



At Moody Memorial Church, Peter Deyneka received Christ as his Lord and Savior.

SGA... 75 Years of Proclaiming the Gospel

Sing to the Lord, bless His name; proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day (Psalm 96:2).

January 1920 was a month of momentous events. The League of Nations held its first meeting and ratified the Treaty of Versailles bringing World War I to an end. The U.S. Senate bucked President Woodrow Wilson and voted against joining the League — the precursor of today's United Nations. For sports fans, the Boston Red Sox traded the legendary Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees for \$120,000.

But something else happened midway through that month, and the eventual impact around the world would be profound, especially across the lands of Russia. The place was Moody Memorial Church in Chicago and the date was January 18. On that day, a 21-year-old Belarussian immigrant named Peter Deyneka received Christ as his Lord and Savior. The biography *Peter Dynamite* says it best . . . “Peter knelt and wept before God, realizing he was a lost

sinner without Christ. That night, Peter left his old life behind. His days forever after would be different.”

Peter Deyneka found peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ on that eventful night, and as his new faith grew, he burned with the desire to see his beloved Russian people come to that same saving faith. From that special calling, a mission was born in 1934 — the Russian Gospel Association, later renamed Slavic Gospel Association. And evangelism — the proclamation of the Gospel to Russian-speaking people

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everywhere — has remained the ultimate goal of all that we do to this day — 75 years later.

Foot or Horseback, Land or Sea, In Air or On Air

Peter proclaimed the Gospel everywhere he went, and by any means necessary. In the early days, when he couldn't use a car, boat or train, he'd use a horse. Five years after his 1920 conversion, Peter



“Where we couldn't go with the car, we continued with horse and wagon.”

visited his homeland and was the first to preach the Gospel in his home village. It was the first time many of his countrymen had ever heard the wonderful Gospel and the interest was overwhelming. Back in North America and before the 1934 founding of SGA, Peter pastored a church and traveled as an evangelist. By 1952, Peter had visited at least 55 countries, making an indelible impact with his powerful preaching. Souls were saved and hearts were changed, but the great pull of Peter's heart was to Russian-speaking people wherever he could find them.

Following Peter's example, in subsequent years SGA missionaries took every opportunity that the Lord provided to help churches be more effective in proclaiming the Gospel. They used global shortwave radio to reach millions of Russian-speakers. Millions of Russian-language Bibles and Christian books were sent or distributed. They sent missionaries to the Displaced Persons Camps of Western Europe, and trained Russian-speaking missionaries through SGA's



Peter Deyneka at the entrance of the Soviet Union

Russian Bible Institutes in Canada and Argentina. Missionaries were sent to Alaska, and SGA offices were opened in other nations where an encounter with Russian-speakers was likely. Beginning in 1975, specialized training for Christian ministries among Slavic people in Eastern Europe was offered through SGA's Institute for Slavic Studies. Young short-term missionaries were trained through Summer Youth Training Europe, or SYTE. In those days, open evangelism in the Soviet Union was difficult, dangerous and sometimes impossible. Yet through all of this, God was preparing for the day that He would answer the millions of prayers from around the world and bring the Berlin Wall smashing down, enabling the few surviving evangelical churches to openly proclaim the Gospel to their people.

God Gloriously Answers Prayers and Thrusts the Door Open

In the latter half of the 1970s, SGA's *Strategic Prayer Initiative* was born to intercede for believers in the Soviet Union. The year 1982 was pivotal as SGA told the story of Russia to North America through a nationwide television program called “A Land Without God.” In 1984, SGA began the *Russia Now* campaign for intensified evangelism, and the purpose was . . . “to focus all tools — literature, radio, and personal interaction — to reach Russians around the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” And God began miraculously answering the prayers of His people. A year later, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union and the atheistic communist system began relaxing its grip — so much so that in 1988, the nation observed the millennium of Russian Orthodox Christianity. Finally, God brought an end to the atheistic Soviet Union in 1991, making it possible for SGA to openly assist the faithful evangelical churches.

The Gospel Goes Forward Freely

In the 18 years that have passed since then,

through the prayers and the great support of our partners, much has been done for the glory of Christ. We have helped train nearly 5,000 pastors and church workers through SGA-sponsored seminaries and Bible institutes established by faithful national believers. Several million Russian-language Bibles, Christian books and theological works have been distributed through the churches. Hundreds of dedicated church-planting missionaries are being sponsored in unreached regions. And we have helped the churches reach more than 200,000 children through special ministries such as *Orphans Reborn*, *Immanuel's Child* and summer camps



In 2004, believers rejoiced and history was made as the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (UECB) launched the nationwide Gospel Expedition with the prayers and support of SGA partners. Traveling by specially provided motor vehicles, Russian evangelists and church planters visited 236 different locations across Russia's 11 time zones. It lasted 221 days, covered more than 36,000 miles (including more than 10,000 dangerous off-road miles), and the Gospel was preached in more than 447 different evangelistic meetings. More than that, the record-setting Expedition received much positive coverage in the media, which helped counter



decades of false stories circulated about Baptist churches. Hundreds of people came to Christ through the mammoth outreach, which gave evangelical churches a new realm of authority that they had never had before in Russian society.

In 2007, another SGA-supported Gospel

Expedition took place, this time by bicycle. Teams of evangelists led by Russian national bicycling champion Vladimir Skovpen biked more than 9,100 miles — from Varel, Germany, all the way to the Russian city of Vladivostok on the Pacific coast. And in February of this year, a new Gospel Expedition began, this time under the theme, *Multiple Colors of Russia*. Pastor Ruvim Voloshin, vice president of missions for the Russian UECB, said this Expedition's purpose is to take the Gospel to the many minority nationality communities throughout Russia. "We want to draw the attention of believers to these smaller people groups, to share the love of Jesus Christ with them, and to begin planting new churches to minister to them. Who else will go and tell them the Good News of salvation through Christ?" We plan to have reports from this Expedition in *InSight* later this year. Indeed, much has been accomplished, but much more remains to be done. And the doors open so briefly are already beginning to close again.

Tragically Doors Are Now Closing . . . While There Are Still Ears Wanting to Hear

SGA president Dr. Robert Provost has made more than 160 visits to the former communist lands since 1989. And each time, he returns home with re-energized zeal and an unchanged observation — the Russian people are still waiting to hear, and even wanting to hear the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ. "Only the Lord knows how long we will still be able to openly help our brothers and sisters in Russia and the other former Soviet nations. Restrictive new laws have been passed in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, while severe oppression persists in Belarus. Many regions of Russia are increasingly restrictive for evangelical ministry, especially in the Muslim areas. Right now, Ukraine is the freest of all the former Soviet countries, but as we have seen so often, even that could change very quickly. It is vital that as partners in the glorious Gospel, we step up our prayers and our efforts to help the churches win the lost for Christ. This was the driving passion of our founder Peter Deyneka, and it remains our driving passion today.

Much prayer, much power!

Immanuel's Child 2009

SGA Partners Help Church Workers Reach Thousands of Children During Russian Christmas

As the year 2009 began, much of the world's attention was focused on the global economic crisis. But across the lands of Russia, some 267 evangelical churches were focused on reaching children with the Gospel. They did it through SGA-sponsored *Immanuel's Child* outreaches, which were held mostly during the week of Russian Christmas January 7.

Final numbers and reports were not all in as of this writing, but at least 12,559 children in Russia and eight neighboring countries were reached through the *Immanuel's Child* ministry. More than 8,500 of the children were from unbelieving families, and at least 360 children repented and placed their trust in Christ. Also as a result of *Immanuel's Child*, a total of 967 children and adults began attending local Sunday schools. In addition to the reports, we are receiving some wonderful testimonies. Ten-year-old Nadezhda of Smolensk wrote, "Thank you so much for the gift. There were so many good things. The Star, which contained the words, 'God loves you,' I keep near my bed. I want to come to the church always, not only on holidays. I hope my mother will come with me."

We also received some tremendous reports from the predominately Muslim Asian countries, including Kazakhstan where SGA sponsors the Almaty Bible Institute. Director Oleg Korotky and his wife, Svetlana, led an outreach to 90 children and 20 adults. According to Svetlana, many had never been to the church before.

"We provided children's Bibles for each child, as well as fruit, toothpaste and brushes, warm socks, candy, a plush toy and gift packets. We put the Stars, which you had sent, in each present. The children were very pleased with their gifts. We made invitations for this celebration and spent two days going door to door and through the streets in the neighborhoods, inviting the children



to the Christmas program. At the beginning of the celebration, we sang Christmas songs. Then Oleg held a brief Bible lesson and conversation with them about the birth of Jesus Christ. Then the children watched a puppet show about this and later we played games.

Hakim, one of our Kazakh brothers, led a separate class for the parents, along with a short worship service. He told them what our instructors teach the children, as well as how

important it is for parents to take their children to Sunday school as they become familiar with the God Who loves them. Hakim shared his own testimony of how Jesus Christ helped him to start a new life after being a criminal and drug addict. This all had a powerful influence on several of the parents, and they expressed a great desire to bring their children to the Sunday school. We gave them New Testaments



as gifts. Thank you all very much for your financial assistance in helping us hold this celebration. May God bless you!"



Editor's Note: We are already in the planning stages for next year's *Immanuel's Child* ministry, and we'd like to reach more children than ever.

Our goal is to reach out to 15,000 or more children with the Gospel this Christmas. If you would like information on how your church can get involved, you can order an *Immanuel's Child* kit, by checking the appropriate box on the enclosed response card, visiting us on line at www.immanuelchild.org, or calling us toll free at 1-800-BIBLE-50.



SGA During the 1950s . . .

The decade of the 1950s began with continued ministry in the DP (displaced persons) camps that were opened up in Germany and Austria by the Allied Powers at the end of World War II. There were roughly 2 million refugees and others in these camps as the 1940s drew to a close, and Peter Deyneka saw them as a wide-open mission field. In addition, SGA continued to expand its global outreach.

1950 . . . Ruth Deyneka, eldest child of Peter and Vera Deyneka, graduated from Bob Jones University and began her service with SGA. Ruth first went to the DP camps in Europe, joined by Frozina (Rose) Kucher and Nick Leonovich, cousin to Vera Deyneka. Rose and Nick later married and, along with Ruth and her future husband Jack Shalanko, would go on to have a tremendous role in SGA's shortwave radio outreaches. Andrew and Florence Daneliuk joined SGA's work in the DP camps in 1953.

The year 1950 also saw the formation of SGA/UK, with work focused among the Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe who found themselves as refugees in the displaced persons camps of Austria. At that time, SGA's office in England was mainly a relief organization and servicing mission. From Austria, SGA/UK's work moved into the former communist controlled Eastern Bloc and was initially engaged in a ministry of encouraging and assisting Slavic believers and the delivery of Bibles.

1955 . . . Peter Deyneka received an invitation to attend the third annual President's Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C. In addition to Vice President Richard Nixon and other governmental leaders, Billy Graham was also in attendance and delivered the day's message. Peter had been invited by Abraham Vereide (International Christian Leadership Group), who had also arranged for Peter to speak several years earlier to several groups of senators, congressmen and federal judges in Washington.

1956 . . . By this year, 25 half-hour shortwave radio broadcasts aired each week over HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, steadily expanding the Russian-language Gospel radio ministry to the isolated, suffering souls of the Soviet Union. Eugene Szczepanski began his SGA service in South America. Along with his wife, Valia, Eugene would eventually serve in a variety of functions during his time with the mission.

Andrew and Pauline Semenchuk moved to Buenos Aires, where Andrew took over the leadership of the Russian Bible Institute. Andrew would spend the next 12 years as director of the school, instituting evening classes and other special sessions to train lay leaders of Russian evangelical churches in Argentina.

Planting Seeds in Young Hearts

*Vyacheslav Rodnev
Svisloch, Belarus*

As he serves Christ in Belarus' Grodno region, SGA-sponsored church planter Vyacheslav Rodnev spends much time in ministry to young people. It is truly wonderful to see how God is using Vyacheslav in their lives.

“There are many examples. Last October during our Harvest Celebration, youth from another church came to celebrate with us. Together with our youth, they worked hard and decorated our sanctuary and the communion table with fruit. In the center of the table were water, bread and the Bible. The children of our Sunday school prepared a program and sang. Our sanctuary could not hold everyone, but we still shared the joy of worshipping our God, and later went to a local park for recreation. Later in the fall, we had four sessions for young preachers bringing together about 20 brothers from our region, including two from our church. I am praying that God will motivate them to

work zealously for His glory.”

Remembering the Love of Christian Fellowship

Later in the fall, Vyacheslav met a 27-year-old young man named Ivan, who had quite a story to tell. When Ivan was 12, he attended his first Christian service and was invited to Sunday school.

He began attending and really liked to read Christian books — in time even enrolling in a Bible correspondence course. Sadly, Ivan's mother began opposing his involvement and no longer allowed him to attend church.

Under the pressure of his family, Ivan left and then entered the university in another town. According to Vyacheslav, for Ivan it was the start of a downhill slide. “At the university, he fell. He began drinking and couldn't graduate. He went to a small village as a teacher, and then to the army and farther and farther from God. After his military service, Ivan found a job but could not break his alcohol addiction. By now, Ivan's mother was desperate to help her son, and that is where we met. While I talked to Ivan, I shared the Gospel with him from beginning to end, and invited him to pray. He said that he understood everything, expressing his desire to meet with our youth, and that he had a lot to think over alone with God. And not only Ivan. His mother also expressed her desire to come to the church. Please pray that this seed planted years ago will bear fruit in the lives of Ivan and his family.”

Vyacheslav's church concluded the year with yet another youth meeting, this time at a church in Volkovysk where young people from five churches gathered for teaching and fellowship. As always, Vyacheslav's emphasis is evangelism and discipleship. “Pray with us that every member of our church can be successful in reaching people for Christ!”





Rev. Allan W. Vincent
Director, SGA Canada

In addition to Frozina Kucher (Roz) (*Canada Connection – Feb. & Mar/09*) God called other Canadians to serve with SGA. One of them was *Bill Kapitaniuk*. Bill was the third son born to a family that had just emigrated

from Ukraine to Grosmont, Alberta. The Kapitaniuks were Orthodox and had never heard the Gospel. But that changed when Bill's mother went for a walk seeking relief from a heavy heart. Beautiful singing drew her to a farm house where the joy of those dear people and the clear Gospel message were used by God to bring Mrs. Kapitaniuk to repentance.

For six months, Mrs. Kapitaniuk lovingly shared the Gospel with her husband and sons but they refused to listen. One winter evening, Mr. Kucher knocked at their door. Hearing of Mrs. Kapitaniuk's conversion, Mr. Kucher walked 25 miles to meet and encourage her. By God's grace, the next morning Bill and his brothers prayed for salvation. Not long afterwards, Bill's father also repented. Some months later, the entire Kapitaniuk family was baptized in a small lake in the woods near Athabasca, Alberta.

Bill's commitment to serve the Lord led him to apply to Prairie Bible Institute. In those early years, his resolve to trust the Lord led him to ask PBI to allow him to study in place of a friend who had decided on another school. God opened that door and used Peter Deyneka speaking at a chapel to call Bill to take the Gospel to needy Slavic people.

So it was that Bill arrived in Augsburg, Germany, in 1952. But a letter from Peter Deyneka communicated that a church in Belgium desperately needed a pastor. For three years, Bill served as their pastor. Those years were foundational to fulfilling Bill's dream of evangelizing refugees, learning French and Polish and pastoring a church.

The year 1956 was special for Bill. Following a meeting in a Slavic Church in Montreal, Sophie Bobel, a young lady visiting from France, introduced herself to Bill and

invited him to speak at her home church near Calvados, France. God had prepared both of them for that meeting and, within a few months, they returned to France and their deepening relationship resulted in marriage on December 29, 1956. Sophie fully embraced Bill's burden to minister to the French, the Polish and, as God gave them opportunity, Ukrainians.

The following years offered innumerable ministry opportunities. After working among refugees in camps in West Germany, Bill and Sophie moved back to Calvados, France, before their first son was born. In 1958, sensing God's leading, Bill traveled to Poland for the first time. At that time, Poland was under communism and behind the Iron Curtain, but Bill discovered many Christians there. In a short time, he developed a deep trust and ministry relationship with Baptist Churches in eastern Poland. Little did any of them know the future fruit that God would graciously grant.

During his time in Poland, the Lord burdened Bill's heart with the glaring lack of Bibles and Christian literature. To begin to meet that need, Bill repeatedly carried literature not only into Poland but also into Romania. As doors seemed to be opening, Poland refused to grant Bill an entry visa. This forced him to stop, to think and to pray. God soon showed him a way to multiply himself and, within a few years, Billy-Montigny where Bill was now pastor became a strategic launch pad for the printing and carrying of literature into the East Block and USSR. (To be continued)

Ministry Itinerary:

- April 9 – Benton Street Baptist Church – Kitchener, ON - Seniors
- April 18 – Cross Creek Baptist Church – Cross Creek, NB
- April 19 – Little Southwest Baptist Church – Miramichi, NB
Grace Baptist Church – Charlottetown, PEI
- April 20 – Atlantic Canada *Antioch Initiative* Coalition
- April 26 – Albion Hills Bible Church – Albion Hills, AB – Missions Conference



How You Can Help

Partner With Us . . . Today!



SGA Partners — Helping to Change Lives Through the Gospel.

The Harvest is Waiting . . .

From all across the former Soviet Union, the reports continue to come in. Governments are passing ever-tighter laws aimed at restricting the ministry of the Bible-preaching churches we serve. But we know that nothing will stop the Lord from building His church. As He promised . . . *the gates of Hades will not overpower it* (Matthew 16:18). The spiritual hunger in people's hearts has not abated, and they long to hear of the hope that only Christ can give. We need to help our brothers and sisters reach as many men, women and children as possible — while we still can!



Your faithful giving is making a difference for eternity in many lives

Your gift will impact so many through vitally important outreach ministries . . .

- Missionary Work — through evangelism and church-planting
- Pastoral Training — through theological seminaries and Bible institutes
- Orphan Ministry — through *Orphans Reborn*
- Bibles and Christian Literature
- Children's Ministry — through Sunday schools, summer camps and follow-up outreaches
- Christmas Outreaches — through *Immanuel's Child* and *Christmas for Orphans*

Please prayerfully consider how you can help evangelical churches reach Russian-speaking people with the Gospel.

Thank you!
Please return the enclosed reply form with your gift.



Your gift can help make an eternal difference for someone!

- I'm enclosing \$ _____ (11000)
- Allan, here's my gift to help spread the Gospel in the lands of Russia. I'm enclosing \$ _____ (11000)
 - Here's my gift to help plant and strengthen churches in the CIS. I'm enclosing \$ _____ (67099)
 - Please send me an information kit including materials and a video about how my church can join in this year's *Immanuel's Child* outreach. (3542)
 - I would like to stay better connected! Please e-mail me with periodic ministry updates. (3542)
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