

No Christmas Celebration for Christians Suffering in Damascus

***Editor's Note:** Hanna is a Christian woman living in Damascus with her husband. She and her husband have two young daughters. She works in a school. For the past year, Hanna has been writing about what daily life is like in war-torn Damascus and Syria. Here is one of her entries.*

It's snowing in Damascus now. It's rare that it snows. We don't have much to warm ourselves, as there is a lack of oil and gas and there are electricity failures that last for hours and hours. Yesterday I was at home with my daughter and we just wore all the clothes we could find.

But we don't complain because we think of many of our fellow Syrians that are living on the streets. It breaks my heart when I think of the children that fled with only their summer clothes on them. We would love to go there and help them, but traveling to the area they live in is far too dangerous.

No, Christmas will not be a time of celebration for us this year. How can we celebrate when people around us are suffering?

We will have some special prayers in church, but we don't have any decorations. Having Christmas decorations outside the church would provoke the terrorist attacks. They already send the Christians a message—hey have special “Christmas gifts” prepared for us: three bombed-out cars. We don't know what to expect next.

It has been quiet the last week; we only rarely hear the sounds of bombs anymore. It is what we have been praying and fasting for. But I feel strange and I don't know why. It's

like this is the silence before the storm and they are waiting to suddenly attack us.

Last week I went to the market to get some hats, socks and candy for the kids in our church. Normally we would buy them some games, but toys are way too expensive now. At least they will have something to keep them warm. That's more important than toys in this situation. I want to give those gifts to the children and hope that they will know that Jesus still loves them, no matter what's going on around us. Please keep praying for us.