

# Russia Field Report

## July 2017

Over the past 18 months we have sensed God's call and direction to focus on recruitment for the Russian Field. The field is ready to receive new team members to move our vision and goals forward. Following God's lead towards that end meant sacrifices for our family. One was an unexpected trip back to the US in the winter to recruit. Jamie and I fit in more campus visits than we probably should have with a 6-month baby in tow, and left our goal of raising \$500 in monthly support on the side burner. In hindsight, the trip could have easily been a road to burnout, but ended up being quite rewarding. Three solid young women have joined us this summer for EnGage. Relationships with college professors were built. And we have a young couple making the first steps toward joining our team full-time. And, somehow (of course, we know how), we ended up with \$1,000+ of new monthly support within a month of returning to the field. It was, yet again, God showing His great power in providing for our family as we seek to make His name famous in Siberia!

### **Perspective**

Sometimes in ministry we see actual steps toward fulfilling goals and vision, and sometimes it seems that God has us simply circling in a waiting pattern. I sense that the year 2015 was a year of seeking and finding vision and goals. 2016 was a year of moving pieces into place, and this year is a year of seeing pieces come closer and closer together. Our attendance on summer teams in those years went from 1 to 2 to 8. Our pipeline for full-time team members went from 0 to 1 to 2. Russian believers will join us on a short trip to Buryatia for this first time this year. All very exciting and encouraging as we move forward on the Russian field.

While we cannot speak for Bible college students as a whole, we really sensed a swinging of the pendulum on the college campuses we were on, of students moving toward relational ministry and away from project-driven trips. Something that plays well into what we offer at EnGage! and our long-term positions.

English teaching ministry continues to bear fruit in Krasnoyarsk and we sense that it can bring a fresh wave of new believers into the Russian church. We then pray that as our team partners with local churches in the process of discipling these new believers, that God would place a calling in their lives to join our team in cross-cultural ministry to the indigenous people groups of Siberia.

### **People**

Shawna Hess – Shawna received her renewed 5-year residency permit this spring. If there was a movement toward forcing local missionaries out of certain areas of Russia, this would have been an opportune time for the local authorities to do so. However, we sense that Shawna's standing in her community and servant's heart

still have many years left in Ulan-Ude. While she still struggles with the symptoms of lupus, the spring and summer months have been much better for her than past years.

Lucas and Jamie Orner – We returned to Krasnoyarsk after our whirlwind recruitment-focused special assignment. As I mentioned above, when we returned, by the end of March, we had received over \$1000 of new monthly support, mostly from people who we had not asked. June and July are full as we lead, disciple and coach two teams consisting of eight students. Last month Jamie found that she had an ankle fracture from an injury incurred four years ago.

Ted and Kate Mole – Ted and Kate continue their plans for assisting the formation of a rehab center in Namtsy. They have a hurdle of obtaining legitimate visas to continue their trips but there are options available. They plan to train local believers in the Genesis Process during their next trip.

Frankie Emrick – Frankie’s return to support-raising was full of difficulties. He has decided to enroll in our one-year, part-time tent-making English teacher position in Krasnoyarsk which starts in September 2017. In the summer of 2018 he plans to return to the US to continue his support-raising toward full-time ministry in Siberia.

John and Gina Turton – God has placed Siberia on the hearts of this young couple. Mentored by the missions team of one of our (Orners’) supporting churches, we had a chance to spend an evening with them during our time recruiting this past winter. They are ready to apply and start raising support, but we’ve asked them to come on a vision trip first. They will join us this winter for two-and-a-half weeks.

Summer Teams – Our EnGage team consists of three young ladies from Moody-Spokane, Moody-Chicago, and Frontier (WY). We also have a team of five students from Biola University. Both teams will take a train trip to Ulan-Ude to expose them to the Buryat culture and the needs of that people group.

Summary:

<u>Missionary</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Ministry</u>
Shawna Hess	Full-time, on field	Ulan-Ude, Republic of Buryatia	Discipleship (focus on Buryat people), Midwifery
Lucas and Jamie Orner	Full-time, on field	Krasnoyarsk, Krasnoyarski Krai	Discipleship (focus on moving Russians toward going to UPG), Field Director responsibilities

Frankie Emrick	Arrives 09-2017 for 1-year position	Krasnoyarsk, Krasnoyarski Krai	Part-time tent-making (English teacher), part-time discipleship ministry
Ted and Kate Mole	1-2 visits to Russia/year	Namtsi, Sakha Republic	Facilitating training and start of rehab center

### Pipeline

<u>Appointee</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Ministry/Other Notes</u>
John and Gina Turton	Have submitted short-term application for vision trip	Passion for relational discipleship among unreached people groups. Have a relationship with the Orners

### **Partnerships**

Dr. Marc Canner: During our time recruiting at MBI Spokane, Thomas Slawson was able to connect us with Dr. Canner and his students (one of which is on our EnGage team this summer). It was a fruitful time and we were able to share our vision with Dr. Canner. On our last day on campus he swung by our table to tell us that InterAct would be the first on his list of agencies he submits to attend their missions conference and that after hearing our vision, he would be an advocate of the unreached people groups of Siberia.

Pioneer Bible Translators (Hannah Ely): PBT has begun recruiting toward teams among the unreached people groups of Siberia. We met Hannah Ely five years ago and she briefly considered InterAct before pursuing translation ministry. She will be taking a vision trip in October and we see her as a possible informal teammate for Shawna in Ulan-Ude.

SEND: SEND has been ministering in Ulan-Ude for several years, starting with a focus generally in Russian areas. However, over the last couple years they have moved to intentionally focus on ways to reach the Buryat people. Dale had a chance to meet with the outgoing field director in Canada, and I hope to pursue partnership with their team in the Ulan-Ude area in the near future.

### **Prayer and Praise**

- There is a lot to praise the Lord about: 8 Bible college students spending the summer in Siberia, a new couple in the pipeline for full-time ministry on the Russian field, and many stories of God using InterAct Ministries' missionaries to advance His Kingdom in Siberia.
- Pray with us that God would place a calling on the heart of a few of our summer workers to return to the field full-time.
- Pray that Shawna would continue to have less pain and that God would continue to use her in amazing ways as she disciples believers in Ulan-Ude.

- Praise that our family's support saw a huge boost in the spring and pray for a time of rest in August after the summer teams have left and before school begins in September.
- Pray for all the visa paperwork to come through from the language school for Frankie Emrick's work visa so he can move to Krasnoyarsk on schedule.

Joyfully Serving Christ!

Lucas Orner

Russia Field Director