

The Kindness of the Lord

... the kindness of God leads you to repentance (Romans 2:4).

While the conflict in Ukraine and the great humanitarian need there has captured much attention, severe poverty and need is rampant across the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). SGA's faithful partners are helping evangelical churches make an eternal difference in many lives through the provision of food, warm clothing, and other compassionate aid.



A simple gift of a food parcel can help open the door for the Gospel and sharing Christ's love.

And the wonderful truth expressed by the Apostle Paul in the verse above is being borne out constantly.

SGA-sponsored missionary pastor Sergei K. is one of dozens of pastors engaged in SGA-sponsored Compassion Ministry. He

tells the stories of two families and one older man who will never be the same because of God's abundant kindness . . .

The last three months have been very blessed by the Lord—filled with meetings with a lot of new people. I am so thankful that many of these families are receiving God's Word along with the aid. They see God's love and care for them in action and it encourages them to accept His Word. Romans 10:17 says that faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the Word of God. Four people have come to the Lord in repentance.

We had helped a lady named Anna with food parcels. While we were at Anna's home, her daughter Natasha came home and we began talking to her. God in His wisdom guided the discussion toward spiritual themes, and what the Lord Jesus had done to buy our pardon.



Natasha

Natasha expressed the desire to have forgiveness from the Lord, and to keep Him in her heart. We prayed with her right then to receive Christ!

Tanya is another young woman who we helped. Her children had been put into an orphanage because she had



Tanya

no food for them. When we heard of her plight, we began visiting her with food parcels, and now her children have been returned to her. She had

been unable to pray with me in prior visits, but one day at the end of our regular meeting, she was finally ready, praying and asking the Lord into her heart.

I have known Volodya for a month.

He is a very chatty, talkative man, and I had been under the impression that he wasn't hearing much of anything I had said to him. I was wrong! He had been listening



Volodya

very intently and keeping it in his heart. I had visited him two times with food parcels, and he also one day repented of his sins in prayer. It is God's miracle!

Sergei went on to tell the story of Shyra, an elderly woman who has known much sorrow. Sergei has been patiently witnessing to her for three years. Shyra's daughter Tatiana was sent to prison, and Shyra has had to take care of her grandchildren as a result. Along with others from the church, Sergei visited Shyra with food parcels, and she was very touched by the love shown to her. Five months ago, after hearing yet again about Christ's love for her, Shyra repented and gave her heart to Him.



Shyra

These are just four stories out of many that could be shared. Four stories—four lives—and so many more individuals and families who need to hear the hope of the Gospel. Join us in asking the Lord for many more opportunities, and for many more new brothers and sisters in the family of God!



Physical food will run out in time, but the Bread of Life granted by God will never run out! Pray for the families reached through SGA-sponsored Compassion Ministry.



The Spiritual Fruit of Summer

When you consider the advance of the Gospel across the CIS, many major urban centers have a number of evangelical churches, for which we are thankful to the Lord. But ministry in the smaller, outlying rural or suburban towns is every bit as important. And in Belarus, the youth of Golgotha Baptist Church in Minsk make it a priority to help support the ministries of faithful, hardworking missionary pastors in these smaller villages.

Andrew Z. is an SGA-sponsored missionary pastor in a town outside of Minsk. Andrew had worked in youth ministry at Golgotha in Minsk when SGA's Dima Podrez was a child. So for Dima and the members of his youth team, going to Rudensk to help Andrew is coming full circle, and they are seeing . . . *a good return for their labor* (Ecclesiastes 4:9). Youth from both Golgotha and Rudensk help the church hold summer camp ministry for needy children in the region. They also participate in the worship services when visiting, bringing mutual encouragement to one another in their ministries. Dima is asking for our prayers in advance of this coming summer's many planned outreaches . . .

July is a very difficult, busy month for ministry. It is a great blessing from the Lord to see the fruit of your ministry, God's answers to prayers, and to see the power of the Gospel at work. It is a blessing to see youth on fire for Christ, and eager to use the strength and zeal of youth for the Lord. There will be lots of young brothers and sisters who are going to be involved in children's, teens, and youth camps. Please pray for us and ask for God's blessings. We have accomplished so many projects, and thanks to your sacrificial support and open hearts, we have many opportunities to serve the Lord.

Last summer, a baptism service was held at Golgotha. The seven who were baptized were adults who had come to saving faith at the camps, showing that much more happens at the camps than children's and youth outreach alone. The youth held a special service and meeting for those who were baptized, sharing in the joy! Who knows what we will have to report after this year's summer ministries are over, should the Lord tarry in His coming? We are thankful to all of our partners who help make it possible!

Mercy . . . Compassion . . . God's Grace . . . and Changed Lives!

... to glorify God for His mercy... (Romans 15:9).

We continue to receive tremendous reports from SGA-sponsored missionary pastors about the impact your support of Compassion Ministry is having in many lives. Whether in Ukraine, where churches continue to deal with the aftermath of the armed conflict in the east, or in other CIS nations such as Belarus or the countries of Central Asia, the churches are making a tremendous difference reaching out to individuals and families whose lives have been devastated by poverty.



In the map of Ukraine above, the areas shaded in orange are where the most intense fighting has taken place. Pray for evangelical churches and individual believers in the cities of Lugansk, Donetsk, Slavyansk, and in the outlying villages, as they help rebuild their region and reach the lost with the Gospel.

Brest Region, Belarus

Nikita is a "social orphan." His father was murdered and his mother lost her parental rights due to alcoholism, and Nikita was raised by his believing grandmother, Tatyana. Tatyana attends the church of SGA-sponsored missionary pastor Valery near Pruzhany, and she has little income. God used Tatyana's loving care and witness, and the love of the church to greatly impact Nikita, who has known so much heartbreak. Nikita came to faith in Christ, was baptized, and this past September, got married to a young member of the church named Masha. Nikita was able to forgive his mother and even invited her to the wedding at the church. Valery gave them all food parcels provided with the help of SGA partners. Please pray for this young couple, newly married and newly part of God's forever family!



Belarus Churches Help Ukraine Refugees

While evangelical churches in Ukraine's western regions have been helping thousands of refugees, missionary pastors and their churches in other parts of the CIS have also been reaching out with SGA-sponsored Compassion Ministry. In Belarus' Vitebsk region, Pastor Pavel P. has been working with five families from Donetsk, Ukraine, and providing food for them. There are seven very small children in the family. The father, Sergei, does not have a job at the moment, and Luda, the mother, is busy taking care of their new home and children. They are deeply appreciative of the help and we can see their joy, and we are building good relationships with them. Praise be to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for this opportunity to help, and to share His love!





Ukraine: Crisis Evangelism Fund in Action

... you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God (2 Corinthians 9:11).

As the people of eastern Ukraine continue to rebuild their lives after months of violence and turmoil, the people of God are serving as the vanguard of His love and help. Through your support of SGA's Crisis Evangelism Fund, tons of aid have been on the move and are opening tremendous ministry opportunities for the churches!



Tons of aid, including bed linens and warm clothing, have been distributed through the churches to needy, affected families in eastern Ukraine. Thanks to all SGA partners who generously contributed!

refugees. Mattresses, bed linens, and other materials have been provided, plus emergency heaters and other provisions.

As always, Russian-language Bibles and other evangelistic literature are a main component of any aid distribution. Now that spring is here, many hope to return home to the east, and the churches will continue to assess existing needs. We thank all SGA partners who have helped make these outreaches possible! Please continue to pray for all who have been affected, for the ministry plans and needed resources, and for lasting peace to return to Ukraine.

Vehicles loaded with food were sent to the eastern regions. One was sent to a town in the Donetsk region where fighting was very heavy, and another to the Lugansk region. Facing the onset of winter, refugees in the cities of Zhitomir and Zaporozhye asked for winter clothing, and the local believers helped them with funds sent by SGA. As many homes and apartments have been destroyed, churches and SGA-sponsored Bible schools have housed

Mission: SGA



Find Out Even More About What God Is Doing in the CIS!

Even with 12 issues of *InSight* each year, it is impossible to share every wonderful story and testimony that we receive from across the CIS about how God is using your faithful partnership to advance the Gospel. Yet we share the zeal of Paul and Barnabas, who ... *When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them (Acts 15:4).*

SGA has a special quarterly print and electronic publication that we call Mission: SGA (formerly Russia Report). In it, we are able to share more great reports from across Russia and her neighboring countries, sent to us by the faithful churches we serve. The reports touch on most of SGA's key ministry areas—Bible training, missionary pastor ministry, children's and youth ministries, compassion and humanitarian aid ministry, plus distribution of Russian-language Bibles and Christian literature. If you would like to receive this publication, please check the enclosed response card, email us at info@sga.org, or call us toll free at 1-800-BIBLE-50. We pray that Mission: SGA will be a blessing to you.

How You Can Help

It's hard to describe the deep physical poverty that is reality for many individuals and families across Russia and her neighboring countries. The spiritual poverty is even greater, with millions still needing to hear the life-changing Gospel and of Christ's love. Your prayers and faithful support help provide evangelical churches with food parcels and other humanitarian aid, Bible training, Russian-language Bibles and Christian literature, children's ministries, and support for dedicated missionary pastors. Please pray about how you can help today!



Subscribe to SGA's New Electronic Publications!

Just go to our website

www.sga.org

Canadian Connection

by Allan Vincent

"Bone-Jarring Roads – Heart-Warming Believers"

We were unable to avoid all but the deepest jagged ruts, and **only the parallel rows of trees and (closer to us) the overgrown ditches confirmed that we were still on a road.** For almost 20 km, we and our driver had been somewhat encouraged by regional pastor Ivan Romanyuk's repeated assurances that we would soon be there. After 5 km of bad road, 10 km of terrible road, and 5 km of very bad road, a beautiful House of Prayer appeared and renewed our hope that the end of the journey was near. We resisted the thought that, after the midweek service and meal, we would need to return in the dark.

Although we were only about an hour's drive from the beautiful city of Lviv in western Ukraine, **we were in a different world — Pastor Victor Pelyk's world between two villages** — Stremin and Reklynets. In 1995, Pastor Victor began ministry here and was ordained as a pastor in 1998. Their beautiful House of Prayer was dedicated on September 20, 2009. Having done all the work themselves, theirs had been a 10-year labour of love, especially on the part of Pastor Victor, who is a skilled carpenter.

With the Lord's help, a growing congregation with 45 members also testifies of God's grace and power. The loss of some members to Western nations has not dampened their enthusiasm. **Their love for the Lord and passion to reach their**

comparatively isolated communities with the Gospel was heartwarming.

More than the repeated visits to every house and regular evangelistic meetings, it is probably the persistence of these dear believers that has endeared them to their neighbours. **Despite threats and lies spread by entrenched religious leaders, Pastor Victor has persisted in holding very fruitful summer camps, mid-week children's meetings, and weekend youth meetings.** Some of those children have repented and are now leaders in the church.

Adults have also repented. After the midweek service, during a delicious meal enjoyed by everyone, the lady across from Lynne and me explained how one of the believers had recently knocked on her door and invited her to the services. She had gladly accepted, heard, understood the Gospel, and repented.

What God is doing in this village is even more remarkable because Pastor Victor makes the 120 km round trip three times a week. Some might suggest he would be better to move. That might be true, **but Pastor Victor is training new leaders and will eventually set his sights on another town in desperate need of the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.**



InSight is published to report religious news about Russia, the rest of the CIS and the ministries of:

Slavic Gospel Association
— Canada
55 Fleming Drive, Suite 26
Cambridge, ON N1T 2A9
www.sgacanada.ca
E-mail: info@sgacanada.ca
Phone: 519-621-3553
Fax: 519-621-7571

To start, cancel or change the mailing address on your subscription to *InSight*, please send your name, your old address, and your new address to the address listed above. Please allow six to eight weeks for the fulfillment of your request.

International Offices

Loves Park, USA
Noble Park, Australia
Eastbourne, England
North Shore, New Zealand

Canadian Board of Directors

Dr. Stephen Code, Chairman
Ivan Barber, Vice Chairman
Carol Dean Jeffries, Treasurer
Dr. Allan W. Vincent, Director
John C. Goetze
Walter Gnida
Arnold Heron
Michael Nichols
Rod Wilkinson
Dr. Robert W. Provost
Dan Ciona
Pastor Andrew Hall

SGA is a member of:



Evangelical Council for
Financial Accountability

Al's Itinerary:

3-6 — Shepherds' Conference – Los Angeles, CA

12-14 — 9 Marks Weekender – Capital Hill Baptist Church – Washington, DC

24-30 — Atlantic Canada, Jesus to the Nations, Community Bible Church – Timberlea, NS