



THE SENDING PLACE

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"LAMBS"

As the July 26 close of escrow approaches for the Redding, California, property where we plan to build "The Sending Place", many people have been asking how the fund-raising is going. Perhaps one way to look at it is like this: We have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have all the funds we need to close escrow. The bad news is, it's still in your checkbooks!

Actually, we're getting very close. More than \$100,000 is in, with over \$20,000 more pledged but not yet in. So we still need around \$20,000 more to make our deadline. People from all around the country have expressed strong support for the project. If any of you have been waiting to see what others will do, I would encourage you to wait no longer. This is a God-sized project, which will result in thousands of missionaries preaching the Gospel. But God writes no checks himself. He leaves that up to us. Thank you to those of you who have already given generously to help make this Lutheran missionary training center become a reality! We invite more of you to join in.

A REPORT FROM THE RUSSIA MISSION TEAM

Greetings and blessings to all. What a joy it was to be a part of "The Sending Place's" first mission team to be sent into the mission field. After a few months of weekend training sessions given by Pastor Darrel Deuel, I was joined by Laura Biggs, Lorna Buechler, Deborah Prettyman, Cindy Woodrum, and of course myself, Jamie Deuel. We traveled from California to Chicago where we met up with the rest of our team from East European Missions Network (EEMN) headed up by Pastor Don Richman. We traveled on to St. Petersburg, Russia, where we boarded a bus and traveled to Petrozavodsk, Russia. We spent two and a half wonderful weeks teaching English to jr. high and high school kids in three different public schools. It was a joy to see that children are children in any land, and these wonderful young kids and young adults learned as much from us over the two weeks as we learned from them.

Everything we taught was straight out of the Bible. The first week I was shocked to realize many in my fifth grade class had never heard the name of Jesus and had no idea who God was. Our lesson for the week revolved around Luke 15, the lost sheep, lost coin, and prodigal son. We taught about salvation, forgiveness and the love of Christ. These wonderful children were like little sponges that just soaked up everything we taught. At the end of the week many of them knew Jesus and His love for them. Thankfully, we left them with people who will follow up with them throughout the year, until we return next year.

I was also blessed with being a part of the "younger crowd." Of our team of 40 ranging from ages 17-83 there were about 15 in the 17-35 age group. We had a wonderful time together after school ended each day. We spent our evenings and weekends hanging out with the neighborhood kids, which included kids from a local Salvation Army Church youth group. Neighborhood kids just seemed to be drawn to our group. One girl who wasn't a Christian and didn't believe in God told me the Christian kids had something different from her other friends. She had more fun and enjoyed being around them more. She said she just felt something pulling her to our group. Now we all know this to be the Holy Spirit. I think there were many of us who shared this with her, and time after time she denied this to be true. But she continues to show up and be a part of the Christian Center in the school and a part of the youth group. God continues to pull her to these kids, and they continue to have a friendship ministry with her and others like her.

In our evenings of game playing and laughing together we were blessed with a friendship ministry that clearly God was nurturing. At the end of the two weeks many of the non-Christian kids showed up at the Salvation Army Church youth group gathering on Friday night, and showed up for church again on Sunday morning. These wonderful young people in the youth group are left to minister to their friends in the schools. This was by far the highlight of my trip to be a part of this wonderful group of young adults, watching their faith grow, and seeing how they witnessed to those around them. Not only were the kids in the neighborhood a pure joy, my teammates were as well. I can't say enough about how wonderful our team was as a whole.

This trip was by far the highlight of my life. The people of Russia are so wonderful. Our host families were so kind and generous. The Russian teachers who helped us day after day in our classes were a joy to work with. Our team worked very well together and I certainly made some life long friendships. And of course there were the kids in the school as well as the kids in the neighborhood. They stole a part of my heart. The day we left it was like waving good-bye through tears to our family, not just people we knew for two weeks, but people who had impacted our lives just as much as we had impacted theirs. This trip is worth the time, money, and all the work that goes into it. God blesses us in these schools and He blesses these schools through us. What an awesome way to preach the gospel to the youth of our world. I urge you all to pray about being a part of this great experience next year.

I would like to thank Pastor Darrel Deuel for the hours of training the five of us received prior to our time in Russia. I would also like to thank "The Sending Place" Board of Directors for beginning the process of "sending" missionaries out into the world. I would finally like to thank Don & Mavis Richman, Bob & Donna Bogott, and Steve & Ann Mae for their many hours of work with EEMN in putting together this amazing trip. It is easy to see how God works out all these details, as He does it through our hands. So for all of you who had your hands in this mission, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Blessings to you all,

Jamie Deuel