



Indigenous Mission Project November 2006

Baptists in Russia trace their history to 1867. Some of the first pioneers were influenced by G.Oncken, great Baptist evangelist of Europe. 50 years after the first baptism they numbered well over 100 000. In 1911 the BU of Russia joined the BWA.

There are now about 90 000 Baptists who worship in 1 400 local churches. **Juri Sipko** – the president of the BU in Russia says: *“the number of Baptist churches in Russia during the last 10 years has doubled and the most important task of the Union is to train leaders and continue missionary ministry...”*

Ruvim Voloshin, the vice-president of BU with particular responsibility for missionary ministry and **Leonid Kartavenko**, the director of the missionary program stress that about 200 new Baptist congregations are being planted all over the vast territory of Russia. Several of them are supported by the IMP.

The missionary **Taras** is planting new congregation in Novy Urengoy, above the Polar Circle. His reports show both the successes and the struggles of missionary ministry. Here are some very interesting excerpts:



Boris, Leonid & Taras

Church planter Boris wrote in July 2003

“The life of people in the Far North is divided in two parts: before and after vacation. Summer is awaited greatly after long and severe winter. Many people go to the South to enjoy the sun and eventually public life and similar activities significantly slow down during the summer time in Novy Urengoy. The indigenous people rarely travel far, so every summer we plan different activities in their villages: evangelism, children ministry, humanitarian aid, etc.

In 2003 we had two baptisms of total 12 people. We were happy that youth and middle age people were baptized in a rented swimming pool. There are several other candidates and we prepare them for another occasion. “

Missionary Taras wrote from N. Urengoy in Oct. 2004:

“Last summer was very active. In our town of New Urengoy we organized some outreach meetings in a local cinema. About 120 people attended. Two camps drew about 170 children from villages Sammburg and Urengoy. In Tazovskoye and Gaz-Sale we organized evangelistic meetings and about 200 came; 7 persons accepted Christ. In village Gida (Nenetsky Region) 5 people were baptized. Gida may be reached only in summer by boat or helicopter which is very expensive. A mission group of 10 people visited also town Pangoda. We invited all the new contacts to our Bible study groups. Our church “Source of Life” needs a bigger hall because the present one we rent is getting crowded.”

Church planter Taras - July 2005

“Evangelism in our city is becoming harder. Due to some terrorist attacks in Russia, renting any public buildings to religious organizations is forbidden. Today our church numbers 32 people and is gathering in my apartment. Our greatest need is to find a building for our worship services. We don’t want to lose new people, since not everyone will go to a private apartment...”

After several days of prayer and fasting and some meetings with local administration, we were eventually offered a public hall for an Easter concert. God inclined one woman from the administration to help us with that. “Knock and it will be opened to you...” God also softened the heart of the mayor. Around 300 invitations were distributed, posters were hung up, and the concert dedicated to the Lord’s resurrection was conducted on May 1. Afterwards Christian literature and New Testaments were given out.”



9 months of a year Novy Urengoy is covered with snow

Church planter Taras – May, 2006

“My heart as a church planter is filled with joy and gratitude to the Lord for His wonderful deeds in this town and our region. I’m thankful for all who support us in prayers and material gifts.

I can see the real development of our church since the New Year period. We again rent public facility which helps us to have regular worship services on Sundays. 11 persons accepted the Lord during the 1st quarter of 2006. Twice a month we show Christian films and involve our Christian puppet theatre, a youth club and a Sunday school also continue their regular ministry.

Before Easter we had opportunity to give out about 500 New Testaments in the local hospital and invited people to Easter worship service. Presently we prepare for an Easter concert. We gave out 2 thousand invitations in our town.

The mayor of the town got interested in our project called “Moral revival” aiming to prevent abortion and abuse of drugs & alcohol. 500 posters and thousands of invitations are being printed.

A group of brothers who were involved in translating the Gospel into the Nenetsky dialect visited us. We discussed with them how to reach with the Gospel the indigenous minorities of the Yamal.



Church plant in Novy Urengoy

In February the Lord prompted many of our church members to reach the Nenetsky people for God. Most of them are the reindeer farmers. We decided to organize humanitarian aid for them. We advertised in the local newspaper the request for good clothing and ... received 3 tons! In addition brothers from Salekhard gave us books in Nenetsky dialect and we went to the remote villages of the reindeer farmers. It was tough when one of the snowmobiles broke down but we all got there safe in spite of that obstacle.

At first indigenous people did not meet us warmly. We gave out clothing and books and saw that their attitude to us changed. They invited us to stay in their village overnight and in the morning we had a service with them.”

Let's pray that the Gospel will be shared in the remotest places of our globe. **Pray** that the people of Russia may be responsive to the Christian witness. **Pray** that the Nenetsky people can have New Testament in their own dialect.

Daniel Trusiewicz - EBF Mission Coordinator

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To help growing healthy churches!

For the glory of God!

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