

# William Wood Missions To Russia



July-August 2013

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## WILLIAM STAYING BUSY IN GREVA!

Just received a long, hand-written letter from William and thought it an excellent idea to share it with everyone. I will take the liberty of correcting the spelling and some grammar; otherwise, just enjoy William's latest news from Greva, Russia!

William building a shed for an elderly lady in Greva.



“Dear Precious Brother Dan,

Andrey has sent you some pictures of me. True, I have been silent for a great, long time for two reasons: 1] so supporters get to know the boys better and all the great works they are doing, and 2] as you know, I live without a translator. No one wants to serve in a village for any length of time. A year ago I was blessed with a young lady (Nadya—a Christian) for 5 weeks to serve as a translator, and we had 4 church services. The people who attended were mostly high school age and adults. At least two have prayed to receive Jesus. Sad to say, Nadya had to return to the city and attend college. I do my best trying to share; however, I often fall short with Russian words.

So I go around helping people. Some of my works are as follows: I bought a weedeater and cut grass/weeds 2 feet high for the local school, kindergarten, culture club, and a few local families. I also helped 3 elderly ladies with their bathhouses (bonyas) with new flooring and welding. I also paid one man to rebuild one of the bonyas from brick as a gift. I also built a mini-soccer field for the school using old, metal tubing, welding the top and bottom rail to hold wire fence for top part and using lumber for lower part. Doesn't sound like much but was 3 months of work! I also painted parts of the culture club and then scraped and painted the local bus stop. I've hauled 2 bodies from the morgue to home and later to the grave site. Several times I've hauled lumber from a sawmill 15 miles away along with several trips taking a mother and her child to the hospital, also located 15 miles away. And I've hauled 2 young calves for different people. I built a shed for an elderly lady and also built her a fence. In the winter months, I shoveled snow and chopped ice for an elderly couple who called and asked for my help. I was also able to

share the Gospel in full with them, and they both wanted to receive Jesus—Praise God! I’ve welded on 1 bed, 2 metal chairs, and 2 cars. Children come to the house everyday, so I fix popcorn for them. They also watch Christian DVDs, and for most of them, it is the only time they are exposed to the Gospel.

One day, a young man and lady stopped by the house. I was working at stacking some firewood. The couple wasn’t married, only living together with an eight month old child. . The young man wanted his girlfriend to practice her English. They were here for one week because of a college break and were staying with his grandma.

Her name is Lena, and she said she was a Christian, attending an Orthodox church. She said she had only read Matthew, but after some questions, she understood that she truly did not understand. After going through several scriptures, she started to understand. The Orthodox church gives people a book of prayers, but no one is truly taught how to pray. Nadya was with me at the time, and I asked Nadya to pray from her heart, and Lena started to cry. After sharing the Gospel with Lena in full, she said, “Everyone should hear this!” God saved her and now she wants the world to know—Yes! Praise God! We gave Lena some people to contact in Syktyvkar—her hometown.

Starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, I will be traveling to a village called Turunyu and staying there for 3 weeks. Turunyu is about 90 kilometers from Greva with 30 kilometers of that through the forest and only on a sand road that has large waterholes. It is only possible to get to Turunyu in the summer months. This was a prison village just 3 years ago. Mostly elderly people live there, and they have no choice. No money to move anywhere else and no work, so they survive on potatoes and onions and have a few animals—cows, sheep, or goats. It was the local mayor who contacted us and asked for our help. The jobs are many: replace roof boards, repair hand-dug wells, welding work on wood stoves in houses and bonyas, etc., etc., etc. I am hiring 2 Christian men from the city to help me, plus one Orthodox girl to serve as my translator. She heard about me through the internet and wants to work for maybe two months. Not sure how she will work out with her Orthodox teaching. Maybe she will come to know Christ too!

Anyway we have an open door to preach the Good News while truly helping the most needy! It will be a very hard outreach. There are no cell phones, internet or house phones. Only the mayor has some sort of communication.

Vehicle update: Andrey and Simeon have gone to the far east on a 7 day trip to buy and drive back a vehicle for Simeon. Praise God—I saved enough personal funds plus the \$5,000 from Pastor Larry’s church and gifts from others to buy it. Andrey and Simeon will be sending pictures and story, I’m sure.

When Andrey and I first went to Don, I brought the first Stihl chain saw. Now several people in Don have saved their money and bought chain saws. Last year, here in Greva, I brought the first Stihl weedeater. After a few locals saw how nice the weedeated areas looked, some of them have bought weedeaters and are now using them. I should get some bons from Stihl for helping their sales.

Well, there is a lot more, but tired of writing as you probably are of reading.

My sincere thanks,

Love & prayers,

William

That’s William’s latest news! We’ll look forward to hearing his report once he returns from Turunyu, hopefully with the good news that more people have come to know Christ, including his Orthodox translator! We’ll keep you informed of course!

## CONVERSIONS STORIES FROM DON, RUSSIA!

Pastor Andrey came up with a good idea. He recently sent along several of the conversion testimonies of himself, Simeon and several of the members of the Don church family. So we will begin a series here. Since we already know Andrey and Simeon fairly well, we'll save their testimonies for last. So here we go with Antonena. I personally have always been intrigued by her as she was at one time the only Believer in all of Don. She had prayed faithfully for years for more Christians to come to Don somehow. Finally, the Lord answered those prayers when He sent William and Andrey to Don. Following is Antonena's story:

Antonena came to know the Lord at the Baptist Church in Syktyvkar a few years ahead of William and Andrey's arrival in Don. She first heard the gospel through her sister, and didn't think much about it at that time. But not long after that, she attended her sister's Christian wedding at the Baptist Church. She was so surprised that no one was drinking any alcohol at the wedding. It was that simple observation that caused her heart to stir about finding out more about Jesus Christ and finally bringing her to Him. Antonena had always lived in Don, and after accepting Christ, she was the only evangelical Christian living there. She kept praying that God would send Christian ministers to the village. By God's grace, in 2003, God led William, Andrey to Don. It wasn't long before



Simeon joined them as well. Needless to say, Antonena was so happy that there would finally be an evangelical Christian church established in Don! Antonena is a very influential in the Ust-Kulom district (she is the personal representative of the Governor of Komi in the Ust-Kulom district). She personally knows many of the local leaders and village mayors. When William and Andrey arrived in the Ust-Kulom district, Antonena was a great door-opener for the ministry. She has been such an evangelist even on her job. She is not ashamed of her faith despite all the persecutions she has faced throughout the years. There have been quite a few influential people who despise her religious convictions and who have tried to have her fired. But all their attempts have been useless. She is like the prophet Daniel who stayed in power despite all the attempts to get rid of him! She has been in charge of the ladies ministry in the Don church. Antonena is such a blessing to us all here, & she has been greatly blessed by the ministry's presence in Don..

### NEW VAN FUND UPDATE—A VAN HAS A NEW HOME!

Simeon has a new van! As you read in William's letter, the mission team decided to use the full \$5,000 gift from the East White Oak Bible church to go towards the van. Then you all provided another \$1,788.32 in designations towards the van fund. William then provided the rest of the funding from his own personal funds to complete the purchase. To all of you who helped, thanks so much for your wonderful generosity! You have mightily blessed our mission in Russia! May the Lord always return blessings to you all!