



God's Mission in Almaty, Kazakhstan

Blaze, Spirit, Blaze, set our hearts on fire . . .

Praying to the Lord of the Harvest, LCMS World Mission, in collaboration with its North American and worldwide partners, will share the Good News of Jesus with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people by the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. November/December 2006

Furlough Finale

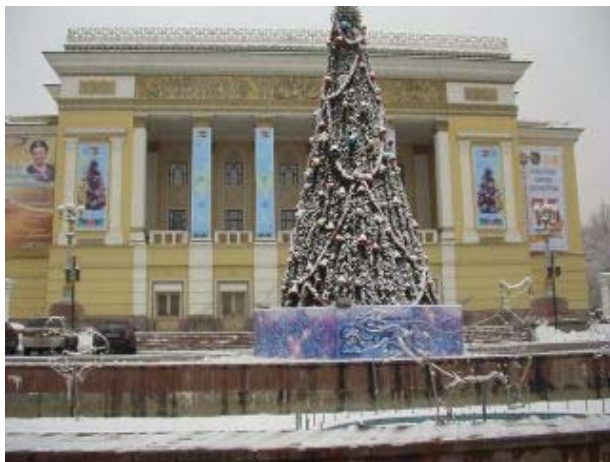
We were at Fairhaven Ministries near Elizabethton, TN the last time we wrote. While in the Tennessee and North Carolina area we had the privilege of sharing about the work in Kazakhstan at St. Stephens Lutheran School in Hickory, NC. The young lady that helped us set up for the presentation was born in Kazakhstan and adopted by a family in the USA when she was four years old. She reminded us that soup is one of the daily foods enjoyed in this part of the world, and said it's still one of her favorites. We gave two presentations at this parochial school and shared lunch with the children before traveling on to Concordia Lutheran school in Conover, NC for a presentation. It was a joy to dialog with the students at both parochial schools. They asked a lot of interesting questions.

We then headed to Asheville, NC for a meeting with an administrator at a Hospice facility. He gave us videos and materials to bring back that will be shared with individuals here. There is a Hospice facility in Almaty which Morris and others have visited. A young Christian doctor contacted Morris shortly before we left on furlough concerning possibilities to organize "home care" related services through a combination of Christian medical personnel and the Christian communities in Kazakhstan. Their discussions will continue after the first of the year. Pray for God to reveal how we should go about using our time and talents to minister to and share the Gospel with individuals in need of physical care.

From Asheville, NC we journeyed to Memphis, TN for "round 2" of meetings with personnel from the Mid-South District and then on to Baldwin, LA to spend time with family. Morris flew to El Paso, TX to meet with personnel from Multi-Language Publications who are associated with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). It was a productive meeting. The process has already begun to translate some of the WELS materials in Almaty. Our mission team is looking forward to an ongoing working relationship that will increase the availability of Christian materials for use in this part of the world. We also traveled to Metairie, LA (near New Orleans) to share about the work at the Lutheran High School during Chapel.

While in Baldwin we celebrated Thanksgiving, an early Christmas and our daughter's birthday together. What a fun time that was! We enjoyed the traditional turkey dinner and were so blessed to be surrounded by our daughter and her family. A "crawfish" dinner was enjoyed before we took a ride to enjoy the Christmas lights. It warmed our hearts when grandson Eli would tell us when he saw Baby Jesus. The last two weeks flew by. When it came time to pack Eli asked, "You're leaving me?" and then went to get his box of books with a little handle and said that he'd come with us :-)

We are now back in Almaty where we were greeted by snow and cold weather which was an adjustment from the temperatures in Louisiana. It takes about a week to adjust to the twelve hour difference between Almaty time and CST in the USA. We also had to get used to walking everywhere again! Morris is now in full time Russian language study and Jean has been busy doing some holiday baking in preparation for the various Christmas and New Year celebrations.



". . . with the New Year"

Everywhere one goes the city is gearing up for the big celebration. New Year's is the big celebration in this part of the country--it is the New Year's tree, the New Year's decorations, the New Year's gifts, and then the New Year's party with "Ded Moroz" (Santa Clause)! Everywhere one goes there are signs for 2007 congratulating one with the New Year in both Russian and Kazakh. We "congratulate you with the New Year" also and pray for the Lord to bless your year with peace and joy, knowing that he loves us and we can trust him to provide for all our needs. Pray that more people here will come to understand that peace and joy comes with Christ in their lives and that the Savior sent for our salvation is a special gift to celebrate all year long.

Tea Time

If you live here one has to enjoy tea! It is a part of the culture that one has the opportunity to partake of daily. Morris met this "babushka" almost every day on his way to the office this past summer. One day he decided to inquire where she was going so early in the morning on such a regular basis. She explained that she went to have a massage each day and that it was easier for her to walk back and forth in the mornings when temperatures were much cooler than in the heat of the day. Prior to furlough, the two of them exchanged phone numbers and agreed to get in contact with each other after our return to Almaty in early December. We had an opportunity to visit "Babi A" this week to renew relationships and invite her to the Christmas program. Pray for "Babi A" who is 80 years old and not a believer. Pray that she comes to know Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior and becomes spiritually **Ablaze!** in sharing the Good News of salvation with those around her.



Thank You

We are grateful for the many opportunities we had to share about God's mission in Kazakhstan while back on furlough. We are thankful for the time we had to reconnect with friends, make new friends and see our families again. We are also looking forward to getting back to work. **Thank you** all for your faithful support and prayers. We look forward to visiting more of you next time we are in the states. We wish you all a Merry and Blessed Christmas. May the Lord fill your upcoming year with peace and joy as you share what Christ has done in your lives with those around you.

Prayer requests:

~~ Thanksgiving for the many opportunities we had to share about God's Mission while we were in the states and our safe travel back.

~~ Blessings on Morris's time in the classroom as he continues to study the Russian language.

~~ "Babi A"--For the Spirit to work in her.

Morris and Jean Olson

wermoj@yaho.com

Serving in Almaty, Kazakhstan

LCMS World Mission

www.lcmsworldmission.org

To support our work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to: LCMS-World Mission -- 1333 S. Kirkwood Road -- St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

Write "50052 Morris and Jean Olson - Kazakhstan" in the memo line.