



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION
Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN

**Winter Brings
Heartache,
Hunger, Pain.
Christians
Bring Love
and Good
News!**

**INSIDE: YOUR
PRAYERS AND GIFTS
AT WORK**

- ♦ Freezing, hungry families in Ukraine get help—and the Gospel!
- ♦ “Children and teenagers repented . . . There were tears, hugs and joy!”
- ♦ In short supply—electricity, water and firewood



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)

With Your Help, Christians Serve a Devastated Village

You Help Bring Winter Warmth and the Gospel to Needy Families

Each winter across the former Soviet Union presents its own challenges. While some regions are far more bitterly cold than others, even milder winters can still bring great deprivation and suffering to needy individuals and families.

Dima is an SGA-supported missionary pastor who has been deeply involved in aid distribution throughout the war in Ukraine. He shared about some of the fruitful, compassionate outreach you supported last winter, while looking ahead to the remainder of this cold season. He said:

“Thank you for your continued help in the ministry. Last winter, we bought groceries, 160 sets of blankets, and 300 sets of first aid kits for the elderly. We distributed it in the city aid center, and in the villages of Lemeshynske and Tavriyske. We work in villages where there are no churches or only missionary service, so 90 percent of people who receive help from us are people who do not yet believe.

With the help of the village administration, we invite either everyone or the most needy, then I always share simple Gospel truths, then I invite everyone to prayer. After the general service, I sometimes have the opportunity to talk with people personally. In the city help center, a person has 10-15 minutes to talk to our pastors, who write down testimonies and share the Gospel, then at the end they invite people to pray together, and to church for the service. Therefore, our ministry is always evangelization!

Lemeshynske is a village 18 miles from Zaporozhye, and it used to be a thriving village with a shop, a bus stop, young people, and life. Now only 46 people remain, including elderly people who are living out their lives and a few refugee families. With the support of SGA, we bought beautiful new



(Top) Sharing the Gospel in Lemeshynske; (Above) Distributing aid.

blankets, first aid kits, and food packages, took spiritual literature, and went to them. It was cloudy and drizzling, but the whole village was already waiting for us on the main street. We greeted each other, talked, and passed on many greetings from our friends and dedicated Christians from SGA. Then, as always, we talked about Christ and His power in salvation. We wept a little about our circumstances, but rejoiced in the hope in Christ. Then, as always, we distributed aid. Thank you for your labor, your help to Ukraine, and your ministry!”

Please pray for continued SGA-supported outreaches throughout the winter, asking for God’s blessing and provision, and as always, for many to come to faith in Christ as they hear the Gospel. ♦

A Year Filled with Ministry Fruit! And Now Another?

God uses a faithful church in central Russia to reach all ages

Alexander B.

SGA-Supported Missionary Pastor in Izhevsk, Russia

This past year has been extremely eventful, both for the ministry and for our family. The summer was filled with ministry. In June, we held a sports town in honor of Children’s Day holiday together with brothers and sisters from the Central Church of Izhevsk. Later on, we were invited to present our family and its values at a local festival.

We asked for prayer that the Lord would help us build relationships with the local administration. We prepared and held a children’s tent camp with a theme on The Life and Adventures of Joseph. We had 85 children, with 36 camp workers of brothers and sisters from different churches. Half of the children were from non-Christian families. So, for the first time in our ministry, **30 children and**

teenagers repented, along with several children from Chur. There were a lot of tears, hugs, and joy! Praise God! There was not a single injury or serious illness, and we succeeded in avoiding the inconveniences with time with the children and the team. The Lord blessed us in every possible way in the preparation and holding of this tour, while opening the hearts of the administration so that they would not interfere. We found finances for food and vouchers for the children from Chur. There were many other testimonies.

When the camp started, the administration called me and asked for help in organizing a holiday on July 5, called **“Family, Love and Fidelity Day.”** I had to refuse, since our camp was taking place that week. Even so, our Lord’s plans are just amazing. On July 5, the administration called me and said that they canceled the holiday due to the intense heat, and postponed it till Monday, July 8th, where we had the opportunity to help them. Praise God!

In August, we managed to organize a **youth retreat where about 80 people came together.** We continue to invite people for celebrations including Harvest Day, where another 80 people came. Praise God that He allowed a Sunday school to start there and local children are coming to it! The village administration asked our family to participate in the All Russian Family of the Year competition. We consulted with the brothers in the church and decided to participate. Surprisingly, we won in the Republic with the nomination, “Young Family,” and the administration promised to award us with a family trip. Again, glory be to the Lord! Please pray that we will be encouraged in our ministry, for upcoming Christmas ministries, and for me as I continue theological study. Thank you so much for your prayerful support! ♦



Children at the camp.

The Love of Christ Amid the Tragedy of War

Death strikes even church children . . . yet hope and love triumph

Viktor O.

SGA-Supported Missionary Pastor in Ukraine

Greetings to you with the Love of our Lord! For the third summer we have been forced to live and carry out ministry when Ukraine is at war. Many thanks to you for being with us. Many thanks for your prayers for us and your material care.



(Top) Lunch for people in need; (Above) Distributing clothing.

Thanks to SGA partners, we received items and were able to distribute them to people. We held services to which we invited displaced persons, the elderly, and to others in need. We held a service and treated them with lunch, **then they had the opportunity to choose clothes.**

Among these people there are those who regularly come to the services, and there are those who have repented. Now we try to hold such a

service once a month, to meet with people who are lonely, displaced, or those who have relatives at war.

Many thanks for the generator, **since electricity is often cut off**, this is a great help for us—it has been **helping us in the ministry for several Sundays.** We also did not forget to prepare for the winter, bringing in firewood together with church members and young people. **Now everything is getting very expensive—electricity, water, and firewood too.**

Of course, the situation continues to be tense, **air raid sirens** often sound and sometimes **rockets** fly in. For example, at the end of June, rockets flew into the center of the city of Volnyansk, it is not so far from the House of Prayer, that rockets hit next to the store and there were casualties. **A boy was riding a motorcycle and died on the spot.** A girl Darina also died, she was only 10 years old, at that time she was in the store with her mother, the mother was taken to the hospital, but Darina died. **This girl, Darina, used to attend Sunday School in our House of Prayer.** How much grief and tears there are around, but by the grace of our Lord we are alive. Of course, we do not know what awaits us ahead in this earthly life, but we believe that these circumstances will strengthen our faith and hope in Our Lord.

Please, continue to pray for us, I send my best regards to everyone and great gratitude for all the material assistance. May God richly bless you! We pray for you! ♦



Generator for the church.

MUCH PRAYER, MUCH POWER IN ACTION

Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God” (Acts 2:9-11).

When we think about the country of Russia, it is easy to forget just how vast a nation it is! Not only does it cover 11 time zones from west to east, but it is also home to some 193 different people groups. Different people, different ethnicities, different customs, but all in deep need of the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Alexander serves as a missionary pastor supported by SGA in Russia’s Tuva region, which is in southern Siberia near the border with Mongolia. He encounters several of these people groups in the course of his ministry, and the Lord has granted much fruit. *“Greetings to you, beloved sisters and brothers in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ! As always, summer is the busiest and richest time in terms of different events for our church. We were able to hold a long-awaited rafting trip for the children of our church and for the church in a nearby village. The rafting trip was attended by teenagers from families with low income, as well as orphans or children from single-parent families. At the beginning of the camp, we gathered at the church in Kyzyl, and then traveled to the headwaters of the Yenisei River. These were unforgettable experiences for the children.*

In the village I mentioned, the children are in deep need, because those are often single-parent homes. Ertine is a student in fifth grade. He lives at his grandparents’ with his brother and sister. Their parents are alive, but the mother went away in order to find a job in a remote location. Their father is an alcoholic and is almost always away from the family. When the new school year started, Ertine had no clothes to wear to school. He is very active and often comes to the services in the Yurt. His grandmother asked for help and shared her need. We prayed to God, and He provided needed help for the boy. We bought him new clothes for school and for the upcoming winter. Ertine*

was surprised and glad. We prayed and thanked the Lord Jesus. We are grateful to the Lord that parents do not hinder the children to come to the Lord. The children pray for their unsaved parents. Praise the Lord Jesus Christ, He is so merciful and good! He extends the days of His grace as He does not want anyone to perish, but He is patient!” Visiting Ertine.



Acts 2 records the beginning of the glorious mission of the church in carrying out the Lord’s Great Commission of taking the Gospel out and making disciples among all people. The Gospel was—and is—not just for the Jewish people, but also for each Gentile nation. No people group, no ethnicity, is excluded from the wonderful, eternal salvation that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus. This beautiful truth is encountered every day by Alexander as he ministers in the ethnically diverse Tuva region. It is encountered every day by other fellow pastors and lay workers across Siberia, and what a wonderful message it is—shining the light of God’s hope to thousands who walk in darkness. Our work is not yet done, and the harvest waiting to be gathered is great.

*Editor’s Note: A “yurt” is a portable, round tent that is covered and insulated with skins or felt. They are traditionally used as a dwelling by several nomadic groups in Asia. ♦

Discipleship for Youth and Ministry Amid War in Ukraine

Alexander A.
SGA-Supported Missionary Pastor in Ukraine

Greetings to you, dear friends! We would like to share with you the news of our joint ministry and express our sincere gratitude for your support—for your prayers, financial assistance, and contribution to the development of God’s kingdom in Ukraine.

Our summer was very active. We decided to plant a new church in a town located in the Kiev region, and moved there at the end of June. One of



Activities with local, unbelieving youth.

25 young people came.

Later on, we held two five-day camps for these young people, which allowed us to get to know their parents. After the camp, we organized a meeting for the parents. Most of the boys from this group do not have parental role models, so we plan to hold workshops for them on topics relevant to them—writing a resume, preparing for a job interview, and an English club. In addition, we organize various day trips and volleyball tournaments. We are especially happy to share how God is opening the hearts of these young people. For example, the twin brothers



Meeting at the new church plant.

our first steps was to meet local unbelieving youth, who we saw were playing volleyball by the river. We met with them three times a week, played, talked, and shared the Gospel. Each time, on average, about



Pastors and their teams meet during the training session.

Yarik and Artur, who were wary at first, gradually began to trust us more and ask for advice about their lives. Thank God for these open hearts!

We are also actively working on building a ministry team for the new church. There are already five people who want to join this ministry—two married couples and a man who helped with the camps. We are planning to start a ministry for displaced people, many of whom came here from the

Donetsk region where the destruction of war has been severe. We are now looking for a location to start this ministry. In the early fall, we held training for pastors and their teams in Dnipro. There were 11 teams from eastern Ukraine who took part in it. It was very important training, especially in the conditions of war. The teams actively shared their worries, blessings, and challenges. They analyzed their ministries and planned for the future. Our prayer is to develop a movement to create healthy, regenerative churches that glorify God and have an impact on society. Thank you for your support and partnership in God’s ministry to the people of Ukraine! May our Lord bless you abundantly! ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Our compassionate God has always had a heart for the poor. He declares . . . *For the poor will never cease to be in the land, therefore I command you, saying, “You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land”* (Deuteronomy 15:11). Your faithful support helps the Bible-preaching churches we



Summer church retreat with children and adults in Russia.

serve across the former Soviet Union to fulfill this command even as they proclaim the Gospel. Your gifts also provide Bibles and Christian literature, children’s ministries, Bible training, and so much more! Please pray about how you can help today! ♦



A family in Ukraine receives aid from their local church after the husband/father died in the war.

Insight FROM MICHAEL

Don't Look with Worldly Eyes. Instead, See What God is Doing!

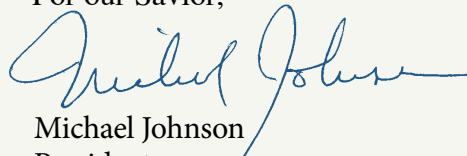
At the start of this new year, I can't help but look back and reflect on the year that has been. If you were to judge only by watching or reading the news, about all that 2024 had was heartbreak, bloodshed, war, drought, venomous political disputes, geopolitical conflicts, and many other devastating sorrows. And the reports would be true in and of themselves. But these troubling events are not beyond God's sovereign power to bring forth great good through and in spite of them. While it might seem that everything is spiraling out of control, we know that nothing takes God by surprise. Even wicked rulers are under His omnipotent hand. Nothing will stop God from achieving His eternal purpose. Rather, He declares . . . *the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying "My plan will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure"* (Isaiah 46:10).



As Christians, **we look beyond what a largely unbelieving world sees. Instead, we look at what God is doing.** There is much good happening in the midst of the sorrow, and dedicated believers are out there front and center—obeying God's command to engage in good works for His glory. Our brothers and sisters across the former Soviet Union, Poland, and in Israel are living examples of these daily good works. In obedience to God, the good news of the Gospel is priority one as they carry out the good works that He has called them to do. Their stories are in the Good News Report every month, and we rejoice!

We know from God's Word that . . . *the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God* (2 Corinthians 4:4). **But God is greater than the evil one who blinds, and when He purposes to move on a heart through the power of the Holy Spirit, and opens blinded eyes to see, nothing can stop Him.** And what a beautiful transformation takes place in a once broken life. Thank you for being a part of His life-changing work in bringing the lost to Himself in faith.

For our Savior,


Michael Johnson
President



SHARING THE GOSPEL • EQUIPPING THE CHURCH
HELPING THE FORGOTTEN

Good News Report is published to report religious news about Russia, the rest of the CIS and the ministries of:

Slavic Gospel Association

6151 Commonwealth Drive
Loves Park, IL 61111
www.sga.org
E-mail: goodnews@sga.org
Phone: 815-282-8900
Fax: 815-282-8901

To start, cancel, or change the mailing address on your subscription to Good News Report, please send your name, your old address, and your new address to the address listed above. Please allow six to eight weeks for the fulfillment of your request.

International Offices

Noble Park, Australia
Cambridge, Canada
Rugby, England
North Shore, New Zealand

U.S. Board of Directors

Dr. Rick Goertzen, *Chairman*
Kelly Abbott, *Vice Chairman*
Michael Johnson, *President*
Brian Kult, *Treasurer*
Dr. Rick Gregory, *Secretary*
Warner Tillman
Harry Leopold
John Wauterlek
Dr. Bill Atkinson
Rev. Bill Ball
Scott Rich
Josh Tillman
Dr. Robert W. Provost, *President Emeritus*

SGA is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.



Enhancina Trust