



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION

Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN

God Opens New Doors for Pastors and Churches in the Former USSR

INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS AT WORK

- ♦ God saves the lost and transforms families in Ukraine—including 19 children! Read their story . . .
- ♦ Don't forget to pray for this ministry!
- ♦ An open door to exalt "the greatest honorary blood donor."

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)



Your Support Sows Seeds . . . and Changes Lives!

Victor Bogushevich

SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Achinsk, Russia



Cooking and eating along the bank of the Chulym River.

I'd like to share with you how our ministry has taken place over the past year even in the midst of restrictions due to the pandemic. Last summer (2020) was the fifth year we have held a Christian summer camp, but we had to do it differently. **In the past, we rented a base for the camp but this time we organized a tent camp.** We could not bring as many children as before—this time we had 17 teenagers.

They came from both non-Christian and Christian homes, as well as from needy families.

We held the camp on the banks of the Chulym River near Achinsk. The Gospel was communicated through **Bible lessons, group discussions, sketches, and other visual means.** There were several meals per day, along with boat trips, sports, and evening songs by the campfire. **Over time, we could see the Lord working in the children from dysfunctional**

families. Those who were closed and aggressive became kinder, and those who were sad and

“Those who were closed and aggressive became kinder, and those who were sad and depressed became more joyful.”

depressed became more joyful. We wanted to pass on to each child the love of Jesus, **helping them to understand there is a loving God who will never abandon them,** and will always help them in difficult times. Pray with us that they will receive Christ in their hearts and follow Him all of their lives.



Fellowship around the campfire.

We also spent much time in **helping needy families whose lives were made even harder by the pandemic.** Many have been laid off of their jobs and



Julia with her new Bible.



have financial difficulties. **Our church actively participated in providing them with help.**

One good example is a woman named **Julia.** She is 30 years old and was left without work because her organization was forced to close. **Her husband was addicted to drugs and left her with three children and an elderly mother who is ill.** We met with her and took food to her family. We had a very good meeting—she shared her story and we explained why we had come to her. **We told her about the One who died for us and Who loves us.** I shared my own testimony, and at the end of our time together, I gave her the Gospel and invited her to visit our church.

With all my heart, I want to thank God for you, for your prayers and financial support. The Lord provides, and all the glory be to Him! ♦

God's Amazing Grace Touches Three Families

Thank you for supporting the work that is drawing Ukrainians to Jesus!

Andrei Kalinin
SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Ukraine

For in Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). This verse from Acts has been an important motto for our church ministry team as 2021 began and remains so. It is our mighty God who motivates us to serve others, and He enabled us to help **10 families** with **17 adults** and **19 children**. Six people repented and trusted in Christ as Savior—God's grace observed in an amazing way!

Katerina's family lives in the village of Lozovatka. She is the mother of three children. Her husband Oleg works hard and is rarely at home. We have been praying for this family for months. In the midst of the protracted pandemic, the family has experienced significant financial difficulties, and the food packages you helped provide were a great

support for them. Katerina (Katya for short) repented and trusted in Christ, and Oleg has changed his opinion about Christians and the Gospel. Katya is reading the Bible, asking many questions, and is concerned about the future of her family. We continue to care for them and share the Gospel in both word and deed.



Pastor Andrei with Katerina and her family.



Helping Denis and his two children.

Denis is a 30-year-old man with two children, Andrei (age 6) and Angelina (age 3). We had been contacted by the Novensky Village Council about the needs of his family. Several years ago, **Denis' wife left him and the children behind and moved to another city.** She does not have any contact with them at all. Denis does not have a permanent job and has health problems. **He is thankful for the**

food aid we provided, and both he and his children have attended our church services several times. He even asked for time to say a few words at church to express his gratitude to us, and to God. Praise the Lord!

Marina's family is another one that we visit. She is the mother of three daughters aged 9-16. Her husband Gena has to travel to a neighboring village to work and we rarely see him. Marina, like other residents of Lozovatka, is happy to come to our worship services. During our Christmas evangelism, **Marina responded to the Lord's call and repented. She now reads the Bible and other Christian literature.** She said, "I have realized that the Lord never turns away from His children, He is

near. I learned to pray and build relationships with people as it is written in God's Word to love, forgive, and accept others as they are. I feel much better now!"

We praise and thank our God for you, your dedication, your prayers, and financial help. **Praise God that through Compassion Ministry, we can proclaim the Gospel to those who are perishing.** May God bless you! ♦



Marina and her daughter at a worship service.

Don't Forget to Pray for Summer Camps!

There is only one more month to go before evangelical churches across the former Soviet Union begin their summer camp season. Thousands of children eagerly look forward to camp season each year. For many, especially those from needy or dysfunctional families, it is the only opportunity they have to get away and enjoy recreational activities away from the dreary lives they lead. Most importantly, they have the opportunity to experience the love of Christ and to hear of His great love for them through the life-changing Gospel.

Based on estimated demand, we believe we can sponsor 40,000 children, 10,000 more kids than two years ago. **Many will come from non-Christian**

homes. There were 18,627 of them two years ago. At Christmas, we saw a huge increase—**25 percent**—in kids who attended SGA-sponsored *Immanuel's Child* events from unchurched homes. We expect that same door of evangelism to remain wide open for camps. Children—believers and non-believers—have looked forward to these Bible camps all through the cold COVID-19 winter!

Please don't forget to pray regularly for these camps, asking the Lord for His gracious provision, protection of the children and camp workers, and above all, open hearts toward repentance and trusting in Christ as Lord and Savior! ♦



Summer camp in Belarus.

A Blood Donation and a God-Given Opportunity

Herman Dzheriev

SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Beslan, Russia

About 10 years ago, I decided to begin regularly donating blood for seriously ill patients, and I have been doing this 4-5 times per year. I hoped and prayed it would give me an opportunity to glorify my Savior Jesus Christ.

One day last year, I received a call from the Republican Blood Donor Center asking me to come and receive a certificate for being an Honorary Blood Donor of Russia. When I came to the Center, I met the manager who also is a relative of mine. She asked me what I was doing there, and she was happy when I told her. **She then asked me if I would give an interview to the local television station,** and she would also ask a deputy from United Russia to present the certificate.

When the time came for the interview, I gave short answers to their questions, and then told them why I came to donate in the beginning. **I told them my testimony, and how I believed in Jesus and the blood He shed on the cross.** They were surprised, and my final words were directed to the TV audience and to those gathered in the hall. *"In my point of view, the most Honorary Donor of all time is Jesus Christ. Our human blood saves the life of a person for a short time, people thank us, and we are honored. But those who believe in the shed blood of Jesus Christ for their salvation will receive mercy and inherit eternal life!"*



Pastor Herman received recognition for being a blood donor.

The journalists thanked me for the interview, but when it was broadcast two days later, my testimony had been edited out. But I am grateful to God because there were 40-50 people in the hall who heard it! **Over the last several years, I have given Christian calendars with biblical text to medical workers at the Center. This past September, they actually asked me to bring the calendars again for 2021, and not to forget them!**

There are many other aspects to my ministry here. We held Christmas ministry, and also have been able to distribute food to five needy families. I thank the Lord for the opportunity to give out the Word of God among medical workers, and I thank all of you who support my ministry and family with your prayers and material blessings. May God bless you! ♦



Christmas program at Pastor Herman's church.

CIS IN THE NEWS

Russian President: Fight Against COVID-19 Not Over

During a recent visit to the Crimea region and the city of Sevastapol, Russian president Vladimir Putin said that the fight against the coronavirus pandemic is not over, and that preventative measures still need to be followed. According to the TASS News Agency, Mr. Putin was asked to lift restrictions on organized children's vacations in sanatoriums located outside their home regions so that Crimea and other southern regions could be visited in the summer. He replied,

"Our situation is better than in many countries of the world, vaccination is underway, and based on this, we will work on the vacation campaign, and develop domestic tourism. We can't

think that everything is over. The world is interconnected, and although the borders are formally considered closed, they cannot and should not restrict people's movements. So, we need to follow the guidelines of specialists."

It will indeed take some time for the world to recover from the many challenges posed by COVID-19. **In the meantime, SGA is committed to helping Bible-preaching churches with resources to reach needy families in their regions with food and other aid, along with the life-changing Gospel.** We praise God for the opportunity to glorify Him in this way and to share His love. ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP



A former prisoner who came to Christ through prison ministry now helps distribute Christian literature as a witness to others about Jesus.

Day in and day out, faithful missionary pastors supported by SGA carry out their fruitful ministries across Russia and her neighboring countries. They shepherd their congregations, visit individuals and families in their communities with the Gospel, deliver food aid to needy families, and lead Bible studies, often in more than one town and multiple churches.

They are deeply thankful to you and to the Lord for the help you provide. And so are we! **Your support also helps provide these pastors with the resources they need to serve Christ:** Russian-language Bibles and Christian literature, humanitarian aid, Bible training, children's ministries including *Orphans Reborn* and summer camps—and so much more. Please pray about how you can help today! ♦

Canadian Connection

Here in our Canadian context, we refer to October as Pastor Appreciation Month in local churches. This is a time when we encourage congregations to bless the pastor(s) of their churches, letting them know they are prayed for and thought of in a special way. For May and June at SGA, we are focusing on our missionary pastors across the former Soviet Union countries or Eurasia.

Life has changed for everyone and continues to throw curves, causing us to be flexible or get totally frustrated. The great majority of our church leaders have remained committed to the task at hand of sharing the saving message of Jesus Christ and His love for mankind. Some have contracted COVID-19 and a few even succumbed to the illness. Their testimonies, along with members of these local churches, have turned many to Christ.



At present we support over 75 pastors in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Not only that but 11 orphanages and rehabilitation centers in several communities received regular donations. The consistent monthly gifts are what keep each of these beacons of the Gospel shining brightly. Every location is different in need, scope

of outreach, and available personnel to drive these outreaches forward. We often come alongside to provide prayer and resources enabling the work to surge ahead.

Most places are open once again and all are ramping up for the summer season. As we stated in April, the plan is to send at least 40,000 children to camp through local churches. We have assisted in purchasing some equipment for unique activities such as river rafting. As I write this, I know there will be some very excited children to participate in that camp. All it takes is \$50.00 per child for a week at camp this year.



Doors have swung wide open for the Gospel through these most difficult times in our world history. It is time to tell His story wherever and whenever we can. Won't you pray and provide for those whom Jesus loves and for whom He died? Pastors and congregations await the news that we are supporting them over these next months of spiritual sowing and reaping. Let us give sacrificially so that we might store up treasures in heaven.

Serving together,

Bill Ball

Executive Director, SGA/Canada

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