

Siberia Field Report
submitted to Dale Smith
by Lucas Orner
August 15, 2024

Encouragement and Advancement

- Frankie Emrick received his Russian permanent residency permit.
- Travel to Russia remains open. We have hosted Carrie Curtis (mobilization trip), my parents, and an EnGage participant in the past six months. Travel, border crossings, preparation, and training are not as simple as they used to be, but we have still been able to receive guests.
- Ministry continues moving forward in Buryatia, Tuva, and Krasnoyarsk. Here are a few examples:
 - Our team is partnering with translators working on Bible translation into various Buryat dialects.
 - Frankie is working on a Buryat-style song that will be used in churches during the Christmas season that will be released with the Christmas story in various Buryat dialects.
 - Shawna has been active in AWANA-style ministry and also spent time with a woman who she led to Christ 2 decades ago, who is now going through chemo treatments.
 - Light of the Gospel Church in Kyzyl celebrated 30 years in August. InterActers have partnered with the church on and off over the past 15 years. This year the church's pastor retired and handed the leadership to Huler, who is the church's first Tuvan pastor.
 - A young man I have disciplined since he was an unbeliever has finished a 2-year Bible program and has been an active part in planting a house church here in the city.

Challenges and Hotspots

- In March there was a terrorist attack in Moscow carried out by a group in immigrants. Following the attack, Russia started looking more closely at immigrants, which led to huge wave to fines and deportations. During that time, the Costanzos were called in to be questioned by the police, but there were no resulting fines/violations. It was, however, a high-stress situation for us (their family and ours).
- Several new immigration laws are in process, and I spend about a couple hours a week keeping up with developments and current news.
- We have made the decision to delay the Costanzos return to the field after being contacted by their marriage counselor who observed red flags that would be problematic if they returned to the stress of the field without first addressing them. These are not major sin issues but dealing with past trauma and working through how it is playing out in life now.

Plans and Vision

- Build new connections and possibly partnerships with like-minded ministries in Russia and surrounding regions.
- Develop a better system of member care for the Siberia Field.
- My family will be on Special Assignment in the U.S. April-August 2025.