would also take place in Estonia. The angels' message to Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds that Jesus came to save the people from their sins, applies as well to the ungodly of Estonia, where suicide and alcoholism's figures are among the highest in the world.

Sensing the urgency of the hour, there is still time to help us in this ministry, by giving a year-end tax exempt gift to ECM, in return, we will send you an ECM desk calendar. Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer and the much needed support throughout the year. May God grant you and yours a wonderful Christmas and a blessed new year!

Yours in Christ's love,


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