



Taking the Gospel to the Street

The Missionary Zeal of Russian Youth

Konstantin Petrov
SGA-Sponsored Missionary
Pastor and Youth Leader
Ussuriysk, Russia



Our church youth group is in ministries to children and other young people. The reactions we get can be quite different. Some refuse any conversation on spiritual matters at once, while others are very interested and we continue to fellowship with them. I continue to train those whom God gave us in last summer's outreach ministries, and five people have begun coming to our church as a result of the camp and missionary outreaches in our region.

Hard Hearts and Open Hearts

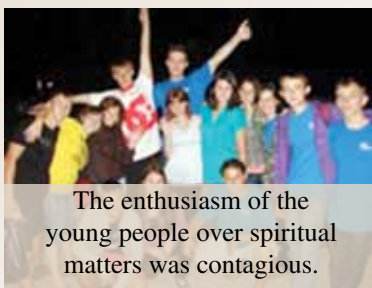
Our summer ministries involved an outreach mission in Ussuriysk. The concept of the ministry was to work with youth and children. We ran into difficulties with the administration of the town, and we were not allowed to work with children. Therefore, we directed our efforts toward youth work. We handed out invitations to our evening meetings, and went to the central square of the town. This way, we attracted a lot of attention and soon had a whole crowd around us. They were curious and wanted to hear the songs we were singing, as they were so different from what they normally hear.

Continued on page 2



Prevented from hosting summer camp, the church organized street evangelism.

As we attempted to start conversations about God, some were attentive and also ready to share their views, while others didn't want to listen at all. We had many conversations with people, and God used each member of the team. Those who were open for conversation actually came to our meetings a second or third time. Some came to us almost every day, and now we have some non-Christian young men who come to our church and they are open for fellowship. We felt the Lord's presence in everything. Our missionary trip eventually came to an end, and we trust that the seeds planted will surely bring fruit.



The enthusiasm of the young people over spiritual matters was contagious.

Youth Camp Patmos

During the month of August for the past three years, we have organized a summer youth camp in Livadia Harbor, one of the most popular places for summer recreation in Russia's Primorsky region along Vostok Bay. In 2010, we were able to purchase a large tent for our morning

The gathered youth listened intently to the biblical truth presented during the sessions.



and evening meetings, as well as for different sports events. Last August, we had 90 youth from across the Far East in the camp.

After crossing over our simulated "Customs Control" and filling out their "Declaration Form" in order to enter our "Megalopolis," the participants were divided into teams. Even before the beginning of the camp, the leaders — some of whom had many years of experience in youth ministry — knew the names of the young people in their teams and were praying for them by name. Each morning began with sports activities and



Youth swimming in Livadia Hardor before the morning session.

then the morning assembly, where the youth would be given the main idea or lesson topic for the day. They would then receive their tasks to prepare for the evening worship service, and plan for creative demonstrations of memory verses from Scripture.



The morning worship was a wonderful opportunity for them to be fed spiritually, followed by discussions of important issues such as forgiveness, what sin is all about, preparation for marriage, and godly living. There was a wide variety of activity during the day, and then in the evening service, the youth would present sketches, sing songs, and listen intently as Pastor Vladimir Lebedev preached about serious issues for youth today. Each evening, invitations were given to receive Christ as Savior, and 16 young men and women came forward in repentance. Praise God!



The basic goals of our camp ministry — as with all else — is to bring youth into contact with Jesus Christ and His teaching, and to challenge Christian youth to be committed to the Lord — to develop their spiritual gifts.

Ministry to Families

In addition to youth camp, we also held a camp ministry for whole families. We had 120 people, or about 50 families from different parts of Russia's Far East. Some of them had been to camp previously, and now they were bringing friends! For 10 of the attending families, this was their first contact with Christian people. The Lord blessed, and they attended our meetings with plenty of questions. Now they are in regular fellowship with believers and want to come to the camp ministry again. We also had some

unbelievers from the village of Livadia, and we shared the Gospel with everyone.

One of the key events was a prayer night. In a large tent, we set up several prayer tables where people could come and pray according to the theme at that table — family, camp, children,

and personal needs. Many wept as they prayed with us, and repented.

We are thankful to God for His blessing on these ministries, and are grateful to all who participated through their support, prayer and giving!

Soon It Will Be Christmas . . .

You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

It's hard to believe that yet another year has gone by, and soon we will be celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior at Christmas!

But time has not gotten away from our brothers and sisters across the lands of Russia, who have been busily preparing for the many children's outreaches that will take place between December 25 and especially the week of January 7—when Christmas is officially celebrated in Russia.

SGA partners help sponsor numerous evangelistic ministries including *Immanuel's Child*. These outreaches take place in local churches in the CIS, as well as in numerous orphanages and children's homes participating in our *Orphans Reborn* ministry. In Ukraine, SGA missionary pastor Vladimir Grishko visits orphanages on a regular basis, and the fruit of last year's ministry helps us anticipate what God will do this Christmas . . .

Last January, our team went to the orphanage in Dobromil for the first time in the year 2011. We were allowed to hold a concert there, and to distribute food and treats to the children. There were about 70 children at the program, and they had been waiting excitedly for us to come. Some of them helped us present our program, reciting poems and singing Christian songs. Afterward, we presented them with their



For many Russian children, *Immanuel's Child* programs are one of the key highlights of the year.

Christmas gifts — sweets, toys, and a book provided through SGA, The Life of Jesus Christ. The children listened to the stories with great interest, and at the end, they answered positively when we asked them if they wanted Jesus to be born in their hearts. Two tenth-graders — Viktor and Piotr — prayed a prayer of repentance followed by three girls named Maria, Olga, and Oksana. And these are only the first fruits!

We trust that there will be more wonderful testimonies such as this, as faithful church workers this Christmas tell of the Lord Jesus' birth in Bethlehem and His great love for children everywhere. Please pray with us in advance, asking God to provide the resources needed to reach as many children as possible. More than that, pray also that the Lord will prepare their hearts to believe the Gospel, repent of their sins, and trust in Him as Savior.

Editor's Note: For more information on Immanuel's Child and Orphans Reborn, please visit SGA's website at <http://www.sga.org>. You can also call SGA at 1-800-BIBLE-50.



Antioch Comes to Pskov

. . . standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27).

By Jess Miller

The church in North America has certainly come to a unique time in world missions. God has brought about possibilities of connection between churches all over the world. It is now possible for churches in North America and churches across the lands of Russia to form unique, strategic relationships designed to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord. At no other time in history has there been such opportunity for believers around the world to . . . *strive together for the faith of the Gospel* (Philippians 1:27). In May, I had the wonderful opportunity of seeing a relationship such as this form in Russia’s Pskov region — historic for being the place where Russia’s last tsar abdicated the throne during the Russian Revolution.

I had the privilege of accompanying Pastors Bryan Hughes and Dave Barnhart from Grace Bible Church in Bozeman, Montana, as they traveled to Pskov. Pastor Hughes and Pastor Barnhart hoped to begin a long and fruitful relationship with the believers in Pskov as part of SGA’s *Antioch Initiative*. Pskov is statistically one of the least reached regions



Pastor Hughes teaching Hermeneutics through a translator, Alim Gelyastanov.

in Russia. The *Antioch Initiative* partnership between the central church in Pskov and Grace Bible Church in Montana is designed to facilitate much-needed Bible training and financial support. This is all part of the ongoing *Antioch Initiative* effort to assist Russian Christians in reaching their region with the Gospel.

For three days, Pastor Hughes taught Hermeneutics to a group of about 30 people



consisting of pastors, deacons, and other church leaders. The students were eager to learn and to absorb all of the rich teaching. Most of the students in the class had never received formal Bible training of any kind. After each session, there were many questions for both Pastor Hughes and Pastor Barnhart, all of which were asked in a spirit of humility from people sincerely wanting to know God’s Word more deeply, and with a strong desire to teach it to others.

We also had the privilege of traveling around the Pskov region and were introduced to

the desperate need of many cities and towns that are completely without a Bible-preaching church. The believers introduced us to some of the men and women who are serving the Lord faithfully through local churches. They have a real desire to see their countrymen come to know Christ. According to one of the church leaders, “Pskov is very religious, but without Christ.” The lost people in Pskov desperately need to hear the Good News of salvation — salvation that is found only in Jesus Christ.

The *Antioch Initiative* was designed to facilitate advancement of the Gospel through

partnerships such as this new one in Pskov. It is based on the model of the church found in the book of Acts at Antioch — a congregation that became a vibrant, zealous, missionary-sending church. SGA provides the bridge that connects the churches in North America with Russian churches thousands of miles away. It was thrilling to watch as this new relationship was formed and to think of the future possibilities that will come as a result. Please join us in prayer for the Pskov region, and for this new partnership in the Gospel between the churches of Pskov and Grace Bible Church in Bozeman, Montana.

Sensible Stewardship

Guaranteed Payments for Life: The Charitable Gift Annuity (Part One)

The gift annuity is an arrangement under which you can make a contribution to your charity and receive, in turn, guaranteed payments for life. It’s a way of stewarding that allows you to make a substantial gift even though you may need ongoing income from your assets.

What Are the Benefits?

In addition to guaranteed payments, a charitable gift annuity provides other benefits, including:

- A portion of the payment is tax-free.
- Charitable deduction in the year of the gift.
- An annuity rate significantly higher than the interest paid on current fixed investments.
- Capital gains tax savings on appreciated assets.
- Satisfaction of assisting your charity in its ministry.

How Does It Work?

Most charitable gift annuities are funded with cash or listed securities. When you contribute securities, the annuity payments will probably

greatly exceed the dividends you were receiving. While contributors usually name themselves as beneficiaries, a relative or friend could be named as well (perhaps to provide support to an aged parent or a sibling who needs financial assistance). Married persons typically provide for payments to be made over both of their lives. When the first spouse dies, the payments continue at the same level to the survivor.

Your charity would receive your contribution, invest and manage the proceeds, and provide you with lifetime payments. At the end of your life, the remainder would be distributed to your charity for present or future work.

SGA has made special arrangements for you to look into such matters with PhilanthroCorp, a nationally-known Christian charitable planning firm that works exclusively in the areas of estate and gift planning. There is no cost or obligation to you for this service. To learn more, visit our website — www.sga.org. Or you can call PhilanthroCorp at 800-876-7958 to visit on the phone with one of their Estate Specialists. In our next Sensible Stewardship column, we will discuss more of how gift annuities work.

Finding and Sharing Freedom



Eugene Belyakov
Pskov, Russia

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death (Romans 8:2).

Eugene Belyakov grew up in a non-Christian home in St. Petersburg, Russia. At the age of

13, Eugene's parents divorced and they sent him to live with his grandmother. Although his grandmother loved Eugene, she was unable to properly care for a boy his age, so Eugene ended up turning to the streets. It was on the streets that Eugene discovered the lure of drugs. His older cousin was a drug dealer, and was responsible for giving Eugene his first exposure. When Eugene was 15 years old, he began using heroin. By the time Eugene was in his early twenties, drug abuse had become a daily part of his life. He knew that he was hooked and needed help, but didn't know where to turn.

"I tried to heal myself," he recalls, "I went to a number of non-Christian rehab centers." But these attempts were to no avail. Eugene would only stop using drugs for a week or so, and then he would be right back where he started. To make things worse, Eugene began dealing drugs himself. This gave Eugene access to drugs at any time and any place. When Eugene was 26, he was arrested for dealing and was sentenced to more than two years in prison.

While in prison, Eugene had time to reflect on his life. He wrongly blamed the drugs as the source of his problem. "I'll be fine once I get out," Eugene thought. But after his release, he began using drugs again the very first day.

Eugene's grandmother was very concerned about him. She gave him a business card to a Christian rehab center that was sponsored by local churches in Pskov. On the card, there was the illustration of a window. The window had bars around the edges that had been cut open and pried apart. The business card read, "There is an exit." That is exactly what Eugene knew he needed — an exit and escape from the vicious cycle of drugs and crime. He saw it as his last chance. So Eugene

checked himself in to the drug rehab center.

Once there, Eugene knew he had made the right decision. Eugene recalled, "From the moment I came here, I was sure this would help me. Once I arrived, miracles started to happen. I heard the testimonies of the other men and it gave me hope." Eugene came to realize that the core of his problem was not ultimately the drugs. His problem was sin. After two weeks at the rehab center, Eugene repented and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior.

As part of the treatment procedure, the patients are required to attend a local church. Eugene received his first exposure to Christians at this church, and it made a huge impact on him. "When I went to the church, I saw Christian people for the first time in my life. I didn't know such people existed. I saw something clean in the eyes of these people."

After six months of treatment, Eugene knew he wanted to serve the Lord by helping other men who had fallen prey to sin, drugs, and crime. He was sent by the church to St. Petersburg to train for ministry at Christian rehab centers. After completing his training, Eugene returned to the rehab center in Pskov and began ministering there. In addition to welcoming new patients and managing the men on a daily basis, Eugene leads Bible studies. He has since had opportunities to lead men to Christ and to disciple them in their new faith. Eugene digs in and works right alongside the men doing the daily chores and care of the center. "By my open



Eugene is now discipling men and women who struggle with substance abuse as he did.

example, I'm trying to show them how to work."

Please pray for Eugene as he faithfully serves the Lord in Pskov.

Innercircle Perspective



Then the people rejoiced because they had offered so willingly, for they made their offering to the LORD with a whole heart, and King David also rejoiced greatly . . . “Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name” (1 Chronicles 29:9 and 13).

As I write, my heart is filled to overflowing with gratitude to Almighty God for all His awesome blessings — and to you, our partners in the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. Your willing faithfulness in prayer and support has enabled us to withstand global economic challenges for more than three years. Our current year budget is 36% less than our support level of three years ago. Yet somehow, by God’s grace and your faithfulness, all of our ministries are continuing, and the Lord has even added very exciting new opportunities in Israel, as well as in the pro-American republic of Georgia.

The new SGA ministry in Georgia is tremendously exciting. The movement is led by a faithful servant of Christ, Dr. Levan Akhalmosulisvili. Imagine, a surgeon leading a clinic for the poor, and simultaneously pastoring three churches and two developing groups of new believers! In addition, he gives oversight and encouragement to seven pastors who share in the leadership of 24 churches and 10 groups. Two of the churches are in Azerbaijan, which is 92 percent Muslim.

This dear, stalwart brother in Christ is a virtual modern-day version of the qualities of the Apostle Paul . . . but instead of making excellent tents to sell, he treats the medical needs of village people. Having had many people die in his arms over the decades, Dr. Levan has become extremely aggressive in his evangelism. He says, “We must take away their freedom to not listen to the Gospel — it is a matter of eternal life or eternal punishment. We dare not be restrained by fear that we may offend them. It is a matter of life and death . . . we must work to save them even when they think they don’t need to be saved.” Spending 11 days with Dr. Levan intensified my thinking forever about evangelism. He convinced me that we must be lovingly bold with everyone whom we know who is lost.

Three Georgian missionary pastors are serving full-time without compensation, subsisting on their gardens and from the meager salaries from

the employment of their wives. A church consisting principally of converted university students needs help in purchasing building materials for a modest building they are constructing with their own hands in Tbilisi.

Throughout the SGA mission fields, 363 missionary pastors are pressing on, each of them evangelizing in multiple communities and growing new churches for the glory of Christ. Through them, Christ is building His church in Belarus, Georgia, Israel, Russia, Ukraine, and in the Muslim nations of Albania, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

Selected and sent by their local churches, 50 *Orphans Reborn* missionaries, assisted by 127 volunteer assistants, are serving in 130 orphanages in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Armenia. They are loving, reaching, and discipling 11,500 lonely, forgotten orphan children and youth.

Nearly 1,000 zealous young men and women have been selected by their church leaders and are being trained in SGA-sponsored Bible institutes and seminaries in Albania, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. The men are being equipped to serve as evangelists, missionary pastors, pastors, choir directors, and youth directors. The young women are being prepared to serve as directors of women’s ministries, in ministries to the children, and for music ministries.

SGA’s new Russian-language immigrant training initiative in Israel is underway in three cities. As I write, our missionary — Dr. Oleg Korotky, his wife, Svetlana, and daughter Angelina are in harm’s way, as the rockets launched from Gaza are randomly striking their city. Please keep them in your prayers.

Our hearts are always filled with gratitude to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for your faithfulness as partners in the Gospel in the lands of Russia. Your support and empowerment through your prayers are enabling all that is being done. We praise our Lord for you and thank you very much.



Dr. Robert W. Provost
SGA President



How You Can Help

Encourage Russian Believers As They Evangelize the Lost and Make Disciples!



InSight 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: insight@sga.org
Phone: 815-282-8900
Fax: 815-282-8901



Slavic Gospel Association — Canada
55 Fleming Drive, Suite 26
Cambridge, ON N1T 2A9
www.sgacanada.ca
E-mail: info@sgacanada.ca
Phone: 519-621-3553
Fax: 519-621-7571

To start, cancel or change the mailing address on your subscription to *InSight*, 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

Australia / Dr. Nikolai Porublev
Canada / Rev. Allan W. Vincent
England / Derek Maxwell
New Zealand / Richard Hemmingsen

U.S. Board of Directors

Warner Tillman, Chairman
Harry Leopold, Vice Chairman
Dr. Richard Gregory, Secretary
John Wauterlek, Treasurer
Evan Hedley, Director Emeritus
Dr. Robert W. Provost, President
Dr. Bill Atkinson
John Blackman
Rev. Bruce Love
Jack Tedford
Rev. Allan W. Vincent
Brian Kult
Kelly Kruse

Canadian Board of Directors

Dr. Stephen Code, Chairman
Ivan Barber, Vice Chairman
Carol Dean Jeffries, Treasurer
Rev. Allan W. Vincent, Director
John C. Goetze
Walter Gnida
Arnold Heron
Michael Nichols
Dr. Robert W. Provost

SGA is a member of:



Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability



CrossGlobal Link
Formerly called IFMA



Young believers are no less passionate for the Gospel and no less gifted by our Lord for service. Whether it is through serving in their church, street evangelization, or helping run summer camps, youth are tirelessly serving our Lord. Men of all ages are learning how to interpret the Bible

through hermeneutics classes taught as part of the SGA-sponsored *Antioch Initiative*. Former drug addicts are proclaiming the freedom they have found in Christ through church-based rehabilitation centers. Finally, as we approach the Christmas season, please be in prayer for our Russian missionary pastors and their congregations as they prepare for Christmas outreaches in their communities. There are so many who haven't heard the Good News.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and financial support. Without faithful partners such as you, SGA wouldn't be able to continue helping faithful churches reach the lost for Christ across Russia and her neighboring countries.

Your support provides:

- Evangelism and discipleship of children through *Orphans Reborn* and Sunday schools.
- Distribution of Bibles and Christian literature.
- Biblical training for pastors and Christian workers.
- Support of faithful youth ministry leaders and missionary pastors.

Thank you!
Please return the enclosed reply form with your gift.



With your help, more Russian-speaking people can be reached with the Gospel!

- Here's, my gift to help reach more people across the lands of Russia with the Gospel, I'm enclosing \$ _____ (11000)
- I would like to stay better connected! Please e-mail me with periodic ministry updates, key prayer requests and needs. (400)
- Sign me up to be part of SGA's special e-mail Prayer Team. (400)
- My e-mail address is: _____
- My e-mail address is: _____

To make your gift by credit card, see reverse side. >