

# Mission Newsletter



November - December 2008

Number 77

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**“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.” (Mal. 4:2)**

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As we approach another Christmas season, let us look beyond the tinsel and glitter, the gift exchanges and the parties, the pomp and pageantry of the religious world, and even the fun and togetherness of family. Instead, let us look back to the Baby in Bethlehem's manger, and even beyond to the prophecies of great men of old who so wonderfully foretold the salvation message.

Malachi penned the prophetic words, *“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek,.. shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts”* (Mal. 3:1).

The messenger was John the Baptist who would prepare the way of the Lord: *“The Lord, whom ye seek”* was the Messiah, and His *“temple”* was called *“My Father's house”* (John 2:16).

*“The messenger of the covenant”* was Christ, who was predicted to make a new covenant between God and man.

He came in the fulness of time: *“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son”* (Gal. 4:4).

Zacharias prophesied of John the Baptist and, especially, Jesus when he said, *“Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace”* (Luke 1:78, 79).

Simeon held Jesus in his arms and prophesied, *“For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel”* (Luke 2:30-32).

Malachi now looks forward to the Second Advent of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, who will bring healing to every person on earth. None will be sick when He reigns.

At Christmas time, as we meditate on these glorious promises that have brought comfort to God's people down through the ages, our hearts are filled anew with an abiding love for God - and we joyfully sing, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men”* (Luke 2:14).

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## Faith Mission - 2008 Ukraine Tour Highlights



Jake, Helena & Jeremy Elias, dwarfed by the giant, famous 700 year old Oak Tree in the background. Although the famous tree, located right in the centre of the region once populated by our Mennonite ancestors, has only one living branch remaining, the strong Mennonite Heritage in Ukraine has been kept alive.

## “Lasst euer Licht leuchten - Let Your Light Shine” - Motto for the conferences in Gummerbach Germany and Bilja Zerkva, Ukraine

When Eduard Ewert called me in the middle of summer, with an invitation for us to attend the Mission Conference in Bilya Zerkva, Ukraine, I wasn't sure how to respond. Would my health allow me to make the trip? Who would join me on the trip? At first Eduard invited me to the Ukraine conference which was to be on November 22. After we chatted on the phone for a while he added that there was also a Mission Conference in Gummerbach, Germany on November 9th. He also extended an invitation for this event, hoping that we could maybe come for both. Well, after many weeks of prayers and checking ticket prices, we finally felt that the Lord was prompting us to make this trip.



*Special guests at the conference also included Dr. Lewan Achalmosulischwili (left) from the war-torn Republic of Georgia, posing with Eduard Ewert (right).*

We left on a flight from Winnipeg to Frankfurt, Germany on November 5. We spent a few days with our friends in Gummerbach as well as at the FriedensBote office in Meinerzhagen. Our friends at Missionswerk FriedensBote sent warm greetings to all of the Faith



*Longtime FriedensBote worker, Jakob Janzen, interpreting a message by Nikolai Sheppel from Cherkassy Ukraine.*

Mission volunteers and supporters here in Canada.

On Sunday the church in Gummerbach was filled to capacity. The morning service was also a part of the 30 year celebration of the mission work in the former communist countries. This church has been very much involved in the work that began behind the iron curtain in the late seventies.

Although two of the original mission workers, Pastor David Klassen and Johann Janzen, have been called to their Heavenly home, most of the original members are still actively involved in Missionswerk FriedensBote. These include, Walter Penner, Eduard Ewert, Robert Gönner,

Gerhard Schmidt, and Olga Lukanowski. Pastor Jakob Esau was unable to attend the conference. He has been diagnosed with tuberculosis and was in isolation in a Paderborn hospital.

Attending the “Let Your Light Shine” conference was a real encouragement for us even though the High German language was a bit of a problem for us.

We flew from Frankfurt to Kiev on November 11th. Our friends, Peter & Anatoliy were there to meet us when we touched down in Kiev at 2:00 pm. We put our baggage in storage at the train station, and then spent the afternoon walking through the streets of Kiev and riding the subway. What an experience!

We took the overnight train to Odessa, the port city where our containers are unloaded from the vessels. The overnight trains are a great way to commute in Ukraine; no daytime hours wasted on the road! The travelling distance from Kiev to Odessa is about 550 km. In total we travelled about 2400 kilometers by train.

In Odessa we were finally able to put some faces to the names of the people we had dealt with over the years. We spent the better part of the day discussing our container issues and concerns with the people in charge of delivery and clearing customs. I am hoping that, in the long run, this time spent with them was worth more than the cost of the whole trip. I am confident that we “tied up many of the loose ends” that have been causing us problems and delays with clearing the containers. ☩☩



### Port of Odessa, Ukraine

After all the years that Faith Mission has sent containers with Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine, we finally got to see the Port of Odessa where the containers arrive and are unloaded from the vessel with these huge cranes.

Not only did we see where the containers are unloaded onto trucks to be delivered inland, we were also able to meet with our shipping agent in Odessa. It was wonderful to have our contact person, Nikolai, who is in charge of all the Humanitarian Aid we ship into Ukraine, join us for the meeting with our shipping agent. We were very happy that Nikolai was bi-lingual. He is quite fluent with High-German. I can't say I'm fluent, but we managed quite well.

**A special thank-you to Eduard, Johan, Anatoliy, Nadia, Orest and Zhanna for a wonderful job of interpreting for us.**

## ***November 22,2008 - Mission Conference in Bilja Zerkva, Ukraine***

Our trip from Kharkiv to Bilja Zerkva was much longer than we had planned. We had hoped to leave Kharkiv at noon and arrive at Bilja Zerkva by early evening. The youth orchestra from the Kharkiv church was also invited to provide the music at the conference so we had about 20 people travelling in three vehicles. One of the vans broke down so we spent about 3 hours in Poltava trying to get it on the road again. We finally arrived at our Hotel in Bilja Zerkva at about 2:00 am. Nadia, our interpreter, did her best to translate as much of the conference as possible from Russian to English. We also got several of the sessions interpreted into Low German by our friend, Eduard Ewert.



We were very happy to meet with some of the friends whom we have featured in our Newsletter over the years. We met with the Reschetniks from Dymy, Poliktin Janovsky from Khmelnytsky, Viktor Marchuk and Zhanna from Bilja Zerkva. Zhanna was our interpreter during the entire trip in 2001. There were others who were very grateful for the humanitarian aid they had received from Faith Mission. The Marchuks expressed a very special thank you for the bicycles that we have sent. Thanks again to Mr. and Mrs. Wiebe for your faithful work in repairing the bikes this last summer.

Poliktin Janovsky was also one of the speakers at the conference. As we have written about him in past newsletters, he has a passion for all the orphans and street children in Ukraine. He shared about their experience with their adopted children as well as a few other families that had recently chosen to adopt. He challenged all Christian parents in Ukraine to adopt at least one or more children. He stressed that this may be the only way that many of these children will ever be introduced to Jesus Christ. ††

## **Kharkiv Drug & Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre**



One day our friend Leonid took us to the Drug & Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre which is located a few kilometers off the main highway about half an hour

out of Kharkiv. Faith Mission has provided the center with clothing, blankets, shoes and other essential items. It was so encouraging to hear the testimonies of the young men who had been restored from a life of drugs or alcohol and in some cases both. The complex, that was reconstructed from a concrete skeleton without a roof, is now the home of about 40

men who are in the rehab program. We had lunch with the 16 men who stay at the centre. Twenty four of the men were working in the city. These men do not get paid for their work. Their earnings are paid directly towards the operations of the rehab center. The full capacity of the complex is about 150 men but more finances are needed to complete the building and hire more staff. ††



*One of the Drug & Alcohol Rehab Centre clients sharing his testimony and expressing heartfelt gratitude for the aid from Faith Mission.*

## **Help Needed - Sew More Blankets**

As was already mentioned earlier on in this newsletter we are just back from Ukraine.

We visited many places that have received our bales of clothing, shoes, boots, bicycles, blankets etc. Everywhere we went the people all could not express themselves enough in their thankfulness to Faith Mission for the help they had received. This is very encouraging for me to continue in the work that Faith Mission is doing. There were however a few things that they asked for more of and one of them being blankets. We have been thinking about this and thought we should put more blankets into each bale. Now, each bale gets two blankets, at the most. Some bales only get one blanket. In order to pack more blankets into one bale we will need to have more blankets!

If you would come to Faith Mission now, here's what you would find! There is a big pile of used terylene-filled blankets that need to be renewed. Then, there is a big pile of jeans that need cutting up into blocks to be pieced together for blankets. We also have boxes and boxes full of cut blocks and pieces of jean patches that are waiting for someone to sew them up into blankets. Then there is another pile of fleece remnants and blocks also just sitting there and waiting for some kind lady to come along and volunteer to sew them into nice warm blankets. We also have bags and bags full of terylene that needs carding for blankets or pillows and made into just that. Once again we ask if you could possibly help us in any way with this project. Everyone is busy and everyone says, "I don't have time." Could there possibly be any changes you could make in your daily schedule, that you would give you some "free time" or you could "make time" to help sew some blankets? In Matthew 25 verse 40 Jesus says, "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (KJV)

**Please Note: A very special thank you to all who donated towards a new washer for Faith Mission. We have all the funds in place for a new front-load machine. - Helena**

**If you would like to hear a detailed report about the ongoing Faith Mission work in Ukraine, please contact us for an oral or visual presentation in your church.**

Due to the limited space in this newsletter we have only been able to mention a few of the many areas and needs which we experienced while in Ukraine. We spent 2 weeks in Ukraine, travelled more than 3,000 kilometers and took lots of pictures.

The global economic crisis has also affected the people in Ukraine. Just when many felt that the economy was on it's way up, many factories and large construction projects have been forced to lay off or even shut down completely. It is very difficult to understand how people survive with an average income of \$800 - \$900 per month. Cost of groceries and fuel is at least as high as our prices in Canada.

As we travelled through the country, we could not help but notice that the need for Humanitarian Aid is still there in Ukraine. We also witnessed first hand, many other mission-related projects that were waiting to be completed but were on hold due to a shortage of finances.

**Please consider Faith Mission in your year-end giving. Tax Deductible receipts will be issued in January 2009.**



## Office Hours



Tuesday 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### Clothing sorting & baling:

Thursday 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. & 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.  
Clothing may also be dropped off in the small white trailer at the south end of the warehouse building. This trailer is open 24 hours a day, emptied on a regular basis, however, if you have more than a few bags or boxes, please call ahead to arrange delivery.

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE CLOTHING DONATIONS OUTSIDE!**

### Volunteers Welcome!

**If your Youth Group, Bible Study group, or Ladies' Sewing Circle would like to volunteer for an afternoon or evening (Monday-Saturday), please contact the office to make arrangements.**

Faith Mission (FriedensBote) Inc. solicits your gifts for the purpose identified in this appeal. However, if the project for which the gifts are received has been fully funded or cannot be completed for reasons beyond the control of the charity, the board reserves the right to use such funds for other similar projects.

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Faith Mission (FriedensBote) Inc. is a nonprofit, registered charitable organization based in Winkler, Manitoba. Faith Mission was incorporated on May the 16th, 1994 in the Province of Manitoba

### Purpose of Faith Mission

- to provide humanitarian and spiritual aid to the people of former Communist communities of the world.
- to call others to pray for the suffering people in the world.
- to provide information about the people of the former Communist communities to fellow Christians in North America.

The **Faith Mission Newsletter** is printed bimonthly and mailed at no cost to those people who have supported us in the past or to those who request information about Faith Mission.

**Banking Information** - Heartland Credit Union  
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