



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION

Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN



**READ HOW YOUR
SUPPORT HELPS
SELF-SACRIFICING
PASTORS REACH
PEOPLE WITH
COMPASSION
AND THE
GOSPEL . . .**

INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS AT WORK

- ♦ “We had nothing at home to feed our children.”
- ♦ Pastor risks his life to help a church member. See what God did!
- ♦ *Orphans Reborn* worker develops unique outreach . . .

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)

Shivering Bodies and Shattered Souls!

SGA supporters provide physical and spiritual warmth in another freezing winter.

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Hebrews 13:16).

As winter's icy grip tightens across the former Soviet countries, thousands of needy individuals and families face serious difficulties. Poverty is rampant in many regions, and SGA-sponsored

churches have seen the heartbreaking conditions firsthand. We also receive regular reports from SGA-sponsored missionary pastors who visit the needy with food and other aid you help provide through Compassion Ministry.

Eastern Ukraine War Zone

Among the regions where the need is greatest is the conflict zone of eastern Ukraine. In both the Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts (states) over the last several years, **thousands of families have had their homes destroyed by mortar and tank fire.** Pastor Dima Matyukhin leads teams into the dangerous region on a regular basis, and he recently shared a brief report about the impact of the help you provide . . .

*We are thankful for your continued support of needy people in eastern Ukraine. We have been able to distribute **hygiene kits, medicine, and fan heaters** to 150 homes in the towns of Andeevka and Kamianka—both of these towns are suffering from the lack of essentials for normal living. The medicine supplied included **heart medicine, anti-inflammatories, analgesics, and topical pain relievers.** In bad weather, families who have used most of their coal and wood are very grateful for fan heaters. Along with the aid, we also distributed **Christian literature.** On behalf of all the families, we would like to thank you again for your support!*

Poverty-stricken Azerbaijan

In the Caucasus nation of Azerbaijan, evangelical churches are under significant pressure and we must be careful in reporting to protect their security. Even



A couple is excited to receive relief packages in Avdeevka.



(Above and Right) Widows and their children are helped with food packages and medicine.

so, an SGA-sponsored missionary pastor sent in an encouraging report about the eternal impact of Christ's love:

*[W]e can bring warmth and mercy, and build bridges through Compassion Ministry. **It brings the love of God to believer and unbeliever alike, and helps build trust toward Christians.** One young mother of two lives in a dormitory. She and her*

“The Lord answered our prayers. We had nothing at home to feed our children!”

*husband have no work, and when we brought food to them, they had no words other than “The Lord answered our prayers. We had nothing at home to feed our children!” We also reached out to a widow who **has three children and whose health is very poor.** We were able to help her with both a food parcel and medicine.*

Emergency Provisions—and the Gospel—in Central Asia

Earlier this year in Central Asia, another SGA-sponsored missionary pastor wrote to tell us about his Compassion Ministry outreaches. He has been visiting people with serious physical challenges, homeless individuals, retirees, and those who struggle with alcoholism. Food parcels were distributed,



containing items such as cooking oil, buckwheat, rice, sugar, tea, soap, and medications. Pastor S said that each visit is a ministry opportunity:

*Through this ministry, the Lord is making known His love and concern for the poor, and through the Word of God, knowledge of Jesus Christ is imparted. **We have regular opportunities to talk with them***

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*about eternity, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, and the forgiveness of sins that He made possible. They respond with gratitude for the love and mercy of God toward them. **Their hearts are open to these discussions, and they are realizing that with Christ, it is possible to be freed from a sinful life.** They understand they need salvation and are open to believers!*

While winter is certainly the harshest season, Compassion Ministry is a need that lasts year-round. Please pray for God's ongoing provision, asking Him to open many hearts to hear the Gospel and trust in Christ for salvation. ♦

Orphans Reborn Presents Biblical Drama to Reach Orphans!

Drama ministry is getting through to needy children.

Sergei Kalinin

Orphans Reborn in Volgodonsk, Russia

We have been presenting drama performances from the Bible for children in the orphanages and boarding schools with the intent to teach life lessons. We have been presenting a program on forgiveness. While the orphanages close to visitors for vacations, we took the time to prepare a new program on the subject of deception, using the Bible story of Jacob.

Jacob had deceived his father and brother, and in time the same thing happened to him. We had to shorten the story and make it so the children could understand it, and it made the lesson even more effective. Sister Oksana, who works at the orphanage, told us that the children were able to retell the entire Bible story to her from memory!

After the performance, as always, we held a discussion and drew the right conclusions about deceit and the harm it brings. We taught the

“Our next program and lesson will move right into the story of Joseph and the trials that came his way. We want to teach the children perseverance and faith.”

children that cheating harms other people and ourselves, and that it is sin before God. Our next program and lesson will move right into the story of Joseph and the trials that came his way. We want to



teach the children perseverance and faith, and that you should never give up because of your problems. This is a relevant topic because many teenagers think about committing suicide because of their problems.

We have also been ministering to young girls who are out of the orphanage and in the transitional apartment. **One day we had to take a girl to Rostov for an examination, and during her week with us, she became saved!** On another day, the sisters put together a gathering for the female graduates of the children's homes. The topic was about the dangers of abortion. The gathering was held at the church and we prepared some video equipment for them to use. All of the girls who came are familiar with our church and have been there. They know and remember us. They enjoyed the meeting and want to have more of these meetings.

Please pray for our outreach at the Nikolaievsk Boarding School. For now, they had not been allowing people in to teach lessons. However, this year they won a grant and were able to build a greenhouse, improve the property, and make repairs. But it turned out that they didn't have enough money for everything, so they asked us to help with getting paint to refresh the children's playground. We just happened to be in Rostov, so we purchased paint and brought it to them. Then we were able to make arrangements for performances after the holidays!



Children were excited to receive a small gift when the Orphans Reborn team visited their orphanage.

So, this has been our ministry. Please pray for us as we travel with our next Bible performance programs. We plan to visit between 10-12 places, including new locations. Thank you for your prayers and support! ♦

(Below) New paint for the children's playground at Nikolaievsk Boarding School;
(Right) Constructing the new greenhouse.



“You Prayed for Me! I will never Forget It!”

Outreach in Ukraine reaches once hardened residents.

Vitaly Morokhovets

SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Ukraine

I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for all the commitment, love, and prayers! Thank you for your support and perseverance. All these years of our ministry can be called the best years of our lives as we serve the Lord where He wants us to be!

Our church building is surrounded by other people's properties. **The neighbors are still trying to understand if they are lucky or unlucky to have a Baptist church in their neighborhood.** Our Christian Medical Clinic helped to melt their hearts and show that we care. One of the neighbors named

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Igor rejected our invitation at first as he didn't know what to expect. But when the other neighbors told him how pleased they were to see the doctors, he got the courage to step over the church threshold. **At the end of the day, he came back to the church smiling and shouting, “You prayed for me! I will never forget it!”** This was such a touching moment for all of us. Please keep praying that our church will shine like Christ and have a good impact on others.

Pastor risks health to help church member in crisis

I spent some time in the hospital not long ago with blood pressure and heart issues. My mother is terminally ill, and it has been very stressful. **The day after I got home, I received a call from the husband of one of our church members.** Sergei is in his early 40s and a very good carpenter. But he has also been struggling with alcohol, and he called to ask me for help. He realized that if he does not stop drinking, he will die. His wife was very angry after

he sold all they had of value to buy liquor. **I felt that I needed to help him even though my church members were concerned about my health.**

Even so, I stayed with him at the church while he went through withdrawal. My wife cooked for me, but he couldn't eat. He was miserable with the worst hangover you could imagine. I even called for an ambulance twice because I thought he was about to die right there. But we washed his clothes, made him tea, bought him milk, and little by little he began eating. Members of the church joined to help, and a week later, his wife came and took Sergei home. **The next Sunday, they were both in church and Sergei came forward to repent of his sins. I kneeled next to him rejoicing over God's mercy.** Sergei attends the church now, and I am preparing him for baptism!

My wife Nadia led the All Ukrainian Baptist Women's Conference in Kiev not long ago. She taught a new Bible course on living with your emotions and dealing with personal responsibility. It was very well received, and we received a lot of positive feedback.

Looking back at all the ministry, remembering the sweet faces of the saved people, spending time in prayer, and teaching the Bible fills my heart with warmth and gratitude. **How can we ever thank you enough for all you have done?** We are forever grateful, and the Lord is pleased! ♦



Vitaly (R) kneeling with Sergei (L).

CIS IN THE NEWS

Islamic Militant Attacks in Tajikistan Heighten Concerns

In early November, a security checkpoint was attacked in Tajikistan's Rudaki district near the Uzbek border. The attack by suspected Islamic State militants left at least 17 dead, including 15 militants, a border guard, and a police officer. Tajik authorities detained four people suspected of involvement, claiming that the attackers belonged to Islamic State and entered the country from Afghanistan. This was the latest in a series of militant attacks in Tajikistan, which began in July 2018 with an attack on foreign bicyclists, followed by two prison riots that ended with fatalities. Stratfor and other analysts think that persistent

militancy will draw the attention of Russia, China, and the U.S. given the mutual security interests of all three major powers. Russia maintains 7,000 troops at a base in Tajikistan and has voiced concerns over militant threats.

The ongoing bloodshed grieves our hearts, and as always, our concern is for the safety of evangelical believers in Tajikistan who are already under significant pressure in a largely Muslim culture. Please pray with us for their protection, as well as for increased opportunities to share the love and reconciliation possible only through saving faith in Christ. ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP BRING COMPASSION AND CHRIST

Your faithful support for the ministries of SGA is making a vital difference in the lives of countless men, women, and children across the Commonwealth of Independent States.

One key way is through Compassion Ministry, where the churches SGA serves distribute food, warm clothing, hygiene items, and even medicine as God provides. As this aid is lovingly distributed, we have repeatedly seen it open the doors for missionary pastors and church workers to share the love of Christ and the hope of the Gospel. It is a tremendous component of the numerous other outreaches you help make possible—Bible training, children's ministry, distribution of Russian-language Bibles and Christian literature, evangelism, and so much more.

We couldn't do it without you. Please prayerfully consider how you can help today! ♦



Canadian Connection

We have entered a new decade! We do so with confidence that God is fulfilling His plan of the ages. World instability on every front seems to be the normal condition of our day, yet God is still on the throne!

Scripture reminds us in Colossians 1:16 that . . . all things were created by Him and for Him. It is God's desire to have fellowship with us as His creation. Our task is to share the Good News that God loves them and has provided this relationship through His Son Jesus.

Today, all across the former Soviet Union, people of every age are responding to Jesus' saving grace. With the establishment of local churches in villages, towns, and cities, the Gospel is being shared. Even where there is no local church, teams are proclaiming the message seeking to plant a church.



Among young people there is a resurgence of interest in truth, and fundamental questions are being asked. What is the real purpose and meaning of life? Youth groups are growing, Bible schools are increasing in attendance, and SGA is there to assist nationals in growing God's church.

We are thankful to each of you as together we are expanding the outreach into new territory. Wonderful reports of people repenting, baptisms happening, and church memberships increasing. God is doing what only He can do in changing people's hearts in this world of hopelessness. Those we partner with through prayer, gifts, and encouragement are excited with the progress. Every day we receive reports and we share with you as many as possible through our publications.



Give thanks together with us for all that is being accomplished for God's glory!

Partners Together,

Bill Ball
Executive Director, SGA/Canada

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