



CBM Newsletter May 2009 – East Europe

This is the first of four quarterly newsletters designed to give you an insight into CBM activities. It focuses on East Europe and gives a few snapshots of the work in five of the countries. You will see how different it can be from UK ecclesial life.

Poland

Quite unexpectedly we had a request for baptism at a Bible Weekend in Wroclaw last November. After a really good interview Olga was adamant she wanted to be baptised the next day. Early the next morning we arrived at a local swimming pool where we were turned away as we had no swimming costumes! Returning from the shops with three costumes we still had to wait for a session change but finally and joyfully we were able to baptise our new Sister Olga.



Kazakhstan

Two ecclesias thrived in Kazakhstan until 2007 when the authorities clamped down and forbade us to meet. Visits from the UK were banned. So in February 2008 we organised a Bible Weekend across the Russian border in Siberia, uncertain of how many Kazak brothers and sisters would make the journey. It was potentially dangerous for them if an informer chose to report them to the authorities as had happened before. Imagine our joy when nearly thirty came to the weekend for a time of rich fellowship around the Word.

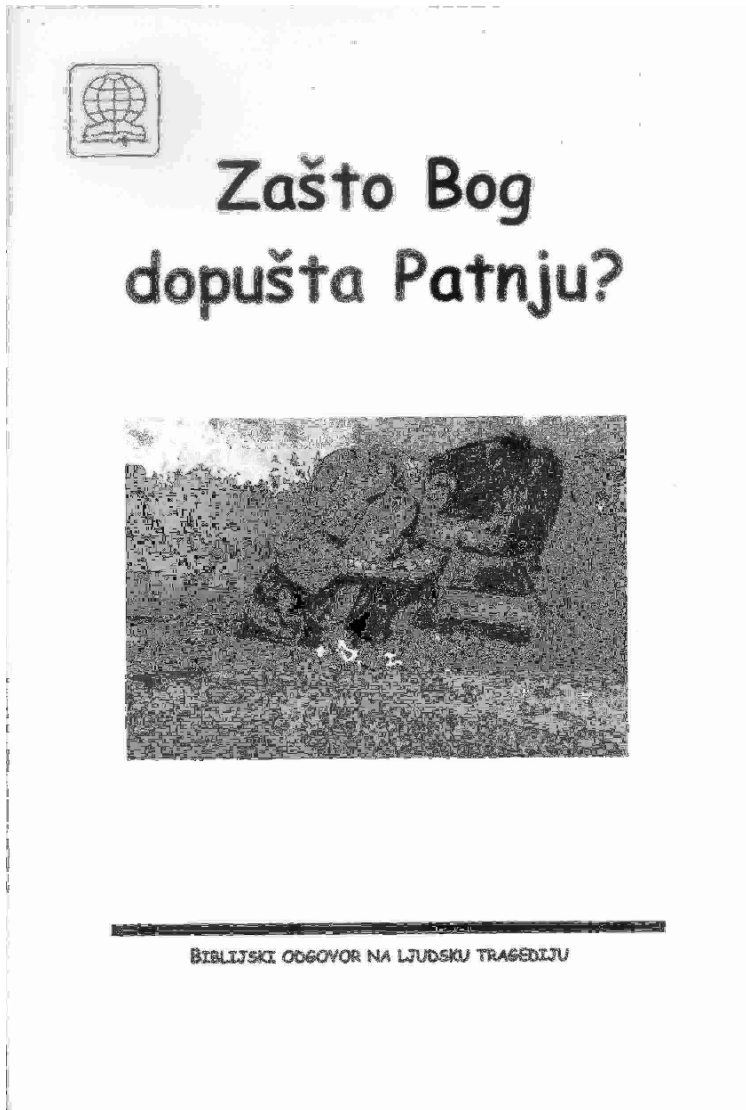
Russia

The event in January was called the 'Russian' Youth Week but young people attended from Russia, Siberia, Kazakhstan, England, Scotland and Australia. The East Europeans truly relished the rare opportunity for fellowship. Some travelled farther than the UK party to get there, and several had journeys of two to three days in both directions. The singing was great, as were the varied Bible studies, presentations, readings, and the outdoor activities with lots of indoor games and free time to chat.

left: sisters at a gathering in Kazakhstan

Turkey

A Turkish brother in isolation in Istanbul is finding it difficult to hold on to his faith. Several hours bus ride away live an Iranian brother & sister who had to flee their home when they suffered persecution in Iran. They are in Turkey trying to get their refugee status confirmed. Our role is to provide support for our spiritual family, get them and their contacts together, enable them to enjoy fellowship, and help their quiet witness to their faith.



The Adriatics and Hungary

Seven languages are used in the Adriatics and Hungary, two of them in the Cyrillic script. Ensuring we have translators for visits and talks is a challenge, as is getting literature translated and printed into a local language. This booklet cover might look familiar – it is a Bosnian translation of ‘Why does God allow suffering?’ Our website produces almost daily requests for Bible literature. We aim to help people read and understand the Bible - they need help in their own tongues!

left: Bosnian translation of ‘Why does God allow suffering?’

Take a look at the East Europe website www.cbmeasteurope.info/ and click on the [Newsletters](#) tab to keep up to date. There are also plenty of photo galleries to browse through. You can also find out more about the CBM and our work in other countries by looking at our central website www.cbm.org.uk.

What can I do?

A great deal of work is done by the CBM as we seek to follow our Lord’s command to preach the Gospel in all the world. There are several ways in which you can help:

- most importantly, please join us in prayer for our Father’s blessing for *‘unless the LORD builds the house, they labour in vain who build it’*.
- put simply, the more you give to the CBM General fund the more we can do to preach the Truth and support our brothers and sisters overseas.
- if you are a tax-payer, we can benefit by an extra 22% on any individual donations you make – see www.cbm.org.uk to download a Gift Aid form.
- we also need people who are prepared to join in the work. This year the East Europe Open Day is going to be specially geared towards those who would like to know more about what is going on, possibly with a view to getting involved themselves. So, a date for your diary is 14th November at Arden School, Knowle, near Solihull (God willing).

If you would like to have more information or would like to hold a publicity meeting in your area, please contact the CBM’s Publicity Secretary, Brother David Furniss by telephone on 01782 658323 or by email david_furniss@btinternet.com.