

June 30, 2015

Dear Friends of WWMtoR:

We are sure that you are wondering about William's condition, as there haven't been many updates recently. Please be assured that over the last couple of months, a lot has been happening with WWMtoR. The Board has met a couple of times, prayerfully seeking God's guidance together regarding decisions at hand and the future of WWMtoR. These meetings have resulted in many decisions and much activity on behalf of William personally and the mission over all. So in this letter, we want to communicate with you what we know about William's health, actions by the Board, a look to the mission's viability in the future, and where things are in this time of transition.

First, we want to give you an update about William's condition, so you can pray clearly and specifically. Over the last couple of months, William's condition actually went from bad to worse, to relatively improved, for which we thank and praise God. Actually, it's amazing that William is still alive! He was in a coma, had severe meningitis, pneumonia, internal bleeding, surgery, and lots of strong medicines. He spent considerable time in Intensive Care, and then a regular ward, at the Syktyvkar hospital and also at a nearby hospice facility. Most recently, William was moved into a private apartment there in Syktyvkar. He is out of the coma; his brain is active, and his blood pressure is stable. He is breathing on his own and is on no life support equipment, but still requires 24/7 care. We thank God for four excellent, privately paid registered nurses (all with ER experience/training) who have cared for William almost from the time he entered the hospital. He has a colostomy, IV for meds, and a feeding tube, and they have to regularly suction his lungs/throat. He cannot speak, but moves his lips sometimes and has been said to smile. He can open and move his eyes, has a fairly firm grip, and can sometimes move his feet, but not his limbs. None of the medical staff in Russia thought it was possible for William to survive all that he's been through, and yet God has done these miracles. It obviously was not His plan to take William home yet.

That being said, although William is much improved from when his neighbor found him, the long-term outlook is not promising, unless the Lord intervenes. The nurses have been trained by a physical therapist on how to exercise William's limbs for him, but he is still a long way from being able to speak and independently move his limbs, which would be necessary to even enter a rehabilitation program. We believe that this is a situation that William would have wanted to avoid, as he had a Living Will. However, Russian law does not allow for any kind of treatment to be withheld, so, here we are. Nonetheless, God is sovereign, and we are completely confident that He will use all of this for His divine purposes, whether He restores William's health and strength, or not.

As you probably know, William has supported himself in Russia through his own pension funds, and donations to the Mission have gone to meet the needs of the Russian people and to sustain the ministry in Don. For William, currently, unless he has another crisis, his personal funds should just barely cover his personal expenses and medical needs. The Board and even some of his family members have looked

into other alternatives for William. However, in honoring William's wishes, we believe this is the best case scenario at the moment.

Andre, Simeon, Sergei (William's doctor friend), the doctors, Maria the nurse, some of William's siblings, and members of the Board have all been in contact at different times through this. Steve Law, the Vice-President of the Board of WWMtoR, is William's POA (Power of Attorney). Steve has already made one trip to Russia on William's behalf, and he may need to make another trip fairly soon.

By way of an update regarding the Board: The Lord has added a number of new members to the Board, giving a better representation of all of the churches that are supporting the ministry in Russia. We have discussed topics of William's condition, next steps, support, oversight, accountability, reorganizing and restructuring of the Board. We've also discussed the future viability of WWMtoR and how to proceed in this time of transition. We are planning to meet again in July or August.

The Board discussed the continued vision of the mission. We know that William never did want the mission to be about him; it is God's work. Therefore, the vision of the Mission remains the same, to support the ministry in the Komi Republic. We believe William's heart for the Russian people and his vision will continue to be carried out, even as it is now, because of the way he poured himself into Andre and Simeon. They, like William, are loving the people, serving the people, sharing Christ with the people, living out Galatians 6:9-10. We praise God for their continued impact in Don, the Ust-Kulom District, and the Komi Republic. Therefore, although there are still questions and items to address, our plan is, as the Lord allows, to continue to use Mission funds to support the church in Don that God has planted through your partnership with William, Andre, and Simeon.

As a result of that decision, we felt like we needed to provide clear communication about these matters, as well as a commitment from Andre and Simeon. So the Board sent a lengthy email to them, followed by a 2-hour Skype session with Andre. We asked for a one-year commitment from them, and both Andre and Simeon and their families are whole-heartedly agreeable to this agreement and steps during this transition.

In looking at the average monthly donations to the Mission, what the Board has agreed to do in this interim phase is in itself a step of faith on our part, to provide for the ministry workers and their families and the work in and through the church in Don and the Ust-Kulom District. We are trusting the Lord to provide. We know that many of you were supporting William in particular, and we want to thank you for your generosity. We ask that you prayerfully consider continued giving to the work that God established through William.

The Board believes that the long-term viability of the mission is dependent upon greater Russian national involvement and partnership, somehow connecting with the Russian Church. This is especially true for the time that William is not directly involved in the work, or if the Lord should take him home. At this point, we aren't sure what that will look like, but we are praying and exploring these possibilities.

Thanks to all who helped by their generous giving to cover Steve's trip and the expenses incurred with that (including very costly translation of documents), which came to over \$4,000. We're excited to share that two young men are going to Russia in August to work with Andre and Simeon and the church in Don. One of these is a board member, and the other is one of the young men who worked directly with William last summer as part of the team from East White Oak Bible Church. Please pray for them as they travel and serve there in the Komi Republic. So you see, there is much to decide, much to arrange, much at stake. However, we know without question that God is in control, He is sovereign, He is powerful. We are trusting Him as we move forward in this situation. God has allowed this, and we are asking Him to show Himself strong so that He would be glorified in it all. We ask that you pray earnestly with us. Please pray for William, his caregivers, for favor from all government and financial agencies, for the people in Greva, Don, and the surrounding area, for the continuing ministry there in the Komi Republic.

Thank you so much for your faithful partnership with us in prayer over these matters and your personal investment as the Lord leads you. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us. You can reach Dan Ashton at (309) 627-2593 or email him at ashtond101536@gmail.com. We hope to provide you with another update by early September, after our next meeting.

In God's peace,

The Board of William Wood Missions To Russia

PS Just a small reminder: If the Lord leads you to continue supporting William Wood Missions to Russia financially, the address is as follows:

William Wood Missions To Russia
c/o Steve and Dianna Law
1693 Township Road 1400 E
Gladstone, IL 61437

As always, your help and your prayers are always greatly appreciated! May the Lord return blessing after blessing upon you.