



# SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN

## Seven-Year-Old Danik Invites: “God Loves People . . . Come to Prayer Group!”

### INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS AT WORK

- ◆ God uses 2022 Summer Bible Camp to reach seven-year-old . . . who reaches out to others.
- ◆ Your support continues to plant seeds in the lives of the poor, broken, and displaced.
- ◆ Read how God’s message of hope reached orphans in the remotest area!

*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)*

# How Many More Young Evangelists Will God Raise Up from This Year's Summer Bible Camp Season?

*Camp Ministry Hit Record Impact in 2022 . . . But the Need Grows*

Eric Mock, SGA Vice President of Ministry Operations

We are preparing for 2023 Summer Bible Camp ministry with great hope. In 2022, by God's grace and provision shown through your partnership, more than 50,000 children were assisted in attending **Summer Bible Camp** offered by local churches supported by SGA. This was a 25 percent increase over the previous year!

Even more stunning is that more than 7,000 children made professions of faith in Christ, and 11,156 children desire to come to church. That is double from last year, and reflects some **140 percent growth over the past five years!** We expect that final numbers will be even higher, as there were camp sessions that were delayed due to the invasion in Ukraine and its related impacts. But the Lord is moving in many young lives, and for that, may He be praised!

This included a 30 percent increase in the number of children from **unbelieving homes**. We assisted 800 churches in 10 former Soviet countries in holding 704 camps, which is tremendous growth over the past five years!

## A Seven-Year-Old Evangelist

In **Belarus's Grodno region**, Pastor Alexander shared the story of one young boy who proved to be an eager witness for Christ:

*Danik is seven years old and attends Sunday school. He was at his grandmother's during summer vacation in a town where most of the residents are former military. When Danik was playing outside with others, he would drop out of the game and run up to passersby, taking them by the hand and retelling what he had memorized from the Bible camp.*

*He told them God loves people, that God is always there, and invited them to a prayer group. His grandmother later said that there had never been so*



Danik (gray t-shirt) with his family at the church.

*many new people at a group as there had been that month. The other children told us the story rather than Danik himself. We later asked Danik how he decided to whom he would speak. With childlike simplicity, he replied, "They were very sad. I didn't want them to go to Hell!" The theme of the camp had been "You're Not Alone."*

This is a beautiful affirmation of the work God is doing in the midst of all the turmoil in this present world. As Job reverently declared . . . *I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted* (Job 42:2). Even in the aftermath of a tragic pandemic and an ongoing, horrible war, the Lord continues to build His kingdom.

As we prepare for yet another **Summer Bible Camp** season beginning this June, please pray in advance for the children who will attend and for the churches holding the camps. May God be glorified in the bountiful fruit! ♦

# Your Gifts Boost Gospel Ministry to Needy Families, Addicts, and Those Influenced by Cults

*Please pray that seeds will sprout into salvation!*

Khakim S., SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Western Russia

There are literally **hundreds of people groups** across vast **Russia**, and one of them is known as the Roma—who are commonly called gypsies across Eastern Europe, but the Roma consider that very offensive. **Poverty is rampant, yet doors for the Gospel are being opened by the Lord, as Khakim's report shows:**

*I recently visited Andrei's family, who are Roma in nationality. Andrei is ill with HIV and Hepatitis C related to years of drug addiction. He contracted all these diseases while leading an unrighteous life. But Andrei began to understand that he was living sinfully*



Visiting Nikolai and his wife.

*and that he needed to be changed. Later he started attending our meetings on Sundays and Wednesdays. His father Nikolai battles illnesses, and I shared the Gospel with him many times.*

*This time, I was able to talk to his wife and shared the Gospel with her. Ruslan, Andrei's relative, is also a drug addict and has*



Delivering food and sharing the Gospel with Ruslan.

*run-ins with the law. I was able to have a good talk with him and shared Christ, telling Ruslan about the true faith and corrected misconceptions that Ruslan had. God's Word has been sown!*



Khakim with Raj's family.

*Another of my visits was to Raj's family. His wife's name is Lisa. They have six children and the family lives very poorly. In the corner of the main room are **hanging many icons**, as we see in many homes. Raj and his family were very happy to receive a food gift and were very glad that we came to visit them. I started talking about God and then one of the daughters came up to me. She asked about my faith, and I explained it to her. It turned out that she was attending meetings of the Jehovah's Witnesses cult. She had already learnt some of their false doctrines and I was able to talk to her about it, and provided verses from the Scriptures showing the deity of Christ. We will talk some more with her next time, by God's grace. Praise God for all things!*

**Indeed, we praise God for these Gospel seeds being planted. Sometimes the soil is hard and the labor can take months, if not years.** But the Lord brings the fruit in His time. Pray for Khakim and his faithful, diligent ministry among Russia's Roma. ♦

# FAR EAST RUSSIA: God Uses Your Support to Share the Gospel with More Orphans!

Not long ago, we received a wonderful report from the **Khabarovsk region** in Far East Russia. There, SGA-supported *Orphans Reborn* leader Vyacheslav encountered yet another vivid reminder of God's power. His story begins with Christmas outreach:

*This past year, we have received more financial assistance than in previous years, and even more than we needed for the children in the three orphanages where we already minister. We accepted this as God's call to work harder!*

*We resumed praying for the orphanage in another village, asking God to open the doors for us there. However, we were not able to meet with the headmaster of the orphanage before the Christmas holidays as she said the orphanage was on quarantine, and vacations were already scheduled. Instead, she invited us to hold our Christmas program after the holidays. We trusted God, bought gifts, and held the Christmas celebration for the other three orphanages*



Celebrating Christmas with orphan children.

*in the church building. Since we had been refused admission previously at this orphanage, we thought that they worked closely with a local Orthodox church. But we learned that the priest began reducing his activities there, at first just at Easter and Christmas, and after that he stopped showing up at all. As a result of this, we were now allowed to show our Christmas ministry!*

*A week later, we signed an agreement between our church and the orphanage. From now on, every week the Word of God will be heard in one more place! Everyone who was in the orphanage and even the teacher attended our outreach. We talked about Christmas again. Then we had tea and a long conversation, and the children did not want to let us go.*



Meeting with children at the new orphanage.

*As we talked, the children seemed very open. They had asked us to come at least a few times a year, and were very **happy to find out that we would come on a weekly basis!** Afterward, apparently after the director heard about the success of the first meeting, she contacted the pastor of our church and thanked him for a good start of our cooperation, offering even to expand it! We look forward to fruitful cooperation and the expansion of the Kingdom of God in this village and in our region. Thank you for giving us this opportunity!*

We praise and thank God for this tremendous open door, and ask Him for His continued blessing on the **Orphans Reborn** team and their ministry. May many young boys and girls come to saving faith as they hear the Gospel! ♦

## MUCH PRAYER, MUCH POWER IN ACTION

*... for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries (1 Corinthians 16:9).*



Children at the Christmas service.

As in the other former Soviet nations of Central Asia, ministry in **Uzbekistan** takes place under **significant opposition**. We recently received a report from a missionary pastor named Andrei, highlighting yet again that God brings about fruit in His time and in His way—sometimes after years of diligent outreach. He shares:

*In one local village, thanks to God, services are held regularly two times a week. There are also youth and children's fellowships that take place. We also visit villages nearby. In each, there are people who hear the message of salvation. **Praise God, some people are receiving the Lord there.** This past Christmas and New Year's, many new people visited our services. We pray that God will bring them to Himself. Recently, two new brothers joined the church, thank God!*

*In mid-December, I visited a seriously sick man whom I had known for a long time. When I met with him earlier, he did not want to listen to anything about God. He considered himself a believer in his own way, but he lived a very sinful life and was not embarrassed by it, but once in a difficult time, he helped us a lot. We lived with him for about 10 days. Before his death, I went to share Christ with him several times, and he managed to reconcile with God*

*and with his family. We thank God for this, even though he was saved at the last moment as the thief on the cross.*

*Not long ago there was yet another dying person. He also turned to the Lord while he still lived and had the opportunity. Recently we visited him, and pray that God will help him pass into eternity without doubting Christ. There are people in his life who might attempt to shake his faith. So, please pray with us for him. His name is Zhuma.*

For believers like Andrei who are diligent in evangelism and sharing faith in Christ, it can be **easy to get discouraged when we don't see immediate results**. In the West, we are so accustomed to everything being fast—almost “on demand.” Yet things don't often work like that when it comes to matters of faith.

Seeds must be planted, and often cultivated for years before the fruit begins to manifest. As the Word tells us . . . *I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth* (1 Corinthians 3:6). While Andrei's report doesn't speak of it, the country in which he and his church minister is one of the most oppressive for evangelical believers. Yet the work of the Gospel goes on in the midst of it, and even overcomes. ♦

# “They Do Not Know Where to Go”

*How your prayers and gifts point desperate refugees in Belarus to Christ*

Pavel M., Zhemchuzhinka (Little Pearl) Children’s Healthcare Center, Kobrin, Belarus

SGA partners have helped support the **Little Pearl Camp in Belarus** for many years now. Since its beginning, the camp has helped thousands of children with illnesses related to residual radiation from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, receiving initial diagnostics and limited treatment. **But since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the camp has found yet another way to minister the love of Christ by helping fleeing refugees driven out of their homes by the war.**



Refugees arrive at the camp.

Pavel, the camp director, says that the stories of the refugees are heartbreaking. He says, *“The stories often fail to convey the horror of what is happening. It’s all the bombing and the fear. And the stories are similar. A woman and a man were among the latest group that came. I could see that they are very confused. They do not know where to go. They came from Ukraine’s Kherson region and have no relatives abroad. Their relatives remained behind in Ukraine.”*

Tatyana was reluctant to give her family’s names and it was evident that she was afraid. Since the beginning of the invasion, the troops occupied the best houses. They openly steal washing machines, microwave ovens, refrigerators, and other household appliances. There is nothing the people can do

about it because they are armed. A lot of people die in the constant shelling. A neighboring family of a mother and her daughter decided to hide in the attic of their house, and that is where the shell hit—killing them both.

Piotr Podrez, the director of SGA’s Regional Ministry Center (RMC) in Minsk, came to visit Kobrin along with his son Dima, who also works at the RMC. He shared, *“I am thankful to God that I had the opportunity to have a meeting with refugees and to witness for Christ. There were 76 of them.”*



Meeting with refugees.

According to Pavel, with each group of refugees that comes in, there is a one-hour meeting to instruct them on how to move across the border and abroad. The hope of the Gospel is also shared with them as the most important matter of all. Please join us in lifting these men, women, and children in prayer, praying that as they seek peace in the midst of war, they will find the true peace of Christ that . . . *surpasses all understanding* (Philippians 4:6). ♦

# Celebrating Your Support of Retiring 70-Year SGA Missionary Florence Daneliuk!

On January 31 of this year, long-time SGA missionary Florence Daneliuk retired after serving on the mission field for more than 70 years—the last 58 of them in Kodiak, Alaska. Florence has been facing some ongoing health issues, and decided that the time for retirement had now come.



Florence Daneliuk

Florence arrived in Kodiak in 1965, yet her ministry with Slavic Gospel Association began much earlier with her late husband Andrew in refugee work after World War II. After Andrew’s untimely passing in an auto accident, the Lord led Florence with two small children to go and work in Kodiak.

Florence spoke Ukrainian fluently, and was deeply involved in ministry to ladies and transient Coast Guard families through Kodiak Bible Church, which was originally an SGA church plant. In the earlier days of our mission, SGA had several missionaries in Alaska ministering to Russian visitors, sailors, and business people. Florence managed apartments in Kodiak for years, and held regular Bible studies with individuals and families passing through. By God’s grace, Florence and her ministry truly impacted hundreds of lives for Christ, and we trust that she will continue to do so even in retirement—in the Lord’s service, no one is ever truly retired!

SGA’s board of directors, President Michael Johnson, and the rest of the SGA family are thankful for Florence and her decades of faithful service to Christ. We also are deeply thankful to the Lord for all the SGA partners through the years who steadfastly and generously supported Florence’s ministry. ♦

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Each year, we look forward with joy and eagerness to see what God will do through SGA-supported summer camps, and through your generous support of them. Through the years, so many young boys and girls came to know Christ as their Savior and Lord through these camps. They also open



Boys at a summer camp in Belarus.

the door for follow-up ministry opportunities with the children and their families. You are truly making a difference through these outreaches, and all the other SGA ministries you help sustain—Bible training, Compassion Ministry, ministry to orphans and other children’s ministries, distribution of Bibles and Christian literature, and so much more! Please pray about how you can help today! ♦



Praying and worshipping during a Bible camp.

# Insight FROM MICHAEL

## We are seeing breakthrough numbers in Summer Bible Camps. And 2023 can be the most . . .

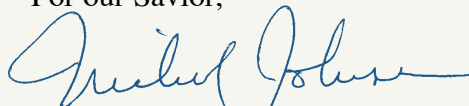
There are many reasons to look forward to the summer months, especially when you are a child. Children in the former Soviet Union are no different.

While we certainly have had summer camp opportunities in North America, in their culture it is even more of an event. During the communist years, many children spent time in what were known as Young Pioneer Camps. **At one time in the early 1970s, there were some 40,000 such camps across the 15 countries that made up the Soviet Union.** There was also a Young Pioneer organization for youth that taught and upheld the values of the Soviet system. After the Soviet breakup in the early 1990s, most of these camps ceased operating. In time, this opened the door for evangelical churches to begin holding summer camp ministries where the children were able to hear the Gospel and learn biblical values along with all the other fun activities that usually go along with camp season.

**By God's grace and wonderful provision, SGA partners have had the blessing of supporting hundreds of these church-run camps, and as you read in Eric Mock's article, a record number of children are being reached.** We have every reason to hope for even greater things this camp season, and I invite you to join us in praying in advance for a fruitful camp season with more children being reached than ever before. **There are many challenges, including the ongoing tragedy of war in Ukraine.** Our resourceful brothers and sisters there still managed to find a way to minister to the children in the midst of it all, trusting in the Lord for His protection and work in the hearts of the children. In other former Soviet nations, other challenges exist—often from governments and other religious groups that oppose evangelical churches and their outreaches. But God always makes a way. It is so vitally important to seize every opportunity to reach as many as possible with the Gospel.

I am so thankful to God for you and your faithful support of SGA-sponsored summer camp ministry, and for your support of all our other ministries. Above all, I am thankful to know that you are our prayer partners in all this. Our founder Peter Deyneka's motto, "Much Prayer, Much Power," is still our motto today. Please pray in advance with thanksgiving at what God will do!

For our Savior,



Michael Johnson  
President



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