



Keeping In Contact

News from Kontaktmission USA

August 2004

Great Local Workers Get The Job Done!

Ukrainians, Russians, Albanians, Georgians and Romanians are joining the KM team

Kontaktmission believes that indigenous (local) church planters often succeed more readily and cost-effectively in starting new churches than American missionaries working in those same places. So while it's true that we work hard to recruit foreign (American) missionaries to go to Europe, it's very possibly an even greater victory for the cause of Christ if we are successful in recruiting a new worker who does not need to move or to learn a new language and who already knows the culture he's working in like the back of his hand.

Ukraine, for example In 1994, KM missionary **Willi Loewen** went to Ukraine, the new country recently separated from the USSR, previously known as "the Ukraine". Willi, a native Russian speaker, was extremely successful in forming relationships and quickly establishing a new church. Since then that church in the city of Kremenchug has needed to build and move twice because of growth and has started several new daughter churches as well, *all under the leadership of Ukrainian workers*. A Bible college has also been established in Kremenchug where a large number of people have been trained, and several see themselves as gifted for service as new missionaries. This Russian language Bible college has also been able to export its ministry through satellite programs to other locations,



Aneri Giunaschwili and his wife are new Kontaktmission workers in Gori, Georgia.

including Berlin, Germany. One Ukrainian woman has recently moved to Russia to help with the KM team's youth work there. Other graduates have started new works in the Kremenchug area and beyond, and still others are ready to begin right now to plant new churches. Again, ***all of this activity is being done through the ministry of local Ukrainian Kontaktmission workers.***

Willi, who has now moved on and serves as our Russian-lan-

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Charity Backs with Karsten Maul, German KM church planter who hosted her internship.

Charity Backs joins KMUSA team

The US side of Kontaktmission has grown by leaps and bounds in the last year, meaning that there are many new contacts with churches, potential workers, and other mission organizations to keep up with. The need for better communication with so many people has led to the need to add a staff member, and we're very glad to have found her.

Charity Backs, who was our very first KMUSA intern in Germany a couple of years ago, has agreed to come and serve in the areas of publications and communication. She will begin maintaining our website and eventually be responsible for our newsletters and mailings. Her education and experience is in business, and her talents in those areas will be a *tremendous* help to us. She is also familiar with the European side of Kontaktmission since she did her internship in our central office in southern Germany, also a big plus.

There would be more than enough projects to keep Charity busy full time, but for now she will work part-time and hold another job as well. Her enthusiasm for this work and her willingness to come and serve with us are inspiring. We are thrilled to have her here! Welcome, Charity!

Charity's work with KMUSA may be supported through donations made to Kontaktmission USA, memo: Charity Backs

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guage team leader, has just completed a summer of evangelistic outreach, training, and strategic planning with our team in Ukraine. He reports the leadership there is set to greatly increase their efforts for new church planting in the immediate future. Practically, this means there are already specific new projects and new workers in mind.

We are looking, as always, for American churches to get behind new works like these. Specific information including thoughts about potential strategies, personal information about the church planter, demographic data, and prospects for success are all available upon request. Is this something your church might consider doing? A Christian worker's family in eastern Europe can frequently be sponsored for as little as \$180/month. For about twice that the church can be supported to a significant degree as well.

And beyond Ukraine

One American church has just recently committed to support a new Ukrainian worker through us, and there is activity in other countries as well. Another

American church with a wonderful vision for worldwide church planting has begun supporting new church planters in Gori, Georgia and in the Orenburg region of Russia. Other churches have shown interest in new workers in Romania. We also have an excellent missionary couple in the country of Albania who are in dire need of a sponsoring church. Frankly, mission-minded American churches represent the best hope for the support they and these other workers need. **Please contact us if you or your church can help. We'll get you all the information you need to make a good decision.**



The Jakanin family is part of the KM team serving in Aviagorodok, Orenburg, Russia

Youth and Children's Camps in Romania Prove To Be An Effective Outreach Tool

As this newsletter is being written, the KM team is holding youth and children's summer outreach camps nearby. These camps, in past years a wonderful outreach tool, were kept in the plan for this year because of their effectiveness, even though there was not sufficient funding for them in this year's budget. As a result, the Romanian team is left with a significant financial shortfall of up to \$5000, a need which looms even greater when the rough economic conditions in Romania are considered. (Finances are being diverted from other KM projects to cover the costs for now, but the need remains).

Please pray for a resolution to this situation, and please let us know if you can help.



Why do we start new churches?

Obviously there are many viable forms of mission work, even if we narrowly define mission work as evangelistically-oriented efforts and projects (as opposed to broadening the definition to include humanitarian efforts in economically depressed areas). Some of these other types of evangelistic work include medical missions, street ministry, radio ministry, literature and writing ministries, children's ministries, camps, and educational ministries, including institutions of higher learning like seminaries. To downplay the value of these kinds of works would be both foolish and wrong because of the tremendous impact they have.

And yet Kontaktmission, along with other organizations and missions analysts, continues to insist that church planting is the most effective, most meaningful type of mission work. Why?

There are several reasons. To begin with a Biblical one, we can say without hesitation that starting new churches was the apostle Paul's prime mission method. The apostle Paul didn't start leadership training seminars or medical facilities or hold crusades... he started churches. He started churches because he wanted to grow all kinds of Christians in an environment in which they would flourish. The local church has always been the basic unit of Christian community in which individual Christians function. In the Bible, a clear vision is cast for the church to be the community in which all of Christianity takes root in people and grows: fellowship, worship, training in the scriptures, accountability, and even evangelism are parts of the local church picture.

Another reason church planting is the most important type of mission work is that it is ultimately the most effective type. If the goal of missions efforts is to create disciples of Jesus who remain true to Him over time, then there is, statistically speaking, simply no organization, project or tool that can compare to a church for producing them. And church planting for evangelism is not only effective, it's cost-effective. Studies show it is really quite economical to start a church when compared with



many other types of ministries.

When missionaries go back home, what do they leave behind if there has been no church established? Possibly some converts, possibly some seeds planted, but probably little that will remain for future generations. When a church planter returns home, if he has been successful his work remains in place and is still doing what it was established to do when he was there.

Once a new church has been planted, it can quickly and efficiently launch the kinds of ministries which are often started as individual missions, such as benevolence works, youth outreach projects, or schools, all with the church as the home base for those new works. If they were not based within a framework of an established church, they would falter when the missionary leaves. But if they are part of the church's overall plan, they can be supported by the membership and guided by the church leadership.

It seems harsh, but it's true: we can only speak of effective evangelism on the mission field if viable churches with leadership have been established. Kontaktmission will continue to emphasize planting churches as the primary goal of our work, no matter what other methods we may also employ, because we desire to do mission work God's way, and we desire to do mission work the best way.



*The Harris Family
Rob & Carla with Alissa & Ryan*

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

National Missionary Convention to be held from September 30-October 3 in Peoria, Illinois.

The NMC has been the best place for us to meet potential interns and workers. It is an exciting time of sharing in inspiring main sessions and helpful workshops, as well as for networking with other organizations. Rob Harris will be sharing in a workshop about the need for workers in western Europe. Our current 8 recruits will all be attending, and we will hold training and orientation meetings with them as well. Please pray for a fruitful convention again this year. Specifically, please pray that we will make at least 6 new contacts with potential missionaries for Europe.

KM Strategy Forum to meet in Lithuania. Rob Harris will be traveling to Lithuania in the first week of October to meet with the other members of our strategic planning team. The reason for meeting in Lithuania, one of the countries where Kontaktmission is most strongly represented, is to allow the team to meet and discuss strategy with the workers there, encouraging them and speaking in the churches, while getting to know the culture and projects firsthand. Please pray for a fruitful trip and safe travel for all members of the team, who with the exception of Rob will be traveling from all parts of Europe.

The **North American Christian Convention, held in Phoenix, AZ from July 5-8**, was a wonderful time of networking with other ministries and of meeting potential workers. Please pray for these people, several of whom are on the brink of deciding to serve as missionaries, that they would find the courage and their “paths straight” to make the tough choices necessary to commit to missionary service. Pray for their wisdom and ours as we continue to work with them in this decision process. There were also two organizations interested in working together with Kontaktmission to plant churches in Europe.

Diksmuide, Belgium, Matthias and Sabine Valenta. In the last KMUSA newsletter we featured the need for new workers in Belgium, and since then we have had some interest and met some potential interns. However, we are not convinced that this urgent need has yet seen the kind of response required. Please pray for additional workers for Belgium. And if you are currently considering serving as a missionary yourself, please prayerfully consider serving in Belgium. Please contact the KMUSA office for additional information.