

# MBL MISSION NEWS

Reporting events taking place in Russia, Armenia, Nicaragua, Haiti and at home

January/February 2007      Volume 1 Issue 3

## CHRISTMAS ITS FINALLY OVER! OR IS IT?

Most of us are very familiar with the story of the Magi visiting the Christ child in Bethlehem. For those men, it was a journey that had to begin months earlier in order to arrive at the chosen place at the right time. We don't know all of the particulars except that we know they had an interest in astronomy and in prophecy. Whatever their motives, this had to be a most important moment in their lives—to find and worship Him who we call Jesus! And worship Him they did, with Gold, frankincense and myrrh.

This search and discovery event is referred to as the Epiphany. In Russia, Christmas Day is not celebrated on December 25th. Instead, the Day of Epiphany is the more meaningful Christmas holiday. And of course, Epiphany in our liturgical churches is not just a one day observance but essentially an observance until the period of Lent begins.

Looking back into the 2nd Chapter of Matthew to read the story of the Wisemen in their quest to find Jesus, they encounter a cruel and jealous King Herod. Herod also would like to find the child Jesus but not for the reason of worshipping nor to adore Him. No, it is for the purpose of removing anyone or anything that threatens his kingly power. The Magi are asked to report back to him when they have found Jesus.

The Bible account records that the wisemen found child, presented gifts, and worshiped Jesus. It could have been while they were in worship that an angel of the Lord warned them not to go to Herod. The result: they departed to their home country by another route!

*For the many of us Believers who have "visited Jesus" and made that startling and wonderful discovery of Salvation, it seems like a fair thing to know that we need to go about our lives in 2007 by taking a new direction—one that is led by the Holy Spirit.*

*No! Christmas is not over! Sending cards, buying presents, attending parties and getting together with family may be an annual event, but discovering our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and allowing Him to guide us with Gospel trained behavior is really what it is all about! In short, we need to lean into a posture and commitment such as one demonstrated by the Apostle Paul when he wrote the following words in Philippians 3:8*

*"More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order to gain Christ"*

*The Magi never returned to King Herod to give any news about Jesus, the child. But I can well imagine that they wasted no time telling their story to all peoples that they encountered as they journeyed home!*

### MISSION TO RUSSIA AND ARMENIA IN 2007

The short term missions to Russia and Armenia will take place this summer. Anna Nerkararyan will lead the Armenian mission and more about that will be in the next issue of MBL Mission Newsletter.

The Russian mission will take place on June 18-July 1st, 2007. This year, the target village will be in Grafskaya, a village about 40 miles south of Voronezh. Voronezh is south of Moscow and is reached by an overnight train trip. (cont on page 7)

Editorial;	1
Russia Mis-	
Test your BVC	2
Partners 2006	3-4
Nicaragua	5
Russia	6-7
Wish list	2
Announcements	8



#### Special points of interest:

- Coming soon! Dr. Robert Harris of the Christian College of Georgia reports that our new website is close to completion. For those of you who have internet access, this will be a splendid way to receive the newsletter and other important bits of information regarding MBL. Meanwhile, we can be found on [www.gadisciples.org/ministries/MBL](http://www.gadisciples.org/ministries/MBL)

## MBL MISSION NEWS

### Test your Bible skills with BVC\*\*

PROVERBS NIV CHAPTER 10: 17-32

(Complete each verse)



17. He who heeds discipline shows the way to life,.....astray.
18. He who conceals his hatred has lying lips,.....fool.
19. When words are many, sin is not absent,.....i.s wise.
20. The tongue of the righteous is choice silver,..... value.
21. The lips of the righteous nourish many,..... judgment.
22. The blessings of the Lord brings wealth,.....trouble to it.
23. A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct,.....wisdom.
24. What the wicked dreads will overtake him;.....granted.
25. When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone,.....or ever.
26. As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,.....send him.
27. The fear of the Lord adds length to life,..... cut short.
28. The prospect of the righteous is joy,.....nothing
29. The way of the Lord is a refuge for the righteous.....evil.
30. The righteous will never be uprooted,.....in the land.
31. The mouth of the righteous brings wisdom,.....cut out.
32. The lips of the righteous know what is fitting,.....perverse

### OUR EXPANDED WISH LIST

**Galina Obrovets** has been using her personal vehicle to provide the necessary services that are vital to MBL. She no longer can use her vehicle to perform duties for our center that is located in Moscow, Russia. Galina and her husband have saved \$6000 and need a \$6000 match to purchase a late model certified used vehicle in the USA and import it to Russia. The vehicle will be used to service the many churches that she and Olga work with throughout Western Russia. This is a NEED indeed!

**Thom Walker** is also looking for a vehicle to use in Nicaragua. It will be a used truck that will be outfitted to be utilized as a panel truck. When Thom goes into villages, Managua and other cities in Nicaragua, he will keep a supply of Bibles, literature, and medications that he can dispense from the panel truck. This will also be a used truck purchased in Managua, Nicaragua and built up to Thom's specifications. Cost is estimated at \$15000.dollars.

Your help is needed for this project. If the Lord lays it on your heart to help Galina or Thom, I know you will be richly blessed for doing so.

**“Honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first of all your produce; so your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow with new wine” Proverbs 3:9-10**

*Please remember Galina and Thom in your prayers.*

The Mission for Biblical Literacy thanks the churches named below for their prayerful support and partnership in carrying out the Great Commission.

Peachtree Christian Church CWF  
Atlanta GA

Harvard Ave Christian Church  
Tulsa OK

First Christian Church  
Glennville, GA

First Christian Church  
Hermiston OR

First Christian Church  
Hermiston OR

First Christian Church  
Murray KY

Utica Christian Church  
Utica MS

Eastridge Park Christian Church  
Mesquite TX

New Life Christian Church  
Hutchinson K

Peachtree Christian Church  
Atlanta GA

Peachtree Christian Church Off  
Fund Atlanta GA

Riverside Christian Church  
Sweet Home OR

New Covenant Class  
Hermitage PA

First Christian Church  
Meridian MS

Sandersville Christian Church  
Sandersville GA

Third Presbyterian Church  
Richmond, VA

First Christian Church  
Watkinsville, GA

**Dear faithful friends who support the Mission for Biblical Literacy:**

I don't have enough words to express my appreciation to all of you who have supported MBL and have helped Galina, Anna, Thom, Sally, and me to accomplish the myriad of ministerial tasks during 2006. Please accept my deepest gratitude for your vicarious involvement with this mission that began years ago by its founder, Dr. Roger N. Carstensen.

I know I am repeating myself but I need to list some of the good things that have been taking place in our areas of ministry. For example, last summer we served 180 children at the orphanage in Dimidova Russia. Most of these kids are "social orphans" who are either homeless or who have parents who can't keep them or have abandoned them. MBL and its team members had the opportunity to provide winter shoes for the kids but the best gift was to introduce them to the Bible and to tell them the story of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As we have done in the past, we closed our week with the kids around a large bonfire with our team (mostly teen-agers) sharing what God has done for them and offering the same hope to the orphans.

You all have helped to make this possible!

Galina Obrovets is now into her sixth year of editing and publishing the Christian Journal for women called SESTRAS meaning "SISTER". Though off to a slow start when it began, it is now a fine journal that is read across all of Russia to include the Siberian Far East. This is a ministry that you have made possible and as a result, many women, including men, are coming to know Jesus Christ because there is such a journal like SESTRAS.

You all have helped make this possible!

I visited Thom Walker in Nicaragua a few months ago. I had no idea of how much territory Thom has to cover in eastern Nicaragua. All this must be done by a boat or dory to reach the many people in villages that lie near a river or creek. Taking his generator and video projector, Thom has been showing the Jesus film wherever he goes. He also has been treating school children for intestinal parasites and head lice. But the people have responded to Thom's ministry. He has won their hearts and he is winning to Jesus Christ.

You all have helped make this possible!

Sally Haas joined MBL last June. Already accomplishing a lot in Haiti, she has been directing a work of nutrition for mothers and children who have nothing to look forward to except poverty and disease. Sally has involved herself deeply and continues to provide the much needed nutrition through special blends of proteins and vitamins.

You all have helped make this possible!

None of the above could have been done without your prayers, involvement, and financial support of this mission that quickly responds to the spiritual and physical needs of God's people on earth.

May God continue to Bless and enrich your faith journey. John Novikoff

Adams, Ruth L.	Combs, Bert	Hutto, John & Gracete,	Sewell, Jeneill
Agalzoff, Nadaline	Dalrymple, Gordon & Monalea	Johansson, Mildred & Hjalmar	Bob & Gay Smith
Ames, James & Kathryn	Darnell, Carol I.	Jordan, Sarah (Sally)	Smith, Robert & Joan Smith, Sam J
Armstrong, Kevin	Dickson, Duane	Kistler, Gilbert & Ruth	Smith Tunis
Askin, Pauline	Dickson Drilling	Koerber, WW & Susan	Solana, David & Nancy
Baird, John & Eleanor	Dickinson, Peggy A.	Kuhn, Frederick & Carol	Steinhauer, William & Virginia
Banks, Sharon Kay	Dotson, Ray & Gloria	Labrum, Nelie	Stetnish, Mr. Julian
Bayer, Mary & Dan	Duffy, Kirk M	Lee, Carol	Stinson, Mary E.
Barrett, Alvin & Sally	Dunn, Celia	Lee Dorothy	Swanson, Loren & Jean
Barrow, III, David & Elaine	Erickson & Associates	Lehr, Lawrence S.	Thomas, Marian S.
Bates, Della M.	Faithvalues.com	Loy, Mr. & Mrs. Joe	Tindall, Mildred
Boone, Stewart	Eldredge, David & Judy	McAdoo Keitha & Dean	Tolmasov, James A.
Boyle, Nancy & Mac	Evans, Mrs. Janice	MacFarlane-Flickinger, D	Turner, JT Company
Boyle, William A.	Falligant, J.Daniel	MacFarlane, Arne & Virginia	Vickers, Mr. & Mrs. Paul Jr.
Bradford, Ellis E.	Fetter, Lawrence & Susie	Manor, Claypool	Waid, Margaret E.
Brock,, Robert	Fowler, Bill & Mary	Martin, Carolyn A.	Ward, Sheron
Burch, Kenneth D	Gladden, Carolyn J.	McCormack, Jean & Tommy	Webster, Alex & Cynthia
Burnsed, E. James	Goble, Helen	Novikoff, John & Margot	Webb, Ruth
Burris, B.C. & Gayle	Grabach, Neal & Ellen	O'Conner. Sara Nelloo,	Wells, Donna & Mary Fisher
Caton, James F	Griffin, Murray & JeAnne	Patton,,Wilbur & Dorothy	Wright, Sally J
Collins, Jim	Gignilliat, Heyward & Pattty	Porter, Robert & Vesta	Wright, Woodven C
Cummings, Jean	Helton, Kenneth Hewitt, Kennith & Louise	Roddy. Neil & Helen	Zenor, Larry & Linda
Carswell. Johnn,	Hite, MaryAnna	Samsell, Helen	Zimmerman, Gwendolyn
Chilton, Helen B.	Hodges, Shirley H.	Samuels, Joe & Helen , Sells, Gloria	

Dear Partner:

As I have traveled throughout the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua, one fact stands out; and that is a very, very small percentage of homes have Bibles. Compare that with the USA where we have from 5 to 10 copies in our homes. This luxury is not enjoyed by the people in Nicaragua.

A Bible here can cost between four and seven dollars, depending on where you buy it, how many you buy at a time, and if it is paperback or hardback. That is about three day's wages for a worker. Another reason is there is not a place to buy a Bible in the small towns and villages. The people have to travel to Managua or another large city to be able to find a place that would have Bibles for sale.

While only about 30% of the population on this side of Nicaragua can read, virtually everyone wants a Bible in their home. They believe that it is God's Word and keeps them closer to Him. It is something that brings great comfort to them.

We have prayed that the Lord would make available money to buy and distribute Bibles to the people in the rural comarcas. God answered that prayer and has sent us money sufficient to buy 200 Bibles to give to families who do not have a Bible. John Novikoff also brought some bibles with him on his recent visit here. This will make such a difference to so many. People who can read can share with those who cannot, and many will hear God's Word.

One man who received a Bible is Senor Whitmore. He is a 74 year old man who lives alone on a finca (farm) on the Rio Escondido. He can read and I'm sure the Bible will become one of his most prized possessions.

These are real miracles to the people here. The medicine, the Jesus Film, the Bibles, and sometimes just a touch to let them know someone cares is letting them know that Jesus is alive and cares about them. You are a part of these miracles. Each of you share with us as we together reach out and touch those to whom God has called us.

Thank you so much for your continued prayer and giving. Together, with the help from our Lord Jesus Christ, we will accomplish the task to which He has called us. As always I am: Amazed by Him, Thom



Receiving a Holy Bible as children watch



Mr. Whitmore receives a Bible from Thom at his home



**A group of women from El Rama receive their first Bible**

**Note:** Thom will be preaching at the First Christian Church at Thomas, Oklahoma on January 21st. Richard Pitt is the Senior Minister at Thomas. Later in the evening Thom will visit the 1st Christian Church at Stigler, Oklahoma. Dr. James F. Caton, our former acting-President of MBL is presently serving as the church's Interim Minister. Thom returns to Rama, Nicaragua around the first week of February, 2007.

## GOD SUPPORTS ORPHANS AND WIDOWS

A conference for families who lost their loved ones –such as husbands or wives -gathered at the Central Baptist-Church of Moscow. Over a hundred and forty believers of Moscow, the Tver region, cities of Kursk, Belgorod and other places of the central part of Russia. participated in this very much needed and important forum in Moscow.

This conference in Moscow is a second one during the seven years of the existence of this ministry. The main goal of the meeting is not only to support, encourage and give hope to people but also to teach people who experienced the loss of their loved ones to search for the strength of God's comfort and to be able to comfort others.

Tamara Muravyeva, who is in charge of the ministry to widows in Moscow told the attendees at the meeting about the progress and development of this ministry. She had lost her husband when she was 35. Somehow she found strength to comfort others and now every month she organizes prayer meetings for 50-60 widows in the Central Moscow Church.

When the staff of the "Sestra" magazine learned about this coming conference, we prepared a special gift for every participant- it was an issue of Sestra that featured two special articles: *"True Widow Puts Her Trust on the Lord"* and *"Is Loneliness - a Burden or a Blessing?"* One of the articles tells about the life of a young widow from Minsk, who is raising four children. She has managed to put her personal tragedy into a fruitful ministry to other widows instead of drowning in her own tears. Many of the women at the conference learned about the "Sestra" magazine for the first time. A few days later a widow named Irina Miroshnikova came to our office to tell how much she appreciated the gift of the magazine and what the Lord revealed to her through its reading. -Galina Obrovets



L-R Dr. V. Obrovets alongside of wife Galina Obrovets



Attendees to the Russian Orthodox Exhibition

Below, IL-R Youth and leaders at the Russian Orthodox Conference



story on page 7

A participant receives an issue of SESTRA



## SESTRA" MAGAZINE PRESENTED AT THE ORTHODOX CHURCH EXHIBITION

On November 1-4, 2006 an exhibition "Orthodox Russia – for the Day of National Unity" was held in the Moscow down-town ExpoCenter on Krasnaya Presnya. The slogan of the exhibition was "Do the good". V.Putin, the president of RF, speaking about significance of alike events, said: «Preserving the cultural and historical inheritance of this country, involving young people into values of the country is a truly national goal, and in reaching this goal the state, society, every church denomination and philanthropic organizations must participate». In the context of the exhibition a charitable action was held. Alexy II, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, handed out religious, historical and educational literature to the fellow countrymen who had suffered during military actions in Lebanon. The Publishing House counsel of the Russian Orthodox Church invited our Christian women's magazine "Sestra" to participate in this action as well. Also the presentation of the magazine was included in the event. During the presentation of the "Sestra" magazine the visitors of the exhibition were able not only to learn about the conception of our publication, main topics and head columns of the magazine but also to meet with the editorial staff, journalists and authors.

(continued from page 1      Russia and Armenia missions)

In the past few years, MBL in partnership with Christ Church of Savannah Georgia has been invited to the Smolensk region of Russia to provide ministry to children who live in an orphanage. Because of the loss of our chief coordinator, Rev Pavel Makarenko who is emigrating to the United States, we no longer have the working relationships that was previously established in 2001.

The work in the village of Grafskaya will be in cooperation with the Baptist Church in that locale. This will be a summer VBS type program with the very poor children of the village. We have been given an estimate that there will be some 80 children. In my visit to that village in early December, I found that there are a number of gypsy families who are living in the village who have also have been receiving ministry and care from the small church.

We visited two of the gypsy families in their shelters; their living conditions are very poor. Because these people are considered "undocumented" by the authorities, work is difficult and housing is difficult to get. I am pleased that the church, small as it is, has been giving relief to all of the families in that village that need such relief.

For those of you who are interested in going on the Russian mission, the cost this year will be \$2400. This includes airfare, lodging, rail transportation, and also a two day excursion to the Golden Ring Cities such as Yaroslav and Rostov Velikee plus 2-3 other locations.

The team will be limited to 10 or 11 Americans and 4-5 Russian students who will act as translators.

If you are one who would like to support another missionary but cannot go on this trip, your support will be welcome.

**Call me at 404 806 1485 or my cell 912 308 8277 for more information.;**



Here are a few cute kids that will be part of the VBS



Novikoff poses with Svetlana who is now a Believer



A pretty gypsy girl poses with Vladimir Cheprasov  
Vladimir is Deacon in the Voronezh Baptist Church

The Mission for Biblical Literacy  
 1580 Peachtree Street NE  
 Atlanta GA 30309-2435

*"Opening the Bible in other lands"*



### Important notice!

During 2006, an attempt was made to move the office of MBL to Savannah GA. Unfortunately, the location did not workout and consequently, it was decided to retain the office in Atlanta at the Peachtree Christian Church. The Board of MBL is grateful to Peachtree CC for this privilege. Hence, all correspondence and gifts will need to be sent to MBL at the Peachtree Christian Church address. If you have any business reply or courtesy reply envelopes addressed to Savannah, please discontinue their use. Meanwhile, the phone numbers listed on this newsletter will put you in touch with me. Thank you. John Novikoff

### Announcements

President's itinerary	January 25-30	Oregon churches to visit:, Lebanon, Sweet Home, Salem
	February 16-16	Faith at Work Conference St. Simon's Island GA
	May TBA	Visit to Georgia and Oklahoma Churches
	June TBA	Annual Meeting of the Mission for Biblical Literacy, Atlanta GA
	June 18-Jul 01	Russia Mission '07 Voronezh Russia
	July 21-25,	General Assembly at Fort Worth, TX
	October TBA	Visit to Kansas and Mississippi Churches

### SPECIAL THANKS

Two special people who have provided hours and hours of volunteer service to MBL and personally to me are Betsy Haun and Lawrence Lehr. Both Betsy and Lawrence have answered the call to help put the newsletter together which includes folding, applying address labels, stamps and seals. Thanks to this pair of saints who also have been on mission trips with me.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that Lawrence also has been the key player in keeping my computers going. His expertise in building and repairing computers has been priceless. He has offered his services pro bono.

One other honorable mention is Mr. Buddy Ray who is the WebMaster for the Christian Church in Georgia. Buddy has posted all of our newsletters and notices in the website (listed below). Thank you Buddy for getting our story out to the people.

Finally, I want to thank Dr. Bob Harris of the Christian College of Georgia for currently developing MBL's new website. When ready the address will be [www.mybl.org](http://www.mybl.org). Meanwhile you can find information and the MBL Mission News at [www.gadisciples.org/ministries](http://www.gadisciples.org/ministries).

**Thank you Saints for a great year in 2006!**