

NEWSLETTER

Q3NL23

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BIBLES IN RUSSIA

Report from Smolensk

Dear friends, thank you for your invaluable contribution to our ministry and assistance in spreading the good news in our city and region! Thanks to your materials (Bibles, New Testaments, Children's Christian coloring books, and Children's Bibles), which you sent us as a gift for ministry, many doors have been opened for evangelism in the streets, houses, apartments, villages, schools, and other public places.

A team of our volunteers distributed many Bibles, coloring books, Children's Bibles, and New Testaments. We reach human hearts every week. We gave Bibles to people who had heard about God but did not know Him personally. Through this literature, we give a person the opportunity to experience a personal meeting with the Author of this book. And, fortunately, many people were open to the gospel, especially young men from 20 to 28 years old, who accepted this gift into their lives with keen interest, as well as people at an advanced age from 60 to 85 years old, mostly women. And, of course, people who come to our spiritual help centers to get rid of bad habits and unhealthy lifestyles were not left without attention. In this work, God's Word becomes an indispensable weapon against sin.

We want to mention Children's Christian coloring pages again. Thanks to the original idea of combining Bible verses with a picture to be colored in, many unbelieving children are memorizing these verses.

One can talk for hours about what a great blessing your help in our work has been. God is using your literature to change the lives of many people, which can be written about for a long time, but I want to share the story of a 28-year-old girl named Marina.

She was far from faith in God and other religious traditions in her life. At the age of 28, she was completely confused in life,

2023 BFK GOAL MET!

We are thrilled to announce that our 2023 Bibles for Kids goal of 560,000 Bibles has been reached! Your generosity has provided Teen and Children's Bibles to meet spiritual needs, and the hunger for God's Word.

One such child you impacted this year is a 7-year-old boy named Lev, a Ukrainian refugee now living in Croatia due to the war. Lev received his own Bible after fleeing Ukraine with his mother. Lev loves going to church now and helping with local Bible distribution after receiving his own free Children's Bible. He had the opportunity to copy his Ukrainian Children's Bible from EEM for his language class as he learned to write for the first time.

Thank you for fostering the faith of children and teens in Eastern Europe and beyond through prayer and financial partnership so that 560,000 Bibles could be supplied to 560,000 kids in 2023.

We have a unique opportunity as united Christians to disciple an entire generation of young believers through financial gifts for God's Word. Because of your sacrifices, many Bibles will be provided—and lives will be eternally changed.

which became empty for her. One Sunday, she attended a church service at the invitation of her believing friend. She was given one of the Bibles you sent us. After some time, Marina admitted that the Bible we gave her helped her learn more about Christ, strengthen her faith, and understand God as He was presented in Scripture. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, which is carried out through the ministry of EEM in the lives of many people.

PRAY WITH US

As EEM continues to serve Eastern Europe and beyond, we continually seek God's guidance for new projects, protection, new direction, new believers, our staff and more. Will you take time this summer to join us in prayer? Here is how you can pray with us now:

1.

Pray for peace in Ukraine. As the Russian military steps up attacks on Ukrainian cities, infrastructure, and civilian population, the suffering of people is increasing.

2.

Pray for our Ukrainian staff and their families, as they are grieving the war and adjusting to life in a foreign country.

3.

Pray for our team in Minsk as the Belarus government continues to persecute many people. Please pray for their families' physical safety and strength to continue on mission.

4.

Pray for our National Director in Russia, Oleg Yakimenko, as he is networking with new churches and individuals needing God's Word in Central Asia and Transcaucasia.



PODCAST SEASON 2

Have you had a chance to listen to our latest episodes on Season 2 of the 55:11 Podcast? We are pleased to announce that we have added video streaming to our content, allowing you to watch each new episode on YouTube. We have an amazing lineup of guests from Greece, Ukraine, Croatia, and more in Season 2. You won't want to miss it! Find our podcast at eem.org/5511podcast or stream it on Spotify, Apple, Google, and on any other podcast platforms. We invite you to share these stories and interviews with others interested in hearing about what God is doing in Eastern Europe and beyond!



SCAN
TO STREAM
EEM.ORG/5511PODCAST

REVIVAL IN BULGARIA

“They were continually filled with praises to God, enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord kept adding to their number daily those who were saved.” Acts 2:47

EEM Regional Directors, Monty, Darryl, and Clyde traveled to Bulgaria to meet many of our church partners. One of those partners was a church family in Samokov, Bulgaria. This year, this church has received 1,500+ books.

Samokov is a town with 35,000 population and is made up of Romani and Bulgarians. On the last afternoon of the trip to Bulgaria, the team had the honor of worshiping with this church, which is the largest church in Bulgaria. They have three services: Wednesday and Friday evening services, as well as their primary Sunday morning service, which boasts over 1,000 Romani and Bulgarian Christ-followers in attendance.



The sacrificial, compassionate, reconciling ministry they are doing is beyond incredible. Every Monday-Friday, they are serving meals for 70+ orphans and widows. They are putting a roof over people's heads when needed and are leading drug dealers to Christ. Recently, they had 247 baptisms in a single day.

They are building disciples and building a wonderful reputation in town. One church leader shared, “There are good rumors about us in the whole city.”

They are leading the way in racial harmony between the Romani and Bulgarians; even Romani and Bulgarian children are in school together with no discrimination. This is typically unheard of in this part of the world.

The Friday evening service was filled with young adults, with a scattering of middle-aged and some older adults. The worship team was made up of teenagers leading the service.

Once again, similar to the ministry among the Muslim refugees and so many other ministries, God had been working mightily here long before EEM came along. What an honor and a blessing it is to come alongside this amazing movement and work of the Holy Spirit that is now combining the power of the written Word with the power of the public demonstration of the Living Word.





Belarus (R)
Finland (L)

ONE UKRAINIAN REFUGEE'S JOURNEY

In recent weeks a church ministry partner from Belarus shared a testimony of how God has used your generosity through the provision of Ukrainian Bibles and humanitarian aid to serve desperate refugees fleeing harm's way. In the midst of such immense suffering, God has mercifully shown us how partnering in this work to provide Bibles and aid is bearing fruit as the Gospel lands on soft hearts and good soil as read in the following report:

"It is a real gift for me when God gives me the opportunity to see the fruits of labor in His field. Here is another amazing and unexpected fruit that God has shown our church that I would like to share. As many of you know, we have been accepting refugees for a long time. Of course, we will never see most of these people again and will not learn anything about them. But sometimes, God gives us the opportunity to

know how he has used our obedience to the call on our lives.

All volunteers remember this man well. He was quite frank with us. He spoke about his difficult fate. He and his wife were one of the many passengers on the bus that our church received. His reaction to a little sermon during dinner was unlike everyone else. He asked big and serious questions about God, the church, about what it means to follow Christ. Then he took the Bible and left. Just a few days ago, the news came that he and his wife were found in Finland. They regularly attend a church there. They rejoice that their lives have changed and thank Christ for this!

May the Lord richly bless all those who all this time prayerfully and financially support the work with refugees."

SEBASTIAN & MIHAI

In May, EEM regional directors Jon Mark Smith, Jim Black, and Lanny Tucker guided by EEM National Director Adolf Papp had the pleasure of meeting Mihai and Sebastian, two young men in their 20s living in Timisoara, a city of 300,000 in western Romania near the Serbian border.

About three years ago, Mihai tried to give a Bible to a friend. His friend was not very interested. Mihai was disappointed but knew he needed to keep trying to share Christ and the Bible with others. He became quite sick and was admitted to the hospital, unsure if he would recover. On his hospital bed, he promised God he would serve him however he wished if he would heal him. Mihai got well and continued giving Bibles to people. The number of people needing a Bible grew, so he took a second job to buy a Bible for his friends.

Shortly after this, Mihai met Sebastian. He learned that Sebastian shared the same passion for giving people Bibles, so they started strategizing together. They started a Facebook page offering Bibles free of charge. They began to get a lot of followers and a growing number of Bible requests. Sebastian's engineering background and Mihai's IT work have come in handy and they have become incredibly organized after having mailed out 42,000 Bibles in just the last two years!

Not only are the requests coming from Romania but they have mailed Bibles to Romanians in Australia, Japan, Canada, and even Chicago. In the last two years, these two young men have hand-mailed 42,000 individually-wrapped Bibles to people on every continent of the world. Mihai showed our team the screen of his iPhone with 19 unanswered voicemails and said, "That's just this morning." Sebastian scrolled through a spreadsheet with over 3,000 rows of information—each line a recent request for a Bible!

They have over 3.6M views on their Facebook pages and have had as many as 2,000 unique

viewers in a single day. They shared several heart-warming stories about lives being transformed one heart at a time.

One woman was scared about the war in Ukraine. So, searching for answers about life and faith, she contacted Mihai, asking for a Bible. Days after receiving her Bible, she called Mihai in tears about the answers she was finding for the first time ever in God's Word.

One man contacted Sebastian saying he was disabled and wondered if someone could hand-deliver a Bible to him near Timisoara. Sebastian's mom works near his address so she went. When she found a largely abandoned, rat-infested building, she thought she had the wrong address. Yet, she persisted in finding the man, and he was, in fact, living in that building. As she handed him the Bible, he began to cry, saying, "No one has ever given me anything for free, especially not a Bible."

Two mid-20's young men have leveraged Facebook to bless 42,000 people—and counting—with a Romanian Bible free of charge. Mihai and Sebastian have been buying and mailing these Bibles with their own money and as God provides through others who learn about their ongoing project. They have received only about 1,000 EEM Bibles so far, but that number is growing. As the team left, they said, "Come back in two years. We hope we will have given more than twice what we have given so far!"



NIKOLA'S FIRST BIBLE

We are excited about the partnerships we have formed with local church leaders and the government of North Macedonia, particularly with regard to providing Children's Bibles in public schools throughout the nation. In May, Vice President Dirk Smith and Marketing Director Brooke Kehl traveled with National Director Jura Lazar to follow up on our latest project of 250,000 Bibles and continue to develop relationships with new ministry partners on the ground.

On their second day on location, they met Nikola Galevski, Church Planter and Senior Church leader at a local church in Skopje, North Macedonia.

In addition to his local church work, Nikola is the National Director of the Global Leadership Summit and Coordinator of the Macedonian Evangelical Protestant Churches in North Macedonia. He also teaches New Testament, Bible Interpretation, and Urban Mission and Ministry at the Evangelical Theological Institute Kumanovo, the only theological school in North Macedonia. With Nikola's various roles, he is widely connected with both Protestant and Orthodox Church leaders all over the nation.

Nearly two years ago, Nikola lost his wife, Anet-Marija, to cancer. They have a teenage daughter, Giselle-Maria. Nikola expressed that it is only by the love and strength of God, and the support of our global Christian family, that he and his daughter have been able to continue advancing the Kingdom of God and the Gospel of Christ in North Macedonia, Eastern Europe, and beyond.

As Jura, Dirk, and Brooke sat down with Nikola for the first time, all were deeply moved by his faith, heart for the Lord and his love for the Word of God. As the four of them discussed how EEM could come alongside Nikola's ministry in North Macedonia, he shared a special story of how he received his first Bible.



Nikola grew up in an orthodox family with little knowledge of God or Jesus. As a teenager, he was invited by friends to attend a local protestant church for the first time. When he was 16, he desired a Bible as his hunger for God grew, but his parents refused to allow him to buy one because they thought it was a waste of money. Bibles were hard to obtain and cost a considerable amount at \$20. As a young boy, his parents gave him \$1 a day for lunch. Despite the cost of the Bible and the ridicule from his family for wanting God's Word, Nikola decided to skip lunch for 20 days to earn enough money to buy a Bible.

On the 19th day of his endeavor to save money, he went to a routine youth group gathering. On this particular day, the church hosted a missionary from out of town. As Nikola was sitting, waiting for the gathering to begin, the visiting missionary stopped and told him that he felt he needed to give Nikola something, but wasn't sure why. The missionary reached into his backpack and pulled out a brand new Bible in Macedonian, and handed it to Nikola. On day 19!

Receiving that Bible at age 16 changed the trajectory of his life. Nikola has dedicated his life to ensuring the Gospel is spread. Nikola loves what God is doing through the ministry of EEM and is anticipating our future work together for the Kingdom of God in North Macedonia. Please join us in praying for Nikola and his church family's ability to adapt to the growth they are experiencing. Pray for continued strategic creativity for the network of Christians to reach North Macedonians in unprecedented ways.



EEM

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HOPE

HOPE CAMPAIGN 2023

STARTING SEPTEMBER 1

800,000 BIBLES FOR 800,000 HEARTS

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