



Summer 2009



Dear family and friends,

You continue to bless us with your prayers and financial support, and we are very appreciative!

Advanced Theological Studies Program.

One of the most significant ministries we started in the former Soviet Union was a master's level seminary program. We began the program as a summer school in Moscow and later moved it to Almaty, Kazakhstan, where we taught classes in two-week modules throughout the year. We have had students from most of the former Soviet republics. A few of the students transferred credits into Dallas Seminary where they completed master's degree programs. Our national director for Central Asia, **Sergey Li, is a product of this program.**

As we wrote to you in the spring, our director, Carl Brown, died of a heart attack, so I (Joe) am now functioning as the director for the program again. **Carl's wife, Angi, has agreed to be my assistant,** which is a welcome development. She worked closely with Carl, and she knows the program well. We have decided to move the program back to Russia, and **we will begin holding classes late this fall in Krasnodar, Russia, in the BLTC. We will also begin courses in Baku, Azerbaijan in the fall.** We have reshaped the program to better meet the needs of church planters, especially in resistant and hostile regions.

Best Practices Institute

In January, Joe traveled with a team to several cities in Russia and Azerbaijan doing research. We are now inviting a select group to participate in a training program we call the Best Practices Institute (BPI) for Church Planters. Our first BPI will be held in **Vladikavkaz, Russia, located in a region dominated in recent years by wars, terrorism, and kidnappings.**

Travel Plans:

- **Joe** was in Russia during **July**, making preparations for training activities in the fall.
- **Linda and Joe** will be travelling together for much of **October and November**. We will both be in meetings in **Moscow** and in **Baku**, Azerbaijan, and Linda will spend a week in Krasnodar with her women's leaders for southern Russia, while Joe teaches in North Ossetia in our Best Practices Institute.

Prayer Praise and Requests

- Praise For the development of the Advanced Theological Studies Program in Russia and Azerbaijan.
- Pray That God will lead us to the best students to take into this program.
- Praise for the great leadership that our Director for Southern Russia Women's ministries, Natasha Knyazeva.
- Pray for Natasha's health and the health of her baby.
- Praise for the cooperation we are getting in preparation for the upcoming Best Practices Institute (BPI) for Church Planters.
- Pray for the safety and the effectiveness of BPI in October in Vladikavkaz, Russia.

Women's Ministries Report from Linda

This will be a very, very busy—but we are praying a very “productive”—fall. Natasha Knyazeva, the Russian Women's Ministry leader for the Northern Caucasus Region of Russia, will be coming to the U.S. Her primary focus will be attending the **International MOPS Convention in Nashville, TN**. Joining us will be Leah Alieva, the **MOPS Director for Russia**.



Irina Suleimanova (church planter's wife) with Natasha Knyazeva

In addition, Natasha will be exposed to as many types of Women's Ministry as we can schedule.

When Natasha returns to Russia, she will help Leah plan for the **all-Russia MOPS Conference** at the Black Sea. Then on the heels of that conference, will be the beginning of our formal **“Women's Ministry Leadership”** classes for selected women of the Krasnodar Region and the surrounding areas. They will be key leaders, pastor's wives and church planters wives. In addition to three-day training sessions for these ladies, we hope to have a conference for all women in the Krasnodar region with Myrna Alexander, sharing from her book, *Behold Your God*. I (Linda) will participate in this introductory session and help the women decide if they want to commit to a long term project—which will necessitate their doing homework regularly and coming to scheduled conferences in Krasnodar for the next several years. These courses (Entrust) will cover every major area which concerns Women's Ministries and the building up of strong churches in this region.

We will be sharing with you our plans for the remainder of 2009 and 2010 as they get more firmed up. But we are studying the feasibility of some outreach efforts involving **Christian medical people** from the U. S.

Along with a very hectic schedule this year, Natasha and her husband Dima, have also found out that they are **expecting a “little one” in December**. She assures me it won't make “any difference” in her ability to keep all the balls in the air. Please pray for her and Dima and the baby, because Natasha is considered “high risk” because of some other health issues.

Also this fall, I will be visiting **Baku, Azerbaijan**, and the women there. The **pastor's wife of the major Azeri church, Tirana**, and I will be discussing strategy for expanding and enhancing the ministry she has been having for about 15 years all over Azerbaijan. This will be my first trip to Baku and Joe assures me I will fall in love with these women. Pray for a good visit and our discussions as we try to find out God's best plan for the women in a very difficult part of the world.

On a more personal note, **I (Linda) will be celebrating 70 years on earth August 14**. Please pray that God will continue the blessings of health so that I can continue doing whatever God leads me to do with women—all over the world. It has been such a privilege and blessing to be able to share anything of value that I have to offer. God has been so kind and generous with His great blessings to me for all these years!



Natasha and Leah Alieva (MOPS Director)