

WILLIAM WOOD MISSIONS TO RUSSIA



January – February 2013

NEWS FROM WILLIAM!

As most of you know by now, William has moved from Don to Greva. If I remember correctly, that's a four hour drive between the two small villages. Greva is located in even more desolate country than Don is. Since the ministry had the one good van, William took the old "heart van" with him and purchased an extremely old & dilapidated home in Greva & used his own funds for the purchase rather than ministry funds. It was a scramble for William to get the house ready for winter and even then, it wasn't as 'cold-proofed' as it should have been once winter hit. I doubt extremely few of us would have the fortitude to stick it out throughout the winter.

The other obstacle that William faces is the ability to communicate with the outside world. It is 20 miles to the closest internet connection and even then you have to wait for the school children to finish working on the couple of computers available. It's not a trip that William makes very often so we go quite a long time between communications with him. I finally heard from him a couple of weeks ago (January 15th) and he reported that the temperature was a -35 degrees, two feet of snow on the ground and wind, which really cramps everyone's travel capabilities.

Even at that, William stays busy. Anya and her husband have been there twice over a couple of weekends to help William with translation. As usual, the children in the Greva village gravitate towards William, and he continues to pass out as many Christian videos as he can. He reports that some of the kids seem to know the videos by heart. He has also been helped by a young lady named Nodya. She was in Greva last summer, and during her visit, William was able to have 4 Sunday services that were fairly well-attended by the villagers and seemed to receive good responses. It must be like planting seeds and watching plants come out of the ground but you're not really positive about what's growing.

Meantime, William has spent a lot of time cutting firewood for the needy. He also put in a mini-football (soccer) field for the local school. The local government asked him to cut the very tall grass in a yard in the village, and William said, "Sure." He's also done work at the school and kindergarten. He worked on a bathhouse for an elderly couple—new flooring and wood stove. As usual, the heart van is used for carrying supplies and materials to whomever happens to need them. And as many of you remember, the heart van has been used frequently as a hearse. That practice has continued in Greva.

It was mentioned earlier that the ability to communicate is the problem that William encounters most. That obviously includes communicating with the villagers of Greva. Please pray that the Lord will bring a fulltime translator to William's doorstep. Meanwhile, following is William's new mailing address in Greva. He would love to hear from all of his stateside friends:

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

FIRST WEDDING IN THE DON CHURCH!

Not only was it the first wedding to be performed in the Don church, but it was also Pastor Andrey's first wedding! The couple was a young man named Vitaly and his beautiful bride, Lena. At one time in his life, Vitaly was a hardened criminal who spent 10 years in a Russian prison. However, it was during his tenure in prison that he was introduced to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. He became a Believer and then started a rigorous rehab program. Upon his release from prison, Vitaly found his old girlfriend, Lena, living in Smolianka. He invited her to go to church with him. He told her that they would go to this little church in Don that he had heard about. She agreed to go, and on her very first visit to that little church in Don, she accepted Christ as her Savior! This wasn't easy for Lena as she had been raised with a Russian Orthodox background. At one time her father had studied to become a priest in the Russian Orthodox denomination. All of this took place about a year ago.

Per Vitaly and Lena's wishes, the church family in Don strived to make this a Christian wedding as much as possible. There was no alcohol at the wedding, which was a minor miracle in itself. In addition, it was quite a shock to the relatives of Vitaly and Lena since getting drunk at a wedding is as common as the exchange of vows! In addition, all of those unbelieving relatives were treated to the Gospel, Christian music, and Pastor Andrey's sermon on what a Biblical marriage looks like. Finally, the church ladies of Don made certain there was plenty of yummy food to be had at the reception.



Pastor Andrey officiating the wedding



Vitaly & Lena about to cut the wedding cake.

We join everyone in the church family in Don wishing Vitaly and Lena wonderful years together as husband and wife in Christ!



Afterwards, an enjoyable time at the reception!

THE MISSION BUYS CLOTHES FOR THE CHILDREN

When Andrey sent all the latest news and pictures, it happened to be -14 degrees, and it had been that way for about a week—this was in late November. Local school authorities contacted Andrey and Simeon about buying some winter clothes for 2 needy boys at one of the local boarding schools. These two boys were placed in the boarding school because of family problems related to alcoholism. Then the authorities notified Andrey and Simeon about 3 little girls at the same boarding school who also needed some winter clothes.



Pastor Andrey poses w/ Dimitry & Nicolay as they show off their new winter coats



From L to R, Nastia, Nastia & Natasha wearing their new blouses. The lady store owner heard about the girls' plight w/ winter clothing & gave each of them a new blouse too as a gift from her!

Of course, Pastor Andrey shared the Gospel with each of the children and some of the staff as well. It was also a great opportunity to hand out free Christian calendars that they could refer to throughout the year!

NEW VAN FUND REACHES \$4,300!

THANKS to the East White Oak Bible Church in Carlock—home of Pastor Larry and Kerry Van Gundy, WWMtoR received an amazing boost to its van fund. The mission committee at East White Oak recently provided a wonderful gift of \$5,000. The mission committee wanted part of the gift to go to Andrey, Simeon and William as bonuses for all their dedicated work on behalf of the mission. But they also allowed us to put the largest portion towards a new van. As we've stated before, because the outreach of our little church in Don seems to grow & grow without an end in sight, and because William requires the heart van for his work in Greva, we dearly hope that we can raise the \$15,000 necessary for a second van to use in Don. Simeon continues to use his own car as much as he can, but it simply hangs on by a thread (or probably wire along w/ the Lord's help!) With this gift, we now have \$4300 dedicated towards a new van. If the Lord leads you to help, please designate that gift as "Van Fund" when you send it on to us. And, of course, you are always greatly appreciated for your dedicated support of WWMtoR. Many of you have been supporters from the beginning in 2001. We sure appreciate you!