

WILLIAM WOOD MISSIONS TO RUSSIA



January-February 2012

WILLIAM & ANNA BACK IN RUSSIA... ALL SYSTEMS NORMAL—EXTREMELY COLD!

By now most of you know that Anna and William have made it back to Russia. It was a whirlwind of a journey for both of them back here in the States. They traveled a lot of miles, renewed some old acquaintances and made lots of new friends. But now they are back in the frigid north. As William mentioned several times while here, he is leaving Don for the new town of Greva, which is about four hours away from Don. Thanks to a wonderful donation from a couple here in the States, William was able to purchase a very dilapidated old house for his new headquarters. But it also took some significant funds to fill in all the cracks in the walls and floors to keep the cold wind out. From his last email, he isn't completely finished with that job, but getting closer. Meanwhile, the temperatures are around -25 degrees. He melts snow for his coffee and gravy packs since the house still doesn't have water. Hopefully, that changes once spring arrives.

The trip back home was a blur for William, so much to do and so many people to see in such a short time, but he certainly enjoyed every moment of it. From our new mailing list, it also seems he made lots of new friends as well. Speaking of mailing list, William is now able to receive mail at his new home in Greva. That address is as follows:

William Wood
Sovetskaya 101
Selo Greva
Koidorodskii Raion
Komi Republic, Russia 168191

And his email stays the same of course, if you want to contact him that way. He always enjoys hearing from everyone. And keep in mind, he is now living by himself with no translator in a village where no one speaks English. So any communication he gets from someone who speaks English is very welcome!

There were plenty of people who made this all very possible or who stepped up in a big way while William and Anna were here. But we want to recognize two people who really went beyond the call of duty: Pastor Larry Van Gundy, who did an excellent job arranging all of William's transportation and communication needs while William was here along with hosting William and Anna for the Thanksgiving holiday season, and Doris Nelson from the Grace Bible Church in Dallas City. Doris graciously provided William and Anna a wonderful place to stay while they were here and stocked the shelves full of food so they wouldn't go hungry. We are greatly indebted and thankful to Pastor Larry and Doris—may the Lord return multiple blessings to both of them!

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK FAMILY AT WILLIAM WOOD MISSIONS TO RUSSIA!

A MAN NAMED VITALY

Vitaly has spent a lot of his time behind bars in Russia—3 different times. However, this last time, he also was able to spend some time at a Christian rehab center. While there, he turned his life over to Christ. When he was released, he started hitchhiking back to his hometown Smolianka, which is about an hour's drive from Don. Along came Simeon who picked him up in the van. When Vitaly finally made it back to Smolianka, he reunited with his girlfriend Lena and his five year old daughter, Paulina. Lena grew up in a strict Russian Orthodox family, and at first she was very suspicious of Vitaly's new Christian faith. However, as she watched how Vitaly's life had changed and listened to his testimony, she came to the conclusion that he had found the right faith. So she decided to go with Vitaly to visit the church over in Don. It's there that Lena accepted Christ and Pastor Andrey reports that she is hungry to know more about the Bible.



Vitaly and Lena standing in the sanctuary of the Don Church

Komi District and is actually a very dangerous place to live. But Vitaly and Lena's hearts are tilted towards the people of Smolianka, and they hope to plant many seeds so that eventually Christ will reap a huge harvest. Please pray for Vitaly and Lena as they are two very new Believers who already have set a course for a wonderful ministry in their hometown.



IN PASTOR ANDREY'S WORDS

"We would like to thank the Lord for the person who donated funds for the Honda van! It has been running perfectly for almost 2 years now, and we have used it A LOT to haul people to church, do outreaches, haul materials and it has NEVER broken down. So, I just want you to know that the Honda van is a BIG BLESSING to all of us here. It's so fitting for it to be pictured w/ a rainbow!"

CORRECTIONAL BOARDING SCHOOL CALLS FOR HELP

There is a correctional boarding school for kids in Ust-Kulom. It's not so much for the kids as it is for the parents. When a parent (or parents) demonstrate that he/she can't take care of their kids properly—usually due to alcohol & drug abuse—the kids are taken from the parents and put into a boarding school. As the school often doesn't have the funds to clothe the kids properly, especially in the winter, the school will often call our mission to see if we can help.



Andrey & Aaron pose w/ a young man named Yury. Yury came to the boarding school when his mother was arrested. She also battles alcoholism. When Andrey first saw Yury, he was wearing old sneakers & a light jacket. So Andrey bought him winter boots, coat, hat & gloves. Andrey also made sure that Yury heard the Gospel. In an interesting sidelight, Yury's mother has visited the Don church a couple of times because she is related to Rimma, one of the new Believers in Don. May the Lord bring both Yury and his mom to Him!



Andrey poses with a young lady named Taisia & a young man named Denis. Taisia's mother has a mental illness & can't take care of her. Denis also comes from a family with lots of problems. Not only did Andrey buy them winter boots, coats, hats & gloves, but you can also see them both holding a colorful Children's Bible. They assured Andrey that they would read the Bible!

To the right, our "quiet" minister, Simeon doing some welding for a bathhouse. William taught Simeon how to weld and now he's the official local welder since William has moved to Greva.



CHRISTMAS IN DON!



Usually, our 4th page is information about William Woods Mission To Russia along with our usual solicitation for financial support. However, I just marvel at this Christmas picture and wanted to share it in a way that is as large as possible. Because of your help, we have played a small part in building this beautiful church in Don. We now support three men & their families who are dedicated to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That would be Pastor Andrey and Simeon (both of them are standing together at the very back of the group) and our newest member of the mission team, Pastor Alexei, who is standing to the left & is dressed in black. And I also remember how Antonena, as far as anyone knew, was the only Christian residing in Don for years & years before William and Andrey first arrived. That's Antonena standing to the right and holding the small child. I think of Susha (the young lady standing just to the right of Vitaly and Lena) and how she came to know the Lord and then through her new life, her mother Olga (she's sitting in the center and dressed in black) also came to know the Lord and also win her battle against alcoholism. She's been sober for 3 years now!). As you look at this picture, almost all of the people pictured here have endured very troubled lives similar to Olga's before turning to Christ. Yet here they stand as living testimonies of what God can do. Finally, look at all the children! Keep in mind, that it is a abysmally small percentage of people in Russia who know Christ. Pastor Andrey has described it as "an atheist nation." Yet there are sparks, small flames sprouting everywhere. Families are raising up children who will know and follow Christ! So I end with this—thank you, thank you, THANK YOU!