



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION

Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN



You're Sending the Love
of Christ to the Poor . . .
and They Turn to
the Gospel of
Salvation!

INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS AT WORK

- ♦ Ruined by war—deserted by their husbands—these women's families won't survive without Christians.
- ♦ People are coming to Jesus . . . because of your love. Read how.
- ♦ Food? No. Heat? No. That's when God stepped in . . .

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)

Her Children Met Us With Plates in Their Hands!

How You Are Helping Churches Feed Hungry Children and Families in Jesus' Name

SPECIAL REPORT FROM: Belarus

When the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s and access became possible, one of the things most evident was the **heartbreaking poverty endured by thousands of individuals and families.** This tragic situation still remains, but we are thankful to the Lord for the way He is using your gifts to help evangelical churches across the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) reach these desperately needy people with food and other vitally important aid—and above all, the Gospel!

In Belarus, Pastor Alexander sent us a moving report from the Cherven area, where he engages in regular Compassion Ministry sponsored by SGA . . .

We visited a family where the mother of four was afraid to let us come into her house because she was thought we would take her

*children due to their poor living conditions. But she eventually allowed us to come in and her children met us with plates in their hands. We gave their mother the food packs and shared the Gospel. **They listened very carefully and after a number of our visits, she gave permission for her children to attend our Sunday school.** We left the family with tears in our eyes as our problems were very small compared to theirs. But we want to keep helping them. We praise the Lord for the opportunity to share the Gospel and tell people of His love!*

(Below L) Pastor Alexander with the mother and three of her children. (Below R) Food packs for the family.





(Above) Alexander and two of his children. (Right) Marina at her baptism.



In another area of Belarus, Pastor Sergei reported similar open doors created by the compassion of Christ in action . . .

We came to know the family of Alexander and Marina, and their three children. Marina repented after six months of ministry to the family. It was a wonderful joy for our church. It is a blessing to see the fruits of Compassion Ministry and she is the “first fruit” from the family. We are praying for the salvation of Alexander and the children. In another family, Nastya has started to read the Bible to her small

children. The Holy Spirit worked through God’s Word and she has come to saving faith in Jesus. Compassion Ministry opens many doors, and I am very thankful to you for helping us. The ministry brings fruit for the Kingdom of God!

Today, SGA partners like you help churches with Compassion Ministry in eight countries—Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. We help provide food parcels containing flour, cooking oil, pasta, and other foods, as well as occasional clothing and footwear as needed. Our brothers and sisters take the command of Scripture seriously . . . So, as those who have been chosen of God, put on a heart of compassion . . . (Colossians 3:12). Only eternity will reveal the full impact in countless lives! ♦

(Below) Pastor Alexander helps another family of four with a food pack through SGA’s Compassion Ministry. (Right) Pastor Sergei regularly reads the Bible with the families he visits.



They Need Help to Survive!

In Ukraine's Ravaged War Zone, Your Compassion Saves Lives and Souls

Alexander Churilov

SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Ukraine

The situation in Ukraine remains uneasy in both the political and economic spheres. Gas tariffs have increased, and the cost for heat and water continues to rise. The value of our currency is fluid but food prices are rising. More and more people are living below the poverty line and are in crisis, needing food. Some 70 percent of those surveyed say they do not have enough money for food, much less paying for utility bills.

People cannot survive in such a situation—they need help! The state and local authorities are not coping, and SGA-sponsored Compassion Ministry means people are at least receiving a little help. **We visit low-income individuals and families, senior citizens, the disabled, and large families.** When we distribute packs of groceries and converse with the families, **doors are opened to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** In the long term, as they hear the

Gospel and experience the love of Christ through believers, they are encouraged to attend the church, repent, and give their lives to Jesus!

Crisis: The Gordeev Family

The Gordeev family is a new household we have begun helping. The husband left the family and joined his parents in Russia. His wife and children have no idea where he is. **They have a house, but are not able to live there because there is no heat. The whole family shelters in a small side-wing where they can burn wood. The grandmother's pension is spent on necessities.**

The mother hurt her back and is unable to work, and their oldest son cut a tendon in his arm and he is not able to work at present. When we heard about their situation, we visited them and they



Galina Gordeeva (49 years old), her son Dmitri (30 years old), her daughter Nadia (12 years old) and Galina's mother Valentina Kolomiets (67 years old).

burst into tears. We comforted them and assured them that Jesus wanted to take care of them. The

“When we heard about their situation, we visited them and they burst into tears. We comforted them and assured them that Jesus wanted to take care of them.”

mother and her daughter come to the church, while her son and the grandmother promise to come soon. **Pray with us for the salvation of this entire family!**

Crisis: The Filipov Family

One other new family, the Filipovs, is in a similar crisis—the husband abandoned the family because it was too hard for him to provide. There were many quarrels and fights. The mother is strained to the limit while her school-age son tries to earn money by digging people’s gardens or chopping wood. The young daughter is kindergarten age. After we visited them with groceries, the whole family **began coming to the church!**

Dear brothers and sisters, I praise God that He has granted us such a wonderful ministry to perform together! Please join us in praying for the families we have been helping. ♦



Natalia Filipova (40 years old) and her daughter Stanislava (4 years old).

Other Families Helped through Compassion Ministry in Ukraine:



Nina (61 years old) cares for her granddaughter Anya (8 years old) and her blind husband Nickolay (62 years old), who, in addition to his blindness, also suffers from cancer and diabetes.



Roman (27 years old), his wife Mariana (23 years old), their son Kirill (4 years old), and their daughter Sofia (1 year old).



Yuri (45 years old), his wife Vika (39 years old), and their daughter Zlata (13 years old).

God is at Work In Young Hearts Through *Orphans Reborn*!

Your Prayers and Gifts Show God's Love to Needy Children

Vadim Barsukov

***Orphans Reborn* Coordinator in Krasnoyarsk, Russia**



Yura at his orphanage.

Yura is 16 years old and lives in a Russian orphanage. His moving story came to us through the SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* team in the Esaulovo region. It's a wonderful

example of how your prayers and faithful support are helping to change troubled young lives.

One day, young Yura got into a fight with another boy in his school. The other boy ended up with a broken jaw, and because of that the police got involved. Eventually, legal charges were filed against Yura and he could have ended up in a juvenile prison. Yura had been coming to *Orphans Reborn* Bible lessons for some time and knew that what he had done was wrong, repenting of his anger. He also went to see the other boy asking for forgiveness and trying in various ways to make it right with him. He was really troubled at the thought of going to prison yet knew that God is almighty and is full of grace and mercy. And he prayed.

Eventually Yura's day in court came. The prosecutor asked the court to find him guilty and impose a prison sentence. And usually in Russia, the court sides with the prosecution. But God had a different plan. **Unexpectedly, the judge pulled out the investigation file and read the paper with Yura's repentance, as well as another letter written by the boy whose jaw had been broken in the fight asking for reconciliation.** The judge then dismissed

the case. Yura shared later that when he realized that God had intervened, he almost shouted "Hallelujah, praise be to God!" in the courtroom.

This wonderful event in Yura's life is a powerful testimony that God is, and that He hears the prayers

"This wonderful event in Yura's life is a powerful testimony that God is, and that He hears the prayers of those who genuinely come to Him."

of those who genuinely come to Him. It was a great lesson for Yura that he needs to walk closely with the Lord daily, and to control his anger to avoid bad results such as what had happened. Above all, if Yura had not been introduced to the Lord through *Orphans Reborn*, his story might have had a much different outcome. ♦



Timur and Artem (in yellow and red glasses) are orphanage graduates who help Vadim and his *Orphans Reborn* team minister to other orphans.

CIS IN THE NEWS

Russian Government Resigns, New Prime Minister Appointed

This past January, Russian president Vladimir Putin announced a surprise overhaul to the country's political system and submitted a package of proposals to change the constitution. The changes include giving parliament the power to name the prime minister, limiting the president to two terms in office instead of two successive terms, and transferring some powers from the presidency to the State Council. At present, the Council is an advisory body but the changes would allow it to shape domestic and foreign policy. After Mr. Putin's announcement, prime minister Dmitri

Medvedev and the entire government resigned. Putin then appointed Mikhail Mishustin, the head of Russia's tax service, as the new prime minister.

These are sweeping changes and served to further fuel speculation about whether Mr. Putin intended to remain in power somehow after his final term as president expires. **Our concern, as always, is that the Russian evangelical churches that SGA serves will remain free to worship and share the Gospel.** Please intercede in prayer for our brothers and sisters in the days ahead. ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP

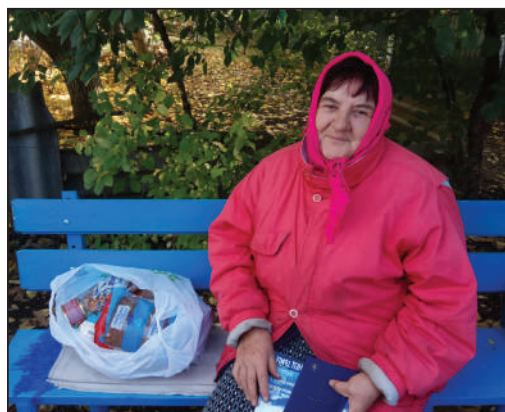


Our God is a God of compassion. It is part of His divine character, and compassion is a quality He wants to see His people imitate in His likeness. Scripture tells us . . . *Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother, and do not oppress the widow or orphan, the stranger or the poor* (Zechariah 7:9-10). There are so many needy men, women, and children across the former Soviet Union. Some are in regions that are economically depressed, while others live in areas marred by violent armed conflict. Yet the Bible-preaching churches SGA serves are helping them with food, clothing, and other aid that you—our faithful partners—help provide. Your gifts also help supply Russian-language Bibles and Christian books, training for pastors and church leaders, support for missionary pastors, outreach to orphans, and so much more. Please pray about what you can do today! ♦

Canadian Connection

Do not worry then, saying "What will we eat," or "What will we drink," or "What will we wear for clothing?" For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things (Matthew 6:31-32).

The greatest majority of the 7+ billion people on earth today struggle and worry about life's most basic needs. You will find this situation on every continent on earth. Outside the boundaries of North America, the reality of poverty is everywhere, even though many struggle in our context as well.



From Jesus' time until now, the opportunity exists to help the poor in Jesus' name. Christ indicated we will always have needs about us. The question is how will we respond? Circumstances will change with government policies, economic variables, and mankind's reactions. This provides Christians the privilege to move into action in His name.

It has often been reported that the Church has made a significant difference to aid society with practical needs. This has resulted in hospitals, schools, and overall improvements in how a whole culture was improved.

Today in the former Soviet Union, we are seeing changes in entire families, villages, communities, and regions. It often begins with one child, adult, or family. We assist national workers to make that difference where they live. Our currency usually purchases far more overseas than we could ever buy here. By praying and giving together, we can make a significant impact in many places all at once.

As the family of God functions in unity, the needy world takes notice and responds to His love. We are grateful for your partnership in meeting needs and changing people for all of eternity. Many respond to love expressed in practical ways, turning their lives over to Christ, repenting of their sin and trusting Him with their soul.

Thank you for your part in this chain of events that changes lives forever!

Bill Ball
Executive Director, SGA/Canada

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