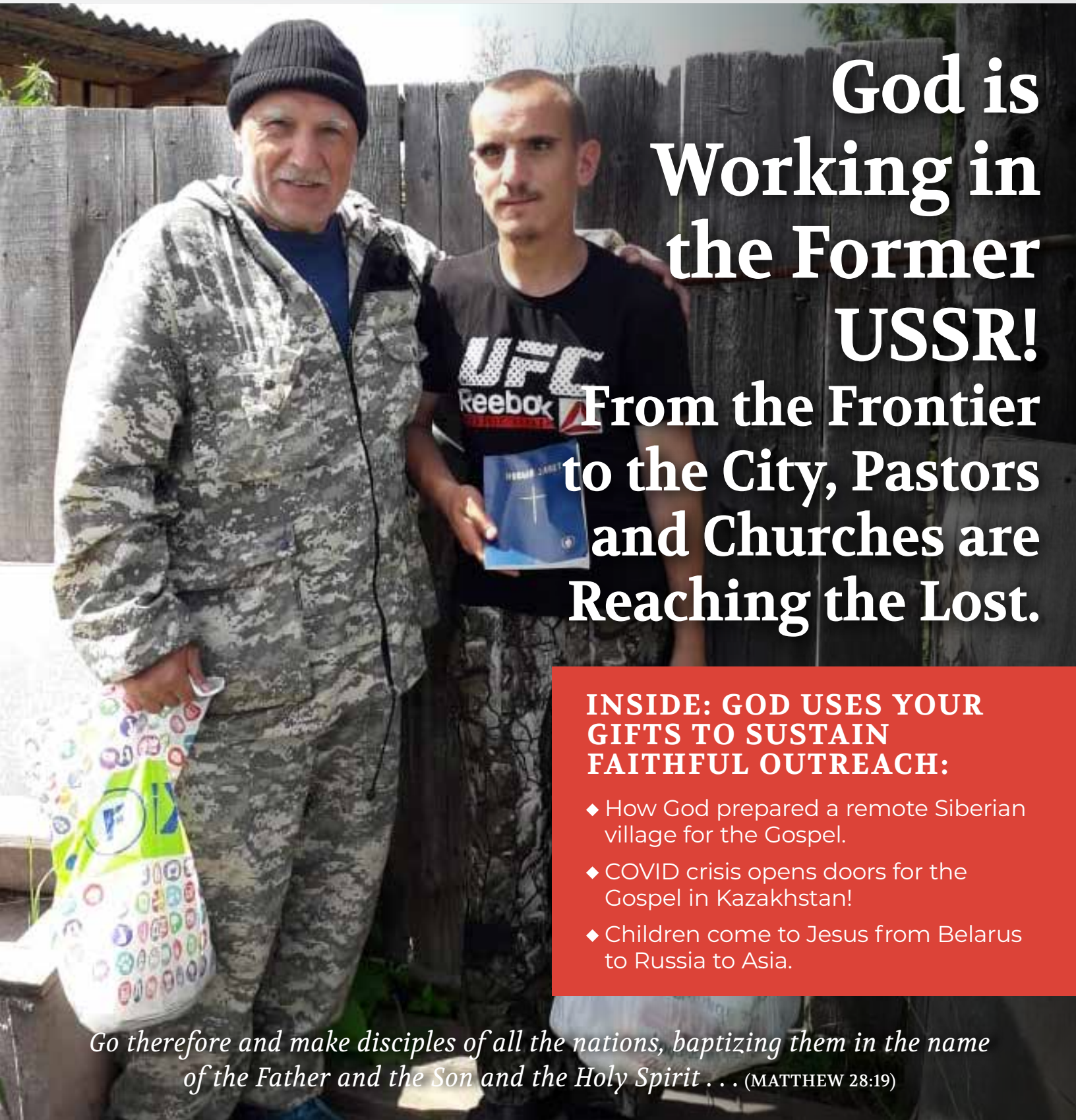




SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION
Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN



God is Working in the Former USSR!
From the Frontier to the City, Pastors and Churches are Reaching the Lost.

INSIDE: GOD USES YOUR GIFTS TO SUSTAIN FAITHFUL OUTREACH:

- ◆ How God prepared a remote Siberian village for the Gospel.
- ◆ COVID crisis opens doors for the Gospel in Kazakhstan!
- ◆ Children come to Jesus from Belarus to Russia to Asia.

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)

The River is the Only Road!

Your Gifts Help Reach Remote Siberian Villages with the Gospel

Boris Schetinsky
SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Russia

Before we started on this missionary trip to unreached towns and villages, we had to prepare for about five months. We purchased **boats, motors, food, and life jackets**. A team was formed and we began planning our journey realizing the challenges that lay ahead. There is **no signal communication for mobile phones, no roads, and no medical care**. This is swampy, forested land with bears, mosquitoes and gnats. If your boat breaks down or sinks, there is no one to help you, and the river has shallow places that can break the boat motor.

We thought about how to reach these people along the river, and we decided as a church to purchase groceries for them including canned meat, cereals, flour, etc. We especially wanted to help needy, large families. The journey started on July 6 with three boats—two carrying our team and the third carrying our cargo. We had planned on the



village of Orefievo, but we overlooked it on the river and went on for two hours. We almost ran out of fuel. Two fishermen told us we had passed Orefievo long ago



(Top) Visiting families on the river. (Above) Travelling by boat from village to village.

and that we were headed for Stariye Birilyusy. We prayed and decided that if God brought us to this village instead of our original destination, it meant He had prepared something there for us.

On our arrival in Birilyusy, we walked around the town and prayed that God would lead us to those who desire to hear the Gospel and truth. We came to a house where we met a man named Zhenya. We talked with him and offered him groceries, which he refused. But when he saw a Bible, he grabbed it from us and exclaimed, “That’s what I need!” **We told him of salvation and Christ’s love. He was so moved that he offered us his tractor as transportation so we could ride around the community and tell people about Christ!** We visited several poor families and gave out food packages, sharing about the Lord along the way. The people were surprised that someone cared about them. We told them that God cares about them, and it was for them that God gave His Son. They thanked us for the hope we brought to these forgotten villages and towns.

On this trip, we covered 60 miles by water. We are so thankful for all who prayed for us and helped make our journey possible. This is our joint mission, our joint labor, and you have a significant part in the work of salvation of human souls. Thank you all! ♦

Camp Little Pearl in Belarus:

Your Gifts Help Provide Sick Children with Physical and Spiritual Care in a Pandemic!

Pavel Mishchenko
Camp Director



Campers spending time outside after being quarantined in their homes.

During these challenging days, the Lord has given us the opportunity to serve Him and minister to the children of our country through the **Little Pearl Diagnostic Camp**. The 135 children who came in the first session in July had already been quarantined in their homes because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These special days—made possible with your prayers and support—gave these children ten memorable days in the open air—a **loving island of summer joy, happiness, care, and the hope of the Gospel!**

Some of the children needed special care as the pandemic claimed the lives of their fathers. The



Checking temperatures.

demand for camp vouchers was greater than the number of children we could accommodate. Maximum safety protocols were observed to prevent the spread

of infection. All staff members passed the COVID-19 tests in advance and were required to reside in the campgrounds during the sessions. Children were assigned to small squads, and the majority of the activities were held out in the open air. Even with these conditions, the children were full of joy and their parents were understanding—and even supporting us in solving various issues.

Each day began with prayer in the children’s respective squads. In addition to the games and activities, the lessons focused on helping the children make the right choices in life. Every day, they will have to make choices in domestic situations, routine matters, and especially eternity. **In the Bible classes, we spoke of how choices should be guided by the Word of God—using Bible heroes and the choices they made in different situations.** We also did creative activities, cooking, fishing, and spent time allowing for quiet conversations around the campfire, and then evening devotions. The time when the young people decide on devoting their lives to the Lord is the most precious thing—this is the goal that makes all our labors worth it all!

We thank the Lord for this opportunity and for His protection, and for you—our brothers and sisters who prayed for us and supported our camp ministry. ♦



Enjoying fellowship around the campfire.

Praying, Sharing, and Harvesting the Fruit

Many Children Are Being Reached with Your Help in Kineshma, Russia!

Dmitri Rastrigin
SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Russia

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary (Galatians 6:9).

I would like to thank you for your help and support for our ministry in Kineshma. Your help and prayers are especially needed at this time in our country!

“Many new children joined us and are now gladly visiting our “Superbook” Bible club. Adults and the children’s parents are also attending the meetings, and they seem to like it.”



Kineshma is a town in the northern part of the Ivanovo Oblast of Russia.

We had fruitful Gospel outreaches over Christmas and the New Year. Many new children joined us and are now gladly visiting our “Superbook” Bible club. Adults and the children’s parents are also attending the meetings, and they seem to like it. We are happy that the Word of God is reaching them. Though the process is slow, we believe that the seeds planted by us will bring forth fruit in God’s timing!

The Bible course for the children includes cartoons based on Bible topics, along with Bible study, games, singing, and pondering the meaning of God’s Word in our lives. **Believers in our church are bathing these**



“Superbook” Bible club.



Snack time at a children’s meeting.



Studying the Word of God.

meetings in prayer for each child and the parents. We also held a separate meeting with the children called “CROSS,” where we taught on the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of His people. It was one of the most moving meetings we held, with children and adults being invited to pray and ask the Lord to forgive their sins. The children prayed, and some of them wept. The



(Right & Bottom) “CROSS” children’s meeting.



(Above & Right) Learning about the Exodus of Israel and the Resurrection of Christ.

second meeting was devoted to the resurrection of Christ, and then we taught on the Exodus from Egypt, and how it ties with what Christ has done for us. We give glory to the Lord for the way He is moving in their lives!

At the moment, we have had to suspend our meetings with the children because of the COVID-19 pandemic. But we are able to help their families with clothing and other aid as we are able. **We can hold some home groups during the lockdown when we are not able to meet at the church.**

This is what we do, and we are very thankful that you participate in this ministry with us. **May the Lord reward you abundantly for your kind hearts and bless you in all that you do! ♦**



Learning about the Exodus of Israel and the Resurrection of Christ.



Giving clothing to families in need.

Christ Over COVID in Kazakhstan

Your Support is Helping to Take the Gospel from Village to Village

Viktor S.
SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Kazakhstan

I am so grateful to you for your prayers and support of our ministry. We really need wisdom, understanding, and sensitive love for the lost, which only Jesus can grant us!

This difficult time has prompted many people to turn to the Lord in repentance, and it is very joyful! We had been praying for some for 20 years, and they finally repented and asked to be baptized. I



(Top) Pastor Viktor is beginning to see the fruit of 20 years of prayer!
(Above) Unbelievers have begun inviting believers into their homes.

They are inviting us to their homes. Our church members have become closer and more united, are more diligent in reading the Bible and in prayer. There are new people—even unbelievers—who want to join our study group “Bible for the Year.”

Thus far, we know of no infected people in our village, and we praise God for that. We have been observing a quarantine regime and no meetings are taking place in the church building. **Despite that, we have held the Lord’s Supper in homes, and youth are gathering to play soccer in the open air next to our home.** Many new teenagers have joined our youth



Youth ministry.

sports ministry, and it’s a delight! We have taken children out to the forest and the lake, or to the river where we all pray. We use the internet to share messages from Kazakh Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptist (UECB) president Franz Tissen, and several have repented through this outreach. In our courtyard, we have been gathering outside for Bible reading and tea in the mornings, and we always have a lot of guests. People have become hungry for God’s Word. They ask questions and take literature with greater desire. Glory to Jesus!

An unexpected toothache led to an opportunity to share. I went to a dentist in a nearby town, and he willingly accepted the Bible in the Kazakh language. Over the course of a month, I visited villages and preached the Gospel, even meeting with Kazakh teachers and giving them Bibles. People need to hear the Word of God, and they are frightened by this “new world order.”

The coronavirus pandemic has shaken everyone up, yet this is having good fruit for eternity. We are seeing many people seek shelter in the Lord Jesus. Praise be to Him! ♦

CIS IN THE NEWS

PRAY: Belarus Roiled by Protests in Wake of Election

Massive political protests involving thousands of people broke out across Belarus in the aftermath of the country’s presidential election August 9. While the official results showed President Alexander Lukashenko winning with 80 percent of the vote, the supporters of opposition candidate Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya said that the results were falsified. The protests and demands for Mr. Lukashenko to step down began to spread across the country, even after authorities launched a severe crackdown. The European Union and the U.S. government issued statements of concern, while Russia issued a warning to other countries not to interfere in Belarus’ affairs.

Evangelical church leaders in Belarus told us, *“We do not participate in any political affairs. We only pray that God will save us from war, and that His holy will would be accomplished. We continue fellowship and worship while continuing our ministry.”* This is in keeping with how the faithful churches conducted themselves during the communist years, and the Lord sustained them—sowing the seeds for a later abundant harvest when comparative freedom came. Please continue to intercede in prayer for the country, and for our brothers and sisters as they proclaim peace and reconciliation in Christ. ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Day in and day out, faithful SGA-sponsored missionary pastors and church workers across the former Soviet Union carry out the ministries to which God has called them. While some carry out their ministries with little opposition, others are serving in very difficult conditions where both governments and other religious groups try to suppress any Gospel work.

Your prayers and support are a constant encouragement to them, and you help them accomplish so much through SGA—evangelism, Russian-language Bible distribution, Compassion Ministry, children’s outreaches, and so much more.

Please consider how you can help today! ♦



Holding a church service under a tent.

Insight FROM MICHAEL

Your Prayers and Gifts Are Being Heard and Used by God!

... *proving to be examples to the flock* (1 Peter 5:3).

In this issue of the Good News Report, we are focusing on the faithful labors of SGA-sponsored missionary pastors across Russia and her neighboring countries. **As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take its toll in their regions and communities, these faithful servants of Christ and their congregations have been diligent to shine the Gospel light before their people.** With your generous support and ongoing prayers, they have distributed groceries to the neediest families and provided millions of meals, all the while sharing the good news of salvation in Christ. And they have found **many open doors** as people are eager to hear that there is eternal hope amid such sorrow and difficulty.



I have been truly amazed as I contemplate the hand of God in all of this. Back when the pandemic first began to spread and the great needs across the former Soviet Union became evident, we realized that this was **perhaps the greatest opportunity for the Gospel since the end of**

“Men, women, and children were not only deeply thankful to receive the help, but they willingly—even eagerly—listened as salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ was lovingly shared.”

communist rule in 1991. Then the reports began coming in from the pastors as they traveled to distribute the food you helped provide. Men, women, and children were not only deeply thankful to receive the help, but they willingly—even eagerly—listened as salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ was lovingly shared. **Many have repented, while others have had their viewpoints changed about who Christians are.** And

God continues His sovereign work as the days and weeks play out.

You have truly been a part of all that has been done for the glory of Christ. It is a great privilege to serve His church across the former Soviet Union, and to be partners with you for the sake of the Gospel. I can never thank you enough!

For our Savior,

Michael Johnson, President



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