

Russia Field Report

July 2020

Perspective

The phrase “new normal” has been thrown around a lot these days. What is the new normal for ministry during COVID-19 restrictions? What will the new normal look like post-epidemic? For missionaries in the cross-cultural context we’ve given up on “normal” long ago. Normal means you know what to expect, a routine is established, and that you know what needs to be done in order to receive the desired outcome. Our ministry rarely fits that mold. Our “normal” is staying grounded, not on what our Call looks and feels like, but on the Caller. And thankfully, our Caller, our Creator, and Sustainer is unchanging (Heb 13:8).

COVID-19 restrictions here in Russia are similar to the West and vary from region to region. Our team has been following local guidelines, while keeping up relationships and doing discipleship in various forms.

People

Shawna Hess: Shawna has limited the number of people she interacts with but is still serving pregnant and new mothers and encouraging women in her community.

Emricks: Frankie and Ira mourned the loss of a miscarried baby but have shown maturity in their trust in the Lord through the pain. Frankie has been taken over the leadership of the Buryat music group (Magtaal, which means praise) after the departure of the SEND missionary. Performances can be seen [on YouTube](#).

Orners: I am continuing in my Masters of Arts in Biblical Counseling and loving the opportunity to immediately apply it to the discipleship relationships that I am currently in. Thanks to COVID-19, in June we were able to renew our permanent residency permit in three days as opposed to the usual 2 months. Our family plans to be in the U.S. on SpA from Dec 10, 2020 through May 15, 2021.

Prayer and Praise

- We are thankful for the overall safety of our team, not to mention the Smiths being able to barely make it out of Russia and somehow through the US to Canada after our Field Conference.
- Praise God for the opportunity for Frankie to serve the music group and pray for his wisdom as one of his first goals is to start planning a way to disciple a local Buryat believer to lead the group.
- Pray for wisdom for our team in decision making surrounding COVID regulations and suggestions.
- Pray for more workers for the team in Siberia. We are thrilled with Andy Chinn stepping into the mobilization role and pray for God to plant Siberia in the hearts of people who see the need.

Joyfully Serving Christ!
Lucas Orner
Russia Field Director