

Russia Inland Mission

Taking the Gospel to the former Soviet Union

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June 2006

Dear Pastor, Friends, and Co-Laborers in Christ:

Hello from the Roses! We leave for the field July 25 and begin our next term. At last! We are so ready to get back to the field. The first stop will be at a Missions Conference and youth camp in Zhmerinka, Ukraine. After a couple weeks in Zhmerinka, Robyn, Valerie, and I will travel to Vilnius, Lithuania to set up the ministry and begin preparations for the **2007 Shelter the Children Campaign**.

From Lithuania we will train nationals for the ministry, support the Church and **Missionary Training School in Belarus**, and work for extended periods of time in Central Asia. This letter will help you understand our decision to base out of Lithuania.

Mostly, our concern is for the growing number of young men and women surrendering for the ministry. God has blessed the work of many missionaries who have labored across the former Soviet Union since 1990. My recent visit to Ukraine, the way God is developing the Ratomka BBC ministry in Belarus, and everything we see in Russia and Central Asia tells us we need to be a **Barnabas Ministry** in this next term.

In March I visited a Bible Institute in Zhmerinko, Ukraine. Pastor Paige Hardin of Fellowship Baptist Church in Radcliff, Kentucky invited me to see this work that God has blessed through his and other Churches over the last several years. Pastor Sergei Kozlook of Ratomka Bible

Ukraine Baptist Church came down to join Dr. Jerome Smith and myself as teachers for 12 Moldovan and Ukrainian believers. You remember that Dr. Smith spent a year teaching in our **Missionary Training School** in Ratomka. God blessed the trip and opened some "Doors of Opportunity" that I want to share in this letter.

Brother Paige has sponsored a young Ukrainian missionary family, Valerio and Tanya Alexandroi, who are starting a Church in Zhmerinko. They teach the Word of God in a two year **Bible Institute**. The young men at the **Zhmerinka Bible Institute** have a great zeal for the work of God. Our hearts were joined in strong fellowship and God began to stir them for next year's **2007 Campaign**. In September 10 of these graduates will begin the **Missionary Training School** under Pastor Sergei and Ratomka BBC. After a year of training in Belarus, they will become part of our 20 man team to conduct the **2007 Shelter the Children Campaign** set for July. Our fellowship in Zhmerinko was strong. We shared our burden to plant Churches across the former Soviet Union and told how the door was open in Tajikistan. One night the Lord moved in very special way and a young man named Peter told Brother Valerio and me that he felt God calling him to be a missionary to Tajikistan. God's presence and power was strong and I felt so uplifted by my trip to Zhmerinka.



Ratomka Bible Baptist Church is doing well under Pastor Sergei Kozlook. This summer they are building the Virtual Orphanage Foster Home next to the Church building.



Zhmerinka Bible Institute during our trip in March. The facilities were a blessing from American Independent Baptist Churches.



Standing on the platform with Sergei (middle) and Valerio (right) just before I depart for Tajikistan at the end of March. We met up one week later in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Now we are preparing for the 2007 Virtual Orphanage Campaign and Valerio is building the VO ministry in Zhmerinka.

We became very close as we worked with the students. The Lord was forming a new alliance for the **2007 Virtual Orphanage Campaign**. As I shared testimonies of how God is working in Central Asia, excitement for next year's campaign grew. Just before I left for Tajikistan, Valerio and Sergei asked if they



2007 Shelter the Children Campaign

A team of national missionary disciples will be led on a *missionary journey* that will last one year. After the initial 6 weeks, our team will revisit those places again as we travel and serve together.

could come and they felt it necessary to see the work there first hand. Sergei has been there many times but Valerio had never seen a Moslem country. I knew I could use their help with the disciples there. On this trip I was planning to teach them Bible doctrine. Teaching them one-on-one would be more effective than as a group; especially since everything had to be done in secrecy for security. We put it before the Lord and asked many of you to pray by email. Someone responded and provided an offering to cover the cost of their trip. What a blessing all of this was to experience as we saw God's plans for our ministry begin to unfold. We all started to realize in Zhmerinka that God was building a team and weaving together several ministries for a serious Church planting effort in East Europe and Central Asia-**the 2007 Shelter the Children Campaign was taking shape and this encouraged everyone.**

Please join us in prayer for the for the **Missionary Conference and Youth Camp July 28-Aug 4** this summer in Zhmerinka. Valerio and Sergei are bringing 30 young men and women from Moldavia, Ukraine, and Belarus so we can tell them about the **2007 Shelter the Children Campaign**, the opportunity to attend the **Missionary Training School** in Ratomka this September, and encourage them to surrender their lives for Jesus Christ. Pray for the ten young men who will attend the **Missionary Training School** and for Pastor Sergei as he will conduct the school. Robyn and I will be there to help also as Lithuania is only two hours away.

My trip continued on to Central Asia after sad goodbyes in Zhmerinka. Sergei and Valerio agreed to leave a week after I did and I departed April 2 for a planned rendezvous with Church builder, Jeff Stamper, in Istanbul, Turkey. Jeff agreed to be my travel partner for the Tajik leg of my trip. This brother was a great asset; not allowing fear to have control in some of the tough times we faced. Jeff was a true friend and good brother whose skills were very helpful. My tasks in Tajikistan were to lay groundwork for the 2007 Campaign. We needed a project that would shield our missionary team from KGB and Islamic extremists who thwart every attempt by foreign missionaries to spread the Gospel. Small construction projects of remote village schools, eye and vision clinics, medical and dental outreaches-**all of these provide cover for evangelistic campaigns** and allow us freedom to preach and teach the Gospel.

Tajikistan

Next year's evangelistic campaign in Tajikistan will be a greater risk to our team than in past campaigns. That is why we are only allowing select individuals to form the main body. **We want to follow the example God has modeled for us in Acts through the second missionary journey of the Apostle Paul.** This means we want to journey from Central Asia to East Europe with the national disciples who will complete the **Missionary Training School** just prior to the start of the campaign next July. The concern for safety and the imperative to make disciples are the two main thoughts that drive



Three members of Ratomka Bible Baptist Church help Sergei dismantle this log house we bought for \$1000! The logs and materials are being used to build the Virtual Orphanage Foster Home this summer.



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Above shows the roof we built on the school in Pishanbye last September. This school is near Poshum where we are building a school this year.



Poshum-This school is condemned. We are building a new school to open the door for evangelism next summer during the 2007 Campaign. Jeff Stamper (left above) gave his expertise to help plan the construction. Valerio (right) was amazed at the kindness

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Jeff Stamper (above) looks out from the room where we were detained for three days by the Tajik border guards. I snapped this picture on a bathroom trip.



The Tajik children in Poshum must study in three shifts because there is no room. The floors are dirt and the walls are crumbling, there is no heat and earthquakes are routine. We are blessed in the USA!

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We invite you to send a missionary team from your Church to meet up with our 20 man team at any of our stops along the route of march. We begin in Tajikistan in July. We travel to Cheboksary, Russia, then on to Belarus, Ukraine, and Lithuania. At each of these stops we conduct evangelistic outreaches through the doors that are opened by the **Virtual Orphanage Ministry**. In each city and town we will find fatherless children who are neglected and living in some of the worst conditions you can imagine. You and I will move in to their life for one week to meet their needs. This way, the cultural walls come down in the community and the door is opened to share the Gospel. The campaign is all about loving desperate people who live in despair; sharing the Gospel message.



Robyn Rose visiting fatherless children and needy families in Tajikistan. Thank you for praying for her. She is recovering from surgery and doing a lot better.