

William Wood Missions To Russia



(This newsletter & others can be downloaded at wwmtor.org)

January – March 2014
1st Quarter

GETTING TO KNOW SVETLANA!



In the last issue of our newsletter, we featured Tamara Tarabukina. In the issue before that one, we did a wonderful story about Antonena. We remind everyone of that because it was Antonena who was instrumental in bringing Tamara to Christ. Then it was Tamara who reached out to Svetlana in hopes of bringing her to Christ. And it worked! About seven years ago, Svetlana was living in the village of Kebanyal and was a severe alcoholic, who drank almost constantly. Once she almost died from a drunken stupor. Then she started looking for something better. She became acquainted with Tamara, who started sharing God's plan of salvation with her. Since the two ladies worked in the same town hall building, it was easy for Tamara to have frequent conversations with Svetlana about God's saving grace. That was around 5 years ago, about the same time that Svetlana decided she'd check out the little church in Don with Tamara. It wasn't long after that day, that Svetlana surrendered her life to Jesus Christ, and she has become a mainstay at the church in Don ever since! Praise the Lord, she has also been alcohol-free ever since that day as well. Unofficially, Svetlana is the church's poet and spends her time writing poems about her new-found faith. She also enjoys movies, and her favorite is a movie based on the life of Martin Luther. Svetlana has five children, and most of them do not know the Lord. One of her daughters is an alcoholic. Svetlana prays for her children daily and would welcome all of us to pray along with her so that her children might someday see the truth and greatness of having Christ be Lord of their lives.

Svetlana's journey to Christ is a reminder to us about how vital that little church in Don is for the local population there. It took a while for Svetlana to find it, but praise God, the church family in Don was there when she needed them the most!

UPDATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCES OF WILLIAM WOOD MISSIONS TO RUSSIA

The mission treasurer, Dianna Law, has just finished up her work for the financials for 2013. The financials/bank statements will soon be turned over to the auditor, Joni Blackman, so that all the required financial reporting to the government will be taken care of. That's not big news as that happens every year. However, it is good for all of our donors to know how the financials unfolded for the last year.

Total giving amounted to \$25,936.81 for the past year! Everyone associated with William Wood is extremely grateful for the generosity of all of you who helped make this year a financial success. Way back in 2002 when someone asked William how much he would need annually in order to be an effective witness for Christ in Russia, he thought a good target amount would be around \$12,000 per year. Every year, we have far exceeded that amount, thanks to all of you who have helped in such a dedicated manner. We also praise God because He has opened the hearts of so many people around the world. We never dreamed we would ever have donors from anywhere except here in western Illinois. But the donor list includes people from Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Virginia, Colorado, Maine, Ohio, Florida, Texas, Michigan, Kansas, Arkansas, California—even from Alaska and Canada! Sometimes a gift arrives in the mail, and we look at the name and address and immediately ask ourselves, “How did this person ever find out about us?!” Then we remember that it is God who is in charge, and He is capable of possibilities way beyond our largest imaginations!

Though we are grateful for all the gifts from this past year, we also need to report that this is the first year in our 12 years of existence that we deficit-spent. In other words, we sent more to William in Russia than we took in. Our practice is to keep all funds state-side until William requests funds. William doesn't trust Russian banks, and we also can earn a little interest in the account here at home. That's just good stewardship. So even though we “deficit-spent,” our hope and prayer is that this is a temporary issue going forward. Please keep spreading the word about the mission to your friends and family. Hand them a newsletter or direct them to our new website—wwmtor.org. Way back at the beginning, someone asked William how long he planned to be in Russia as a missionary, and he thought 10 years would be a reasonable amount of time given his age and so forth. Raising \$12,000 a year for 10 years didn't seem like an impossible task at the time. But we are so far beyond that now! No one ever thought that we would have an actual mission team, who would eventually build an actual church in a small village in Russia, and now we're in two villages! The Lord's Hand in this has been simply astounding!

And when you visit with friends and family about the little mission that you support, be sure to also tell them that 100% of every donation ends up in William's hands in Russia. We don't use any of the donations for overhead expenses here in the United States. All of those overhead expenses are the responsibility of the mission's Board of Directors to cover out of their own pockets. That was one of our core principles from the beginning of the mission. Not that the mission incurs much in the way of overhead expenses as we strive to keep things as simple as possible. Sometimes we may be tempted to create glossy brochures or enter into some type of advertising campaign, but truly it always just comes down to us being faithful in getting the story of William Wood Missions To Russia out to as many people as possible and then letting God do the rest. For us, that just seems to be a good way to operate.

NEW BIBLE STUDY IN KEKUR

Last April, Andrey and Simeon saw a need to start a new Bible study in the village of Kekur. Two fairly new converts live there, Luba and her daughter Nadya. Since the spring roads can be an absolute nightmare because of the snowmelt, the two pastors enlisted an old Russian 4-wheel vehicle to get them there. That works pretty good for a muddy road, but what happens when the road turns into an actual ditch!? With pure Russian make-do-with-what-you-have, someone had left boards lying along the side of the road, so Andrey and Simeon were able to reach Kekur without any more problems.



Simeon arranging the boards so they can continue their journey.



The Bible study group at Kekur—looks like both Luba and Nadya invited a friend!