



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION

Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN

A photograph of a man with a friendly expression, wearing a traditional black fur hat (ushanka) and a dark jacket over a red sweater. He is standing outdoors in front of a wooden fence. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the fence and some foliage.

MISSIONARY PASTORS ARE ON THE SPIRITUAL FRONTLINES!

Listen to what they are
telling us God is doing . . .

INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS AT WORK

- ♦ You can't go any farther east or get any more remote!
- ♦ "Stop the Baptists!" Not so Fast . . .
- ♦ Children and adults with open hearts! You will rejoice.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit . . . (MATTHEW 28:19)

A Gospel Adventure to the Ends of the Earth

Your Gifts Help Missionary Pastors Reach Remote Villagers in Far East Russia

Sayid Protopopov
Missionary Pastor in Far East Russia



People in a village in Far East Russia show an interest in learning more about Jesus.

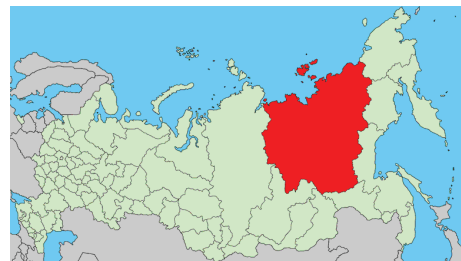
I recently returned from another trip to the Verkhoyansk district, which is in the Yakutia-Sakha Republic in Far East Russia. This is one of the farthest reaches east in all of Russia. It is one of the regions we had visited during the winter using cars, boats, and planes. Access is very difficult in these parts. People are starting to show interest and desire to learn more about the Lord Jesus, and the few believers that are there need encouragement. Here are some highlights from my latest journey:

The Gospel Sprouts in a Regional Crossroads

As I set out, I went through the city of **Batagai** a few times because it is a regional center and is on the way to all the other towns. **The church is very small**

because of the difficult travel. However, there are people who

are starting to come regularly. The people are glad to hear from a brother who can share from the Scriptures to encourage and inspire them. It is like cool water after a drought for them because **they had been without a pastor for some time.**



Explaining Life After Death in Borulakh

Vasily is a man whom I had met in the hospital in the town of **Borulakh** during my last visit. He had lost his eyesight, and this trip I made a visit to his home. Vasily and his family were very glad that I came. **They set their table for me and we had a conversation on life after death!** I shared with them that whether we want it or not, our life does not end



Sayid explains the Gospel over a shared meal.

with physical death. We will all stand before our Creator. Some will face condemnation while others will enter into salvation. **Please keep praying for Vasily and his wife** as I continue sharing the Gospel.

Alysardakh: A Small City Where Jesus is Knocking



Women pray together during a home visit.

Alysardakh is very small—only 100 people. There's a kindergarten, a grade school, and a local community center. **It takes two hours to get there by motorboat.** I had opportunities to speak with people in the street and tell them of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that only through faith in Him can we receive forgiveness of our sins. There are several women there who show interest in God. We sent them literature and follow up with them. **Pray they will open the door to Jesus!**

The Lord allowed me to spend several days in each community. I want to visit them again because when new people are converted, much

"I want to visit them again because when new people are converted, much depends on the regularity of visits."

depends on the regularity of visits. So far, I have no finances, but I am thinking about the opportunity to return to these lands. We ask you to pray for this situation. We are thankful to the Lord and you for the blessings of your participation in our ministry in Yakutia. ♦

How You Are Helping Reach Russia Now



- ♦ More than 100 men across these two locations are being readied for pastoral and evangelistic ministry.
- ♦ SGA partners help support 14 missionary pastors—and we are praying for more by the end of the year!
- ♦ Assisted local churches in conducting evangelistic visits to 20 villages that had never heard the Gospel!
- ♦ Helping churches reach 688 orphans in 17 orphanages, and the doors are open to reach even more.
- ♦ Assist churches in summer camp ministries to many thousands of children.
- ♦ Through *Immanuel's Child*, help 68 to reach 5,187 children and 1,787 adults, opening the door to life-long discipleship.
- ♦ Assist churches in 10 locations to reach needy individuals and families to provide food and the Gospel.
- ♦ Assist a church that has open doors to ministry in prisons, and in a home for young mothers to help meet their needs and to encourage them to keep their child.

From Belarus: Your Gifts Help Gather a Fruitful Harvest at Summer Children's Camps

As camps from across the former USSR concluded for the summer, we received these initial reports from Belarus!



From Pastor Igor:

Thanks to your support, we had 35 children in our summer camp, and 14 children out of the 35 are from unbelieving families. This included three orphan children from Christian foster families. The age of the children in the camp ranged from 5-19.

“By the second day of camp, four children had prayed a prayer of repentance.”

Our camp program included sports, practical lessons, and Bible lessons. The Bible lesson program

included themes like relationships between girls and boys and why God loves us.

We invited three people who were not believers to help at the kitchen and they served with us. Two out of the three attended Bible lessons and told us that they enjoyed them. By the second day of camp, four children had prayed a prayer of repentance. They thanked us for the Bible lessons and asked us to make the next camp longer!

From Pastor Pavel:

Our camp for children was held in July and it was very eagerly anticipated by the orphan children. They had waited for this time for over a year. For the first time, we held the camp at our house—which we



use for ministry to orphan children. Many children said that they felt like they were at home.

In total we had 24 children from orphanages, children' and foster families. We talked with the children about self-esteem, planning for the future, fears, and faith. We involved the children in various activities, and one day we visited a trampoline center. We invited very interesting guests from local churches and from across Belarus. One speaker used to be a criminal but now he is a believer. Other guests were the leader of ministry for teenagers and as well as policemen. The policemen had come to Christ as adults, and they shared with the children.

Nasty's brother Sasha and another boy named Slava prayed for their first time in the camp and asked in their prayers for God to forgive and help them. We thank all of you who help us in our ministry! ♦

Editor's Note: Due to local circumstances, not all of the summer camp ministries that SGA supports are held outdoors. Some are in countries where such ministries must be conducted discreetly, and others lack access to a good outdoor or rural setting.



From a Missionary Pastor in Georgia: *God Uses Your Support to Help Open Doors!*

Dmitri Mikhava

SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Zugdidi, Georgia

In our ministry, we continue to work with children, youth, and with families. This is how we successfully preach the Gospel in this region.

After summer camp season concluded last year, we cultivated good relationships with the children and their parents. So we decided to hold a *winter camp* for the youth. We gathered together 16 teenagers between 16 and 19 years of age.



Winter camp for young people.

It went very well! We talked about Christmas, the meaning of Christ's coming, and the opportunity to change their lives by repenting and trusting in Him as Savior.

This is only one example of our outreach. Because of our weak economy and the seasonality of work, many local families are in need. **We prepare small food packages and distribute them to the families, and help some by doing needed work.** For instance, we helped a widow get a water supply to her home and installed a washing machine. All of this helps to build good relationships with people and to share the Gospel with them!

Another open door: Not long ago, I learned

that a friend works as a director of a small kindergarten. She allowed us to hold a **Christmas program for the children!**

“Stop the Baptists”? Not so Fast . . .

Not long ago, my cousin informed me of someone who came to her neighbors, warning them to “stop the Baptists.” One neighbor’s daughter had participated in our camp last summer. The neighbor replied, “The Baptists do a lot of good for us! My

“The Baptists do a lot of good for us! My daughter was in the camp and will go again because she liked it very much. If you try to stop them, the whole village will rise in defense of them!”

daughter was in the camp and will go again because she liked it very much. If you try to stop them, the whole village will rise in defense of them!”

It’s amazing, because when I first arrived here, everyone was afraid of me as a “sectarian.” **And now we see how God is opening the doors! Pray that more people will hear the Gospel and receive**

Christ in this warm atmosphere! We have already started regular Sunday services in our home. Thank you for participating in our ministry. Praise God! ♦



Christmas program at a kindergarten.

CIS IN THE NEWS

Chernobyl “Sarcophagus” in Danger of Collapse

Crews in Ukraine are beginning the process of tearing down the massive “sarcophagus” covering the ruined nuclear reactor at Chernobyl because of fears it could collapse. Business Insider reported recently that the cover was designed to be sturdy, but it was hastily constructed. Over the years, corrosion has occurred because of water finding its way in through openings in the ceiling and unsealed joints. The Ukrainian company in charge of the site says the sarcophagus has a very high chance of collapsing, and that gravity is the only thing keeping it tethered. The company has been building a new 32,000-ton shell around the sarcophagus for the last 9 years. Once the old

sarcophagus is dismantled, then cleanup of the lingering nuclear waste can begin, taking until 2065 to complete.

Chernobyl continues to have tragic effects due to lingering radiation where the fallout from the 1986 disaster remains. Some scientists believe that by 2065 the radiation will have led to more than 40,000 cases of cancer. SGA partners like you continue to help support ministry and medical care to many radiation-affected children through the **Little Pearl Children’s Diagnostic Camp** at Kobrin, Belarus. Pray with us, asking God for increased funding as these needs will continue for years. ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP

This month, as we highlight the faithful, diligent labors of missionary pastors sponsored by SGA across the CIS, it is good to reflect on just how much ministry takes place. They share the Gospel one-on-one and from their pulpits in the new churches they are planting. They carry out and oversee Compassion Ministry, distributing staple food items to needy families. They reach out to children in a variety of ways, and disciple youth. They lead evangelistic journeys to remote villages and towns, demonstrating the



love of Christ in action

with every opportunity. *Reach Russia Now* is a special focus for evangelism and church planting in Russia's Far East, and you can learn more about this and other SGA ministries at www.sga.org.

All of SGA's ministries that you help support, from Bible training to children's ministries such as *Orphans Reborn* and *Immanuel's Child*, plus distribution of Russian-language Bibles and Christian books, and Compassion Ministry—all revolve around the missionary pastor and supporting the Gospel ministry of the local church. We couldn't do it without you. Please pray about how you can help today! ♦



Canadian Connection

No matter how many times we travel back and forth between continents, the contrasts are what stand out. I will try to explain some of the differences we experience on every trip.

The first would be the contentment with so little. I am reminded of the passage in Matthew 6:25-27 where Jesus says we are not to worry about basic necessities. He declares that even the birds are cared for by our heavenly Father.



Garden & hen houses at rehab centre in Volgograd, Russia

Most of the time we visit in rural villages where items such as food are grown in backyard gardens. The luxury of large grocery stores with endless selections on stocked shelves are simply not available. The simple lifestyle brings people into a humble dependence upon God whereas we care for our needs with what we purchase.

Many have an open and interdependent sense of relationship when I find we are often so isolated and even lonely within a crowd. The truth is that our brothers and sisters in the former Soviet Union have a large sense of reliance upon the Lord and confidence in each other.

In these reports this month you will read of fundamental needs being met all across this region. We are grateful to you for sharing your gifts and resources with those who have so much less.

It will soon be the time when Christmas program preparations get underway. We look forward to seeing how God will meet the needs of so many this year. For most children and pastors the gifts we give will be the only ones they receive. Your thoughtfulness and expressions of love are so appreciated in bridging these contrasts.

Life can be difficult and often is for many, but you make a huge difference. Thank you for your part in advancing the kingdom of God. One project this month that our work team is involved with is expanding an old house of one of our missionary pastors. Please pray for safety and provision as the team works. Your gifts towards this basic need are what assists in making a difference.

Blessings to each of you as we serve the Lord together.

Partners Together,

Bill Ball
Executive Director, SGA/Canada



A Bridge of Hope

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