

# building up the body of christ

## DEAR FRIENDS & PARTNERS OF EEMN,

"And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-12, ESV)

The 2016 EEMN summer missions season has officially begun! At this writing, the English Language Summer School (ELSS) team is already serving at Kondopoga, Russia and I have just arrived at St. Petersburg to begin serving for two months by meeting, teaching, preaching, and planning for future ministry alongside our partners in Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia, Belarus, and Bulgaria.

New this year is the EEMN Missions Blog site, where each of our teams are posting regular updates and prayer requests, as they serve during the summer! Visit the site: [EEMNmissionsBlog.org](http://EEMNmissionsBlog.org) or simply visit [EEMN.org](http://EEMN.org) and select the 2016 Missions page from the side menu!

Please remember to include all of our team members in your personal prayers for safety, as they travel, and that God will use them in profound ways to preach, teach, and share the love of God in Christ Jesus.

In this edition of the Network Newsletter you will meet Jacob Ellis, our new student missionary to Slovakia! EEMN Founding Director, Pr. Don Richman, shares an update about his ministries abroad; and you will see a recap of the new Annual Midwest Event, held recently in Minnesota.

EEMN is pleased to announce that we will also host new Events at Anaheim, California on August 12th and at Denver, Colorado, on October 7th! Keep watch for more specific details in the coming months. These are opportunities to learn more, in a compelling and engaging way, about our ministries, the vision and goals for the coming year, and to become more personally involved in the ministries of EEMN. Of course, you can also expect a good meal and an inspiring message from a featured East European keynote speaker!

God is moving mightily among us and we want to thank you for your continued prayer support and personal investment in the ministries of EEMN. Together, we are Building and Equipping the Body of Christ in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. To God be the glory!



Pr. Don Richman



EEMN SHARES THE GOSPEL WITH HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS IN RUSSIA, EVERY YEAR! YOU CAN SPONSOR A STUDENT FOR ONLY \$45! MAKE YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION THROUGH EEMN TODAY!

## RESPONDING TO THE CALL

During the summer of 2015, EEMN Ministry partner and SEM youth ministries director in Slovakia, Miro Mudrak, expressed to Pr. David his desire for a US college student to serve with SEM and alongside Slovak students for one year. That call was answered in Washington student and 2015 Slovakia English Bible Camp (SEBC) team alumni, Jacob Ellis! Jacob will travel and serve with the 2016 SEBC team, but he will remain in Slovakia and serve through the 2017 missions season! Please keep Jacob in your prayers and look for updated information about his ministry on the EEMN website, under 2016 Missions!



*Jacob Ellis*



BE SURE TO VISIT THE 2016 SHORT-TERM MISSION TEAMS BLOG SITE!  
[EEMNMISSIONSBLOG.ORG](http://EEMNMISSIONSBLOG.ORG)

**RUSSIA**  
MAY 24 - JUNE 13  
Serving Kondopoga School #8

**LATVIA**  
JUNE 22 - JULY 10  
Serving Striki School and Blidene School, both near Saldus

**SLOVAKIA**  
JULY 5 - JULY 25  
Serving at Puchov and Vranov

**ESTONIA**  
AUGUST 8 - 12  
Team 1 - serving at Saaremaa

**ESTONIA**  
AUGUST 17 - 29  
Team 2 - serving at Tartu



DATES FOR THE 2017 MISSIONS SEASON WILL BE AVAILABLE OCTOBER 1, 2016

# — created in His image —

It was about 9:30 on Monday April 11th. I had just finished an evangelism weekend at the church in Sortavala, Russia (Sortavala had belonged to Finland until WWII). As I was eating breakfast with Pastor Sergei, Andre - a 22 yr old young man who had come to the meetings on Saturday - came to join us. After a little general conversation I asked him "Could I show you something about the gospel?" He said yes. I quickly drew the famous "bridge" design, which illustrates man on one side, God on the other and the cross as the bridge between. He pointed out he was on the man side and was not with God. "Would you like to accept and trust Jesus and be with God?" His answer was a yes. He prayed, repented and accepted Jesus as written in John 1:12. "Where are you now?" "I'm with God." "How?" "Because Jesus died and rose for me!" A few minutes later I left to take the bus to Petrozavodsk rejoicing that one more person had been added to the Kingdom of God in Russia.

Petrozavodsk has become a home in Russia where I am warmly welcomed by Pastor Alexei and his wife Nadia. Though I had meetings every day, perhaps the high point of my time there was meeting with the young people's group - ages 16 to 26. After showing them the bridge to salvation illustration I also did a short Bible study showing that we are precious in the sight of God and should not surrender to the feelings of inferiority. Rather, we give thanks to God that because we are created in His image (Genesis 1:26) and bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20), we are precious. After the meeting a young mother told me how this had impacted her life.

I took the 6:00 train to St Petersburg. The new director of the seminary, Pastor Ivan Laptov, was there to meet me. He took me to the seminary about 15 miles east of St Petersburg where I spent the night. That morning we made plans for my return in November to teach at the seminary and then to travel with him to Lithuania and Latvia to speak to pastors.

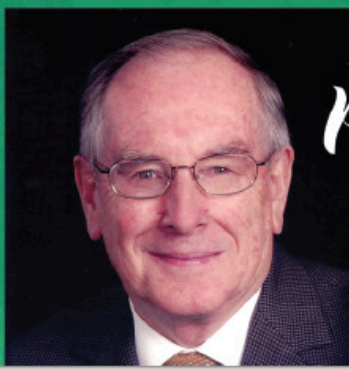
On Friday the 22nd - after four days in St Petersburg where I held counseling meetings with different people - I traveled to Saratov. As I traveled I was reminded that on this same day many of you at home would soon be gathering for the EEMN Annual Midwest Event (Banquet). Due to scheduling issues in Russia I regret I could not be there to meet with you and thank you for your faithful prayer and support. I am grateful for the able leadership of EEMN Executive Director, Pastor David Breidenbach, who could convey our gratitude to you.

I arrived in Saratov at 6:00 am on April 22nd to begin a week of various kinds of ministry in the city and in villages. One of those was Jagadna Palyana. Some time ago I read the story of a Christian lady from that village. Because she was a believer, the Communist state forcibly removed her daughter from their home and put her in an orphanage. I met the woman, the daughter, and granddaughter. The little group of believer women still meets in her home.

Some years ago, when I was in the city of Ulyanovsk, three people came from Saratov to attend my Bible studies. As a result, their pastor invited me to come to their city. Each time I came to Saratov, one of those ladies, Lyudmila, invited me for a nice dinner so I could visit with her husband Sergei. He was one of the few survivors of those who were called to suppress the damage of the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in 1986. Each time we had long discussions about God, Jesus, faith, and eternal life. Each time he was more open. Last fall he took a first step in trusting Jesus. This May, during a conversation after church he asked the pastor and me if he could talk with us. I thought he might want to talk more confidentially. Instead he wanted to pray for me the pastor and the church. I was gratefully surprised at the depth of his prayer---in Jesus' name.

Last fall, Pastor Oziel Campos de Oliveira - a long time friend from Brazil - joined me in ministry in Saratov. This year he is helping form a team of three or four Brazilian pastors from the Lutheran renewal group called Encounter who will go to Russia in October. Since they speak German they will be able to work with those pastors many of whom speak German.

I am grateful to God for the privilege of serving in Russia and Eastern Europe. Thank you for joining in the great, life-changing task of "preaching Christ crucified..." (1 Corinthians 1:23).



Pastor Don  
Richman

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"REBUILDING AND EQUIPPING  
THE BODY OF CHRIST IN EASTERN EUROPE  
AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION."

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## 2016 MIDWEST EVENT RECAP

The annual 2016 Midwest Event was a joy-filled celebration of God's providence and faithfulness in the ministries of EEMN. New ministry opportunities and partnerships were introduced, and all in attendance were mesmerized and inspired by the story of life in East Berlin, as told by keynote speaker, Michael Furchert.

The next EEMN Events are scheduled for Anaheim, California on August 12, and Denver, Colorado on October 7.