

January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Hello everyone!

How are you? Hope you are staying warm. We heard about the cold snap that covered much of the US. Here in this part of the world we have this cold weather approximately from mid October till the end of March. Here are some of the things that have been taking place here:

William has been doing pretty good. Maria his nurse got him a new bed to help him move his limbs and prevent him from falling. William celebrated New Year with Maria. Folks from Syktyvkar area and other parts of Komi (Russia) visit with him. He is excited to see them. I have attached some of the latest pictures of William with Maria the nurse and some visiting friends.



Though it may be cold outside, the Don church believers continue gathering together on a regular basis to hold Christian services and fellowship. We like the idea of a local church being a place of worship and fellowship for the community. In December 2017, our dear sister Augusta turned 76. She has been attending the Don church for more than 10 years now. She is the grey-haired lady wearing red sitting at the fellowship table in the next picture. She says being able to come to the Don church every Sunday morning is a blessing to her heart. When at home she loves singing to the Lord. She has been praying for her son Michael who has an alcohol addiction. *Please pray for Michael's deliverance from alcohol addiction.*



After Sunday services some people are in no hurry to go home. Some stick around for more fellowship. There is no barber shop in the village of Don. Well, it is not a problem as one can have their hair cut right after Sunday school at the Don church. Here is a picture of brother Andre is cutting Arthur's hair.





You've got to be tough to work out in the open here in Komi during the winter. My family decided to check out a local ski track recently only to find the following sign right at the start line: "*Beware of wolves on the ski track!*" A few weeks ago a local skier ran into a wolf right there. The wolf was just finishing up eating a meal.

This year wolves have been particularly brazen. On the other hand, you can't find a better place to train to be a world-class ski champion, as you will ski for your life, and that is the best motivation to ski as fast as you can while praying at the same time! Ha-ha... Here is a picture of the sign with my oldest son Aaron and my wife Lena.



And if one is still scared of wild predators, there is a little skating rink downtown Ust-Kulom where one can take part in Hockey Winter Classic. Here is a picture of us playing hockey with my sons Daniel and Aaron as well as a local kid named Farid. (*left to right: Daniel, Aaron, Farid, Andre*)



On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Don church hosted a Youth retreat for about 14 Baptist youths coming from the city of Syktyvkar (the capital of Komi) as well as some local youths. It was a privilege to minister to those precious souls. The Don church has had a long productive relationship with the 1st Baptist church of Syktyvkar. They asked me to share a motivational message from the Bible. I talked about the need to guard their hearts in this time we are living in. During my message, I quoted the Scripture from Ecclesiastes about the days of our youth. After the Bible study brother Arthur from the Don church helped organize a sporting event at the local community center. Below are some pictures of the retreat.





Last Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, most Russian Christians celebrated Christmas. It was a great opportunity for us to remember the birth of our Savior. Our children sang to the Lord and recited Christian poems, and our sister Antonena recited a beautiful poem as well. Her nephew Andre and his wife Tanya taught the Children's Sunday school that day for the 1st time! Wow! How time flies! Andre used to be a small boy back in 2003 when William, Simeon, and I arrived in Don. Now brother Andre is married and helps teach our children. Praise the Lord! See picture of Andre and Tanya with children's Sunday school.

To God be all the glory and may He  
keep you and guide you always,

Andre

