



SGA — A History of Equipping the Church and Supporting Church Planters

... at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need (2 Corinthians 8:14).

Since the beginning of the year in *InSight*, we have looked back with praise to God for the way He has enabled SGA to serve evangelical churches across the lands of Russia throughout our 75-year history. This joyful service has always been rendered with the help of our partners, and with the proclamation of the Gospel in mind. While the provision of doctrinally sound Bible and theological training has been our top priority as a mission, there are many other areas where SGA has sought to be a reliable equipper and encourager to Russian-speaking believers as God granted the opportunity.

In the Early Days Equipping With Bibles and Bicycles

Even before founder Peter Deyneka began SGA in 1934, equipping the saints was never far from his

mind, as daughter Ruth Erdel relates. “When my father went back to his homeland in 1925, he intended to stay as long as the Lord led. He rented a horse and open buggy in which to travel from town to town. After his marriage, my mother would sing at his meetings and at times, other ladies would join them to form a small choir. After several months of this kind of evangelism, local brothers encouraged my father to return to America and raise money in order to print more Bibles, and to enable them to buy bicycles, which would aid them in their visits between the villages.” Peter did just that,

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and nine years later founded SGA in Chicago. Interestingly, the provision of bicycles was an important tool for furthering missionary work in Europe and what is now the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), continuing well into the 1990s under the leadership of current SGA president Bob Provost.



The Risky Job of Equipping the Saints in the Communist Years

As SGA grew, so did our mission's endeavors to equip churches with what they needed to reach their people for Christ. The need grew more urgent as the Soviet government brutally cracked down on the churches in the 1930s, and in subsequent periods. Doing whatever it took to get supplies of Russian-language Bibles and Christian literature to the churches was a high priority. SGA senior representative Andrew Semenchuk says it's amazing what our Russian brothers and sisters could accomplish through their ingenuity. "From 1970 until the Soviet Union collapsed, we printed and delivered thousands of Bibles, New Testaments and Christian books to special storage locations in several countries bordering the USSR — countries such as Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The local Christians would then take these books into Belarus, Ukraine and Russia by various means when they visited relatives and friends on the other side of the border. We had a fleet of vans in France and Austria that were used to take literature into Eastern Europe. We had no secret compartments in the vehicles and did not smuggle, but the Lord protected this ministry until the Iron Curtain fell. In all those years, we only lost one van that was confiscated in Czechoslovakia. And during those years we had other means of equipping the churches."

In the late 1970s, SGA's work continued in the Western European refugee camps, which were populated by thousands of people fleeing from the

Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact nations. We organized special programs to help the refugees find work and housing, along with language lessons in English or German — and of course, these lessons led to opportunities for the Gospel. In cooperation with the Biblical Education by Extension program (BEE), SGA offered Theological Education by Extension courses for pastors and church workers. In time, we were able to offer a Russian-language version of the Moody Bible Correspondence courses. We also utilized the power of radio, beaming thousands of doctrinally sound Christian programs across Soviet borders.

The Lord Answers The Prayers of Millions – Brings the Wall Crashing Down

Winds of change began to blow in 1985 with the ascendancy of Mikhail Gorbachev — the last Soviet leader. Eventually, the breakup of the Soviet Union came in 1991, and the door was flung wide open to help our Russian brothers and sisters make the most of the unprecedented opportunities. Under the leadership of president Dr. John Aker in 1992, SGA opened Regional Ministry Centers (RMCs) in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, for the purpose of supplying and encouraging Bible-preaching churches as they reached their people for Christ. In addition to facilitating Bible training and the provision of Christian

literature, SGA assisted in numerous evangelistic endeavors led by local churches. These included events such as Black Sea evangelism,

riverboat evangelism in Siberia, prison outreaches like *Birthday for a King* at Christmas, and historic evangelistic crusades such as 1994's *Christ for Kiev* crusade with Dr. Grigory Komendant, which saw 70,000 Bibles distributed in Ukraine's capital city.



The New Era Brings Expanded Opportunities

September 1994 saw more historic changes as Dr. Bob Provost assumed the presidency of SGA, refocusing our mission to serve the churches even more effectively through sponsorship of seminaries and Bible institutes. But other means of equipping the saints were also launched. SGA helped equip evangelical churches in Kazakhstan to reach leprosy victims, provided bicycles to church planters in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and began sponsorship of the Russian Christian folk music group Blagovestie (Good News), as they proclaimed the Gospel in song.



Sending Out Faithful Men

Also in 1994, SGA partners began to sponsor faithful church-planting missionaries, who are selected and sent out by their home churches to unreached cities, towns and regions. We provided them with Bibles and literature, sound systems, keyboards, overhead projectors, bicycles, and occasionally even motor vehicles. Together with our partners, SGA helped church planters with church construction or facility rental. Huge tents were provided for outdoor evangelistic events. Hundreds of tons of humanitarian aid — or funds for the church planters to purchase were provided for distribution to needy individuals and families in crisis. And resources were provided for Sunday school curriculum and youth ministry.

In more recent years, SGA partners have assisted churches in response to horrific tragedies. Working in conjunction with SGA/England, SGA's U.S. office helped churches respond to the Kosovo refugee crisis with a half-million dollars worth of aid, collected with the help of the Winnebago County Bar Association in Rockford, Illinois. In September 2004, SGA partners helped the Beslan Baptist Church respond to the horrific terrorist attack on a Russian public school that killed more than 330 people, including 186 schoolchildren. Pastors Sergei and Taimuraz Totiev lost six children between their

families, but their own sorrow didn't keep them from ministering the love of Christ to the grieving city. SGA partners provided aid for the church to distribute, along with sponsorship of youth ministry and grief counseling conferences in partnership with Grace Community Church in California. We also supplied the churches with the books, *Safe in the Arms of God* and *The Freedom and Power of Forgiveness*, by Dr. John MacArthur.

Today, SGA partners are sponsoring nearly 400 church-planting missionaries across the lands of Russia, and we're asking the Lord to raise up even more faithful men for the work. While much progress has been made, a full 90 percent of Russian cities, towns and villages remain without a Bible-preaching church!

From Sunday Schools Being Forbidden to Wonderful Children's Ministries

To the evangelical churches we serve across the lands of Russia, teaching children and future generations about the Lord has always been of crucial importance. But under communism, it was illegal, very difficult, and done at great risk. Since the Soviet breakup, children's workers and Sunday schools have been sponsored and supplied. SGA partners have supported children's outreaches such as summer camp ministries, and especially ministries such as *Orphans Reborn*, and the *Immanuel's Child* Christmas ministry. As of 2008, a total of 50,369 children have participated in summer camps, while 53,521 children have been reached through *Immanuel's Child*. In addition, 92,968 children have been reached through *Orphans Reborn* since the ministry was launched in the year 2000. Our partners have helped repair and install toilets and showers in a number of orphanages, and repaired gymnasiums that were unused because of leaking roofs and damaged floors. As a result, these orphanages are now open to our church-planters and missionaries to conduct Bible clubs, AWANA clubs and child evangelism sessions.



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Praising God For What He Has Done

As you can see, there are so many “great and mighty things” that our faithful God and Father has accomplished through this tiny mission. There just isn’t room to mention it all! No matter what we’ve done over the past 75 years of ministry, our goal has always been to see the people of Russia and her neighboring nations won to saving faith in

Christ. And untold thousands have been gloriously saved. We have much for which to be thankful, and much yet to do. Until He comes again, may the Lord continue to find us faithful to the mission He has given us to fulfill. And may we all remember that wonderful motto of Peter Deyneka — as true today as it was on that cold January day in 1934 . . .

Much prayer, much power!

SGA During the 1960s . . .

1960 . . . In the *Russian Gospel News*, Peter Deyneka looked back on his 40 years as a Christian, and his motivation for founding SGA after his parents sent him to America. . . “Soon (World War I) began in Russia, and following the war, revolution and famine. As a result of hunger, three brothers, two sisters and my father died. My brothers and sisters never once heard that Christ died for them, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I am so grateful that after I was saved, I had the opportunity through correspondence and Gospel tracts to witness to my father in Russia before he died. My heart has been greatly burdened, since the Lord saved my soul and brought me out of darkness into His marvelous light, for the millions of Slavic people and others scattered all over the world. That is why today we are engaged in this wonderful work of preaching the Gospel to these people.”

1963 . . . Taking note of the significant number of Russian immigrants to the United States, SGA held a series of outdoor evangelistic meetings from July to October in Chicago’s Humboldt Park every Sunday evening. The meetings were held in Russian, Polish, English, and other languages. Many in the audiences were from Russia and other Iron Curtain countries. According to the *Russian Gospel News*, “they marveled that in this country they could hear the Gospel preached in the open air; they appreciated this religious freedom. Some made decisions for Christ and have started attending (SGA’s) Russian Gospel meetings at the YMCA.”

1965 . . . Peter Deyneka traveled to Australia to speak at several meetings about the ministry of

SGA. He met Ron Vogt and his wife, Margaret, and encouraged them to help begin a branch of the mission in Australia. In 1970, Ron would become the chairman of SGA/Australia’s first “official” council, with secretary George Sayer and his wife, Gwen, also as members.

After her husband, Andrew, was killed in a tragic automobile accident in Canada, SGA missionary Florence Daneliuk accepted reassignment to Kodiak, Alaska, working with Kodiak Bible Chapel and ministering through Sunday school, Coast Guard personnel, young singles, and occasional visiting Russian fishing crews and military exchange personnel.

1967 . . . Peter Deyneka Jr. traveled to Russia and reported that

Christian radio is reaching Russians with the Gospel like never before, with 25 million shortwave sets in use across the Soviet Union. “I

visited five cities while in Russia, and preached in six churches. Wherever I went, when people found out I was in Russian radio work, I was literally mobbed by those who just wanted to thank me and the others responsible for the radio ministry. We here in America have no idea how much the Christians of Russia appreciate and value these broadcasts.”



Peter Deyneka and the “Greatest ‘Christian’ Generation”



By Andrew Semenchuk
Senior Associate, International
Ministries

It seemed like the most unlikely time to start a new missionary organization – especially a “faith” mission! You see, these were the 1930s, during the greatest economic depression the United States had ever experienced. Millions were without work — standing in bread lines — poor and hungry. People had no expendable money. And yet, God touched the heart of Peter Deyneka, a young Russian immigrant, to do just that!

But the obstacles were great. In those days, Western missions had no outreach to Russian people. Under godless communism, it was considered impossible — a closed door. Most evangelical missions would not consider a field if they couldn’t send a Westerner there. So God raised up a national to reach his own people with the Gospel, and a new strategy in missions was introduced — trained nationals to reach their own people for Christ! And as a result, a new organization came into being that has become the largest mission to the Slavic world. This miracle came about when the nation was bankrupt — when people had little money – when the church was poor financially, but rich in faith!

It seems that God delights in doing the unusual. It was during those difficult years of

the Great Depression and immediately following the Second World War that God raised up many evangelical missions and organizations. Newsman Tom Brokaw called the people of that period “The Greatest Generation.” I believe that this period also produced the “Greatest Generation” of Christian leaders, and Peter Deyneka knew many of them personally, working together with them for the glory of Christ. They were men such as Rev. Paul Rader, evangelist and pastor of Moody Church in Chicago. Author and pastor Dr. A.W. Tozer often had Peter in to speak at his church in Chicago. Dr. J. Vernon



McGee of *Through the Bible* fame was a good friend of Peter’s and a supporter of SGA. And we can’t forget men such as Dr. Clarence Jones of HCJB, or Dr. Billy Graham, who knew Peter and asked him to lead prayer at many crusades. There were so many others, and during this crucial and unlikely period of history, evangelical missions exploded!



What does that tell us today, as much of the world wrings its hands in despair over collapsing economies? As Psalm 50:10 tells us, our faithful God and Father has *the cattle on a thousand hills* and is not constrained by the world’s economy. We have His sure promise that He will continue to build His church, and we have His command that remains in force until He comes again . . . *Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation* (Mark 16:15). And we have you, our faithful partners in ministry. Together, let’s continue to take every opportunity the Lord provides us to help our Russian brothers and sisters win the lost for Christ. The time is short!

Reaching Rostov . . . One Life at a Time

Ivan Akhanov
SGA-Sponsored Church Planter

The Lord Most High is merciful as always! Our ministry here in Russia's Rostov region is difficult, but God is blessing us. In the last quarter of 2008, we added five new members to the church — the second baptismal service during that year — for a total of 11 new believers. And each one of these new brothers and sisters has a unique life story.

Yuri Molchanov was one of those baptized. He is a programmer, scientist and engineer. Throughout his 44 years, Yuri searched for the truth and tasted many things that this world has to offer. But he could find no solutions to his problems, and peace was nowhere to be found. But one day, he decided to visit our church and the Lord touched his heart. Yuri repented of his sins, acknowledging the futility of his past ways and throwing himself on the mercy of the Lord. Praise be to God for His power to break through to the hardest hearts, even to the point of showing scientists and engineers the true way.

We continually work with alcoholics and

people with other kinds of addictions. In many cases, the parents have high positions in society but their children end up as alcoholics. During these past months, we have sent several individuals to our rehabilitation center to be freed from alcohol or drug addiction. Those who are sincere before the Lord find the freedom they seek through His power alone.

We were glad to host a youth event for young people throughout the Rostov region as they gathered for a "brain ring," or quiz game on the book of James. We had a full house of young people, and after the game, they continued in fellowship together. We use these types of quizzes to encourage the study of God's Word.

We are thankful to the Lord for what He has accomplished. Please pray with us that God will bless our work in the village of Petrushino, and that people there will be open to the Gospel. Pray that our youth will continue to grow and

strengthen in their faith. Also please pray for two of our brothers who have left to fulfill their mandatory military service. Their names are Andrei and Alexander. Pray that God will guard them and keep them safe. Thank you so much for your prayers and financial support of our ministry!



Join us to celebrate the great and mighty things the Lord has done in the lands of Russia over the past 75 years!

Throughout 2009, churches across the U.S. have been hosting special 75th anniversary celebrations for old and new friends of SGA. Watch for local opportunities to hear how the Lord is reaching millions with the Gospel across the lands of Russia. And this fall, Chicago's Moody Church is graciously hosting a 3-day, International 75th Anniversary Celebration and Conference on September 25-27, 2009. Details will follow, so mark your calendars!



Rev. Allan W. Vincent
Director, SGA Canada

In 1952, when Bill Kapitaniuk began to serve with SGA in Western Europe, he had no way of knowing how the Lord would enable him to multiply himself. Within a few years, Billy-Montigny where Bill pastored became

a strategic launch pad for the printing and carrying of literature into the Eastern Block and USSR.

By 1957, the Lord provided property where the Kapitaniuks built not only a house for their growing family, but also a youth center and a large garage/storage building for shipping literature to Eastern Europe. For many summers, teams of British and American young people crossed East European borders with thousands of Bibles, Scripture portions and Christian books.

During those years of shipping literature, Bill became increasingly burdened to develop a large scale printing operation providing more Christian literature for Eastern Europe. As he prayed about that, travel restrictions to Poland were lifted in 1975, allowing Bill to repeatedly visit and minister in Poland

By 1981, when economic unrest in Poland and Solidarity dominated world headlines, Bill and those working with him began a series of humanitarian aid trips into Poland. Each trip was different and included its own miracle(s). Generous Christians from around the world rallied to meet Poland's needs with supplies and cash gifts. Whether it was needy orphanages or churches attempting to care for their communities, God repeatedly provided in unique ways. On one occasion, seven tons of good cheese was purchased at a bargain price. Then there was the time when the truck broke down and there seemed to be no way to contact the pastor who was to receive the goods. But God intervened and, as Bill approached the ferry en route to the church, he was surprised but not amazed to see in front of him the pastor whom he was to meet. Explaining his dilemma to the pastor, a man standing close overheard the conversation and volunteered his services as a diesel specialist to repair the truck so the aid could be delivered.

Transporting the humanitarian aid and literature only met part of the need. The Polish people's insatiable

desire for Christian literature tugged at Bill's heart. In answer to Bill's fervent prayer and tenacious spirit, God moved in the hearts of donors and helpers to equip an efficient print shop in Billy-Montigny. Learning as they went, Bill, his sons and scores of short term volunteers produced over ten million books and pamphlets with the *Illustrated New Testament* being the most requested title of all.

Since God provided that first T. P. Miller printing press, much has happened. With perestroika and the destruction of the Berlin Wall, printing could be done closer to where it was needed. What the Lord enabled Bill to do in France was replicated in Lutsk, Ukraine, where Christian Life Press (with Bill's mentoring) has provided for the CIS millions of books and pamphlets. Among those books were 1,800,000 *He Lived Among Us* (The Life of Christ). In the providence of God, that printing press is not far from the town where Bill's parents had lived before they immigrated to Canada.

With Polish, Russian and Ukrainian-language material no longer needing to be printed in France, the printing equipment was used to provide French-language Christian literature. A few years ago SGA/France merged with Bible Literature Fellowship (BLF) a printing ministry overseen by Philippe, Bill's son.

On Nov. 7, 2008, the Lord called Bill's beloved Sophie home. Still being in relatively good health himself, Bill assists at the BLF print plant and, when he can, visits and ministers in the Volyn Region of Ukraine. Bill's passion for ministry and printing has not diminished. By God's grace, he is able to share in taking the Gospel to the descendants of those who had been his parents' neighbours.

Ministry Itinerary:

May 1-3 - Peoples Church - Toronto, ON

World Missions Conference

May 5 - Port of Fellowship - Port Elgin, ON

May 11 - SGA/Canada Board Meeting

May 24 - Erbs Cove Baptist Church - Erbs Cove, NB
Grace Valley Church - Quispamsis, NB

May 28 - Hamilton Niagara Association Meeting - AI



How You Can Help

You can make a difference . . . today!

Your faithful support is vital in these days of change and challenge!

The past several months have been truly amazing to watch as the effects of the economic crisis continue to rattle the globe. It's no different across the lands of Russia. In addition to economic challenges, governments continue to tighten — or attempt to tighten — restrictions on religious freedom.

For SGA and the evangelical churches we serve, costs are steadily increasing — caused by instability and fluctuating currency values. The costs of food and fuel have been skyrocketing while the incomes of our brothers and sisters have remained static. Economic challenges are impacting everyone, in the former Soviet Union and here at home.



None of us know for certain what lies ahead. But one thing is certain: we serve a sovereign God who provides. And your prayers and financial partnership play a vitally important part in pressing on with Christian ministry to Russian-speaking people in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Please Help Reach Russian-Speaking People for Christ

Your partnership enables SGA to come alongside Bible-preaching churches to help train their leaders, plant new congregations, and provide them with the resources they need for effective ministry. But we must continue to adapt to the changing environment, realizing that our time may be short. That's why we're asking friends like you to join with us now. Thank you for your generous contribution to the cause of Christ.

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

Your gift can help continue "equipping the saints!"

Allan, here's my gift to help proclaim the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ in the lands of Russia. I'm enclosing \$ _____ (1000)

I would like to stay better connected! Please e-mail me with periodic ministry updates, key prayer requests and needs. (401)

Sign me up to be part of SGA's special e-mail Prayer Team. (403)

My e-mail address is: _____

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