



# EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

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## Women in East European Ministry

*Sandra Oestreich*

June 1995 marked my 25th year as a missionary, most of which has been spent traveling or living in Eastern Europe. Recently I observed one of the young Albanian female staff members on our Youth With A Mission (YWAM) Discipleship Training School in Tirana, which led me to reflect on the changes I have experienced and seen for women in ministry in the East. I watched as she sat prayerfully during a ministry time when the staff was praying for students. She went to one of the young male students and began to share something with him, concluding by praying for him. She shared with spiritual authority, aware of her right and responsibility as a staff member to speak to the students' lives as God directed her. What I realized watching her was that she had overcome, consciously or unconsciously, a traditional part of her culture to do that. In Albanian culture, women serve men; they don't work alongside them equally (although they do work very hard), and they certainly don't correct them or offer advice. Our staff woman has a gentle spirit and was not acting in a domineering or aggressive way. She was merely being a servant of God, speaking from Him to the student. And just as amazing to me was that he accepted her ministry.

Is this typical of ministry opportunities for women in Eastern Europe? No. The church in Albania is unique as former Communist countries go. Because of Albania's total ban on any form of religion from 1967 to 1990, there was no church presence and thus no tradition. Apart from two points in their history (1890s and 1930s), there was also no Protestant church in the country. The Catholic and Orthodox Churches counted 30 percent of the population among their adherents until the Communist ban on religion, and the remaining 70 percent were Muslim from 500 years of Ottoman occupation. Thus, when the country opened up to missionaries in 1991 and dozens of Evangelicals moved to Albania to plant new churches, the new Protestant fellowships were made up of new believers, some founded by missionaries who came from backgrounds where

women are not encouraged in leadership. Today, four years later, there are many women missionaries in the country, and Albanian and foreign women play an equal part in the development of the church and mission.

This has not been the case in many East European countries where the Protestant movement was founded by people influenced by traditional denominations in Europe or the United States. I lived in Croatia for three and one-half years in the 1970s and remember feeling surprised the first time I attended one Baptist church—there the men and women were sitting on separate sides of the room. In the early 1990s I led a short-term team to Bulgaria where we ministered in a Pentecostal church. Much to my surprise, the pastor asked me to give the sermon in an evening service. That was not the norm in Evangelical churches in Eastern Europe!

I am privileged to work with a mission that has a founding value that people should be allowed to minister, whatever giftings God has placed in them, regardless of age, race, or gender. My leaders have often believed in me more than I believed in myself. My being a woman did not prevent them from giving me responsibilities. This is not necessarily the case in all parachurch groups any more than in local churches or denominations. At one point in my missionary career I attended a consultation on behalf of the organization with which I worked. At the same consultation was a leader for whom I had worked in another group. He expressed great surprise that I was also there as a delegate.

I went to Albania concerned about being accepted in a leadership role since the country was heavily influenced by Muslim culture. My first assignment was to co-lead a Discipleship Training School with a veteran male missionary. Would that be acceptable in the male students' eyes? What would students' parents think about a woman co-leader when they visited? (I was careful to wear a skirt or dress whenever I taught a lesson or when we expected visitors.) There appeared to

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be no problem. I sensed a respect from the students and their parents as well as their pastors (most of whom were foreigners). Perhaps that was because I was a foreigner and older. I could take on a motherly role, which gave me a place of honor.

As pleased as I am that I am able to minister here, I am even more excited about some young women I know who are beginning to use the gifts God has given them. I think of two Albanian women in their early 20s who are full-time workers, leading Bible studies, discipleship groups, and doing evangelism in villages; or of the

Russian woman who is a YWAM missionary from a Muslim town and from a traditional Evangelical church. Because she is from a Muslim region of the former Soviet Union and because her Evangelical home church does not envision women in leadership, she has had much to overcome to step out of a doubly restrictive setting to follow the Lord into missions. ♦

*Sandra Oestreich is national coordinator for Youth With A Mission, Albania.*

## Russian Women in Ministry

*Coeditor Wil Triggs Interviews Veteran Missionary Rose Leonovich*

**Q. What percentage of recent converts would you estimate are women? How have they fit into the church?**

A. There have always been more women in the Russian churches. Maybe this is because their lot in life is so difficult. Many men died during the wars and then especially under Communism. I would estimate that three fourths of many churches are made up of women. As for their fitting into the church—it is a difficult transition. The older women would like to put head scarves on all new Christian women and teach them to be submissive to their husbands or to the men in the church. But this is changing slowly.

**Q. As opportunities for the church to minister have increased since the fall of Communism, how have women of the church responded?**

A. It is amazing how much work Christian women do in the church. They have always been very active. For example, when there is a baptism, it is the women who fill the baptistery. It is the women who wipe up the floors. They do the hard work in the church. They are the clean-up crew.

But now there are many new avenues opening up for them to minister, including acts of charity. I have a friend, Ludmila Voronina, whom I have known for many years. Ludmila does charity work in one of the Baptist churches in Moscow. She is very organized and uses a computer to keep track of all the people whom she has helped and also to keep track of what is in stock. Ludmila is not recognized as the one who does the work. There is a man in charge of charity in the church and people know him. She just loves the work and people. People adore her. When she gives rice to a family of four, she makes sure there is enough for several days. Some refugees from Kazakhstan came without any winter clothes. We sent them to Ludmila and she outfitted them for the winter.

Women are exercising leadership in the development of children's ministries. Vera Belova has worked out a Sunday-school curriculum for children and is sharing it with all the churches in Moscow. She actually wrote it out by hand and made photocopies. I am encouraging her to have it published. This curriculum includes a lot of poetry and examples from life in Russia, which makes it quite different from the Sunday-school curriculum that we bring in from the West.

**Q. Can you give some other examples of Russian women ministering effectively in churches and in parachurch ministries?**

A. Nadia Komendant is a very outstanding Christian worker and serves as the president of women's ministries for the Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Ukraine. She has a tender heart, especially for widows who often have been forgotten by the brethren. Nadia has organized handicraft projects for these women. She gets them together at least two or three times a month. They make cloth covers for books, aprons, bookmarks, and little shirts for newborns, and so on. When she has a conference, Nadia sells these products to women at the conference. She divides the proceeds among the widows. This helps them with their expenses because they really do have it difficult.

Vera Kadaeva runs children's camps during the summer and, through the children, reaches unsaved parents. It is such an exceptional ministry. She is actually the president of the women's ministry for the Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia. But her first love is children's ministry.

Svetlana Vorubliova is the general secretary for the Euro-Asiatic Federation of Unions of Evangelical Christians-Baptists. For some time she had wanted to start a Christian women's magazine, but she did not have the blessing of the brethren. Katherine Allen, a missionary with the

Southern Baptists, encouraged her. She printed the first issue in January 1995, just in time for Russian Christmas. It is a very nice magazine, called *Maria*. The women chose the title, *Maria*, as Svetlana explained to me, "Because there are so many *Marias* in Russia now who long to sit at the feet of Jesus."

**Q. What lifestyle and family issues are of greatest concern to the women with whom you minister?**

A. When you hear the women pray in church, it is almost always for a husband or wayward son who drinks. These women love the Lord, but they have no idea how to handle anger at these things their husbands and sons do. Most Christian women are not married to Christian men. There is much stress in the family. I have written a book for Russian Christian women, *Women in the Whole Armor of God*, in which I give some examples of Russian Christian women to whom the Lord gave much wisdom—how when the wayward son is coming home, instead of scolding him and driving him away from the home, she would stay up waiting for him to come home, quickly wash his face, put him to bed and kneel down and pray, caress his face, tell him she loves him. She would pray that the Lord Himself would convict her son and bring him to trust in the Lord. This is in contrast to being angry and having a fight in the home. Many Russian men seek a fight—and if the woman answers back then they can slap her and beat her up. If she is quiet and puts out some soup for him, it could help in a family situation. The unchurched women would not tolerate this. They would just send them off. That would be the end of the marriage.

**Q. How is the Western missionary force a help to the women of the church?**

A. Actually, it is refreshing for Russian Christian women to have visitors from the West. Through them, windows to the West have been opened. Quite a few of the women with whom I have become close friends have shyly expressed that they wished that the women from the West would not copy them by putting on scarves in church. They should dress the way they dress. I advise them to be happy. They don't have to put their scarves on for the church. People are different now. However, many of the older women would like to keep the scarf on the head. This comes over from Orthodoxy. The men like to think this symbol of servitude is really what the Scripture teaches.

**Q. What advice would you give to a Western missionary woman hoping to start a ministry with women in post-Soviet society?**

A. Don't start anything yourself. Get alongside a Christian young woman and train her personally and help her start a ministry that would be useful and profitable for spreading the gospel in her area. In other words, be a sister Paul and find a sister Timothy for yourself. Get next to the people. Help them to do the work. Your role should be to encourage them and train them to do the work.

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Rose Leonovich has worked with Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries since 1992. She has served as a missionary to Slavic peoples for 47 years.

## Missionaries to the Former Soviet Union and East Central Europe

Statistics on what were thought to be the 20 largest sending agencies to the former Soviet Union and East Central Europe appeared in *EWC&M Report 3* (Spring 1995), 10. The editors welcomed additions and corrections. The following table presents the number of Christian workers from five additional agencies.

Compiled by Matt Miller.

ORGANIZATION	FORMER SOVIET UNION	EAST CENTRAL EUROPE	TOTAL	SHORT	CAREER
Frontiers	118	14	132	50	82
Greater Europe Mission	18	20	38	6	32
Institute in Basic Life Principles	320	0	320	300	20
United World Mission	18	19	37	0	37
Wesleyan World Missions	38	8	46	30	16
Additions to Total	512	61	573	386	187
<b>Total for 25 Agencies</b>	<b>3190</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>4906</b>	<b>3197</b>	<b>1709</b>

## The Russian Context Is Best

Beverly Nickles

For intensive, year-round study and acquisition of Russian language and culture, how can there be a better place than Russia? How could a program in the West be a better substitute for missionaries than being immersed in Russian culture and language daily? In Russia the missionary hears the language by walking the streets, riding public transport, going to the market, and listening to people on the elevator. By simply listening, the language student begins to pick up the tone, rhythm, and intonation of the language—as natives speak it. A language lesson is as close as the radio or television or any newspaper or magazine on the street. As a famous American linguist, Leonard Bloomfield, said, “All of the environment teaches.”

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### Formal study

Studying Russian in Russia by necessity includes practice on the streets, with conversation in context by native speakers. Students who cannot run from the language, but must hold it in their heads, learn faster. But when students study the Russian language in the West they do not develop the habit of thinking in the language because they are not forced to. However, fluency will come only as students are able to think in the language.

Missionaries need to be able to use the language, not simply know it. They must develop the skills of understanding other people and accurately get their message across. The best way to learn that is in conversations and in relationships with native speakers. A minority of missionaries have enrolled their children in Russian public schools or have hired tutors to teach their children Russian language, literature, and culture. Such an approach can enrich missionary children and the ministry of their parents.

Missionaries who have come to Russia after studying the language in the West report difficulties. One young American said, “I studied Russian in my university for two years, but when I got here I couldn’t understand Russians and they couldn’t understand me.” Other missionaries who arrived after having studied in an intensive program for missionaries in the West felt that the experience had ruined them for learning the language.

Several Russian-language programs in the former Soviet Union have many decades of experience teaching individuals from every part

of the world who have no knowledge of Russian. Because of well-trained and experienced professional teachers, these students begin reading, writing, understanding, and speaking Russian after a few months.

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### Personal experience

I came to Russia knowing almost nothing of the language. As much as possible, I immersed myself in the culture, living almost exclusively in the Russian community. I forbade my language teachers and almost everyone else to speak to me in English. My first formal language study was in a nontraditional intensive language program at the former Higher Komsomol School in Moscow. During the Communist period, since the Komsomol School trained young Communist leaders from all over the former Soviet Union and other Communist countries, the main textbook had its share of Communist ideology and propaganda, which has given me insights into a worldview that continues to shape the thinking of ordinary Russians.

I then studied in a more traditional ten-month intensive program at Moscow State University’s Center for International Education, which has over four decades of experience in teaching Russian as a second language. I received a rich spectrum of Russian language, history, and literature from the hearts of highly educated Russians. Native speakers who know, love, and live their culture firsthand teach with a great depth of knowledge and feeling.

A word of caution though: sometimes the system is difficult for Americans. For example, in Russia the first day of teaching often begins using only Russian. This approach challenges the student more intensely to think in the new language. Learning in America typically involves materials and an approach that mix Russian and English. Americans sometimes rebel against the all-Russian approach and demand a teacher willing to “explain it in English.” This is just one example of how Russians don’t necessarily see or do things the way Americans do.

I made the decision that it would be better in terms of long-term ministry to yield myself to this approach. It forced some changes in me, but maybe the experience made me more understanding of the Russians around me. Unfortunately, there were times when I also resisted. Looking back, I wish I had been more pliable and had taken what my teachers said a little more seriously. My life in Russia and my

Students who cannot run from the language, but must hold it in their heads, learn faster.

Beverly Nickles is a missionary journalist with Conservative Baptists International based in Moscow.

ministry would have been much richer. Americans tend to expect teachers to perform in a way that is familiar to them. Might it help in cultural adaptation if missionary students tried to adapt somewhat to the style of the Russian teacher? To be sure, it is harder and more time-consuming just to live in Russia. But an astute student takes hold of the normal routine and events of life and turns them into cultural and language acquisition lessons. "Real life" does not get in the way of learning; it enhances learning. ♦

### *Russian Language for Christian Workers*

The Center for International Education of Moscow State University now offers language courses specially designed to meet the needs of foreign Christian workers in Russian-speaking countries. Courses are designed to teach basic, practical Russian language skills of speaking, reading, and writing, while at the same time introducing students to language useful in Christian ministry. Contact: Professor Vera A. Stepanenko, Public Relations Office, Moscow State University, Center for International Education, 18 Krzhizhanovskogo ul., Bldg. 1, 117259 Moscow, Russia; tel: 7095-124-7144; -3115; -8011; fax: 7095-125-4461.

## RUSSIAN LANGUAGE FOR MISSIONARIES: **Start Now Before Departure**

Marc T. Canner

Where can missionaries study Russian language and culture intensively year-round to be equipped to effectively disciple Russian speakers? Missionary candidates who have studied at the summer Russian Language Institute held at Columbia International University, Columbia, South Carolina, make tremendous progress speaking and understanding Russian in a very short period of time. Since 1993 Russian Language Ministries (RLM) has been conducting a summer intensive program for Columbia International University. RLM provides the instructors, the methodology, and the curricula for these courses.

This same intensive program is also available year-round. For the past four years RLM has conducted intensive Russian language courses in the Albuquerque, New Mexico, area. As with the summer programs, those who have trained in these courses have made great strides toward effective ministry in Russia. Taking an intensive course stateside has tremendous benefits for future ministry, benefits which are not available to missionaries who enter the former Soviet Union without the training, or who train intensively in Russia while living there.

This at first sounds incredible. After all, one would think that with the cultural and linguistic exposure, learning in Russia would be faster. But it turns out not to be the case when comparing proficiency acquired by those studying intensively in the West versus those studying in the former Soviet Union. In most cases we have found that intensive study in the United States prior to entering Russian-speaking lands can enable the missionary to begin ministry in Russian much earlier.

### How is this possible?

1. The cross-cultural factor. Language training should be done in a culturally appropriate way which is conducive to the student's learning style.

Russian natives have difficulty teaching Americans in ways suitable to American culture and thinking. This is especially true for basic students who need much encouragement.

2. Teaching methodology in the former Soviet Union usually is archaic and ineffective. The classroom environment in Russia usually is intimidating. Students in this system receive so much language input all at once that the mind simply cannot process it. Errors are corrected abruptly and harshly, and natives normally cannot or do not explain grammar. Though grammar should never dictate a course, the student does need to know how things are done in order to apply what has been learned to other situations.

3. Missionaries usually have very little time to study Russian in Russia because of the nature of life there. Even when not involved in ministry, one can often spend half a day just traveling across town shopping for basic necessities. If one adds ministry demands to this already grueling schedule, any language learning will come slowly at best.

In the West training is much more effective because the focus is almost exclusively on language learning. With proper methodology (conversational/whole language) and time on task, missionaries can soon become conversant

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**Russian Language Ministries (RLM)** beginning and intermediate Russian classes will be taught 22 January–10 May 1996 and 2 September–20 December 1996. Contact: RLM, Box 14254, Albuquerque, NM 87110; tel: 505-880-9667; fax: 505-880-9668. Columbia International University, Columbia, SC, offers basic and intermediate courses 10 June–2 August 1996. Contact: Dr. Jim Wenger, Columbia International University, Box 3122, Columbia, SC 29230; tel: 803-754-4100 Ext. 3133; fax: 803-786-4209 Ext. 1-3133; e-mail: aa106252@midnet.csd.sc.edu.

RLM also is the producer and distributor of a text and tape course, "Russian for Missionaries," for \$98.

in Russian and even be ready to begin ministering in the language soon after they arrive in the former Soviet Union.

RLM courses provide an atmosphere which promotes accelerated learning along with the encouragement needed to thrive in the language. Students study with gifted and well-trained American and Russian native instructors and are

immersed in the language at an appropriate time. The other great advantage of intensive study with RLM is that all courses are specifically designed for the missionary. RLM is a ministry. Our goal is to enable missionaries to become effective workers in the Russian context, workers who are able to minister in Russian, and in ways which are culturally appropriate. Courses stress biblical and theological vocabulary and enable missionaries to teach Bible studies in Russian. All courses stress speaking and listening. ♦

Marc T. Canner is director of Russian Language Ministries, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## In the Former Soviet Union Is There Freedom of Conscience for All?

Mark Elliott

■ In recent months *EW&M Report* editors have received an increasing number of firsthand reports of Russian Orthodox pressure upon local authorities to block Evangelical Christians' rental of public facilities, such as theaters and concert halls. Evangelical seminaries from St. Petersburg to Moscow to Krasnodar likewise are experiencing difficulty in their attempts to purchase or rent property. In the past year more than a dozen Evangelical Christian-Baptist churches in the Moscow oblast (region) alone have been thwarted by officials and Russian Orthodox in their attempts to purchase or rent property for the purpose of conducting worship. One Evangelical Christian-Baptist (ECB) church official reported that this past summer at an ECB Sunday service east of Moscow, Orthodox protestors struck Evangelicals with icons as they arrived for worship.

■ In 1995 the largest Pentecostal congregation in Moscow received numerous bomb threats which halted worship ten times (*News Network International*, 28 July 1995, 4).

■ Russian monarchists, in their support of Orthodoxy, increasingly attack democracy and "various cults and heretical confessions" as "alien to the Russian people" (*OMRI Monitor*, 26 July 1995).

■ A foreign missionary in Saransk, Mordovia, was arrested in July 1995 for alleged currency violations (*Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 11 July 1995, 1), while in another city the same charge was used to confiscate a missionary family's belongings and to evict them from their apartment.

■ Restrictions in the Russian Republic on minority religious activity and on foreign missionaries have been enacted by regional government bodies in the Amur, Khabarovsk, Kostroma, Kazan, Primorski, Tver, Tula, and

Tyumen, and are threatened in Izhevsk, Udmurtia. (See the following "Appeal for Religious Liberty" and Keston News Service, October 1995, 9.)

■ On 27 October 1995 police beat Baptist Anna Zhidkova and removed four foster children from her home in Ulyanovsk (Larry Uzzell, Keston Institute press release, 3 November 1995).

■ In April 1995 police conducted raids on Evangelical Christian-Baptist, Armenian Missionary Association, and Jehovah's Witnesses churches in Yerevan. Also in April in the town of Gyumri unknown persons threw Molotov cocktails into a kindergarten attached to an Evangelical church and a grenade into a Pentecostal home church. According to *News Network International* (19 May 1995, 31), "There is hardly an interview with a senior Armenian bishop that does not include some derogatory reference to the 'sects' and a call for their activities to be restricted." Armenian Apostolic Archbishop Kerekin Nersessian suggested that the incidents "might have been provoked by the groups themselves." Other groups suffering arrests or attacks in Armenia include Seventh-day Adventists, Bahais, and Hare Krishnas (*National and International Religion Report*, 29 May 1995, 6).

■ In May 1995 Uzbekistan began imposing greater restrictions on the printing, importation, and distribution of Christian literature. And in June 1995 Uzbek authorities expelled Campus Crusade workers from Tashkent and closed three churches. While the Uzbek constitution guarantees freedom of religion, a contradictory 1991 law claims to protect the right of its citizens to "profess and spread their faith," but also bans "missionary activities" (*News Network International*, 19 May 1995, 6-8).

# An Appeal for Religious Liberty From the Republic of Udmurtia, Russia

We, the organizers of the interconfessional meeting, leaders of Evangelical churches of the Udmurt Republic and the city of Izhevsk, appeal to the government of the Republic (to the legislative and executive powers), to the public, and to the mass media.

We are very concerned about the growing attitudes of misunderstanding, increased tensions, burgeoning opposition to Evangelical churches, and subjective treatment of events occurring in the life of the church, which are being expressed in the biased opinions of the press, with the aim of influencing the official organs and public opinion. Contemporary history knows quite well enough examples of similar increased tensions, as in Western Ukraine, Central Asia, Ulster, and Yugoslavia, which lead to grave consequences and a worsening of stability in society.

The Evangelical movement in Udmurtia began at the end of the nineteenth century, and despite several difficult periods of tension and persecution, is at the present time expressing its rights for the existence of an adequate number of churches. The Evangelical movement in Udmurtia is represented by 21 officially registered churches and three in the process of registration, with approximately 7,000 full members and more than 50,000 parishioners.

We consider it necessary to declare that Evangelical churches have nothing in common with such totalitarian sects and movements as "Aum Sinrekyo," "Jehovah's Witnesses," "The White Brotherhood," "The Our Lady Center," "Moon Society," "Church of the Last Testament," and others similar to them.

In spite of mutual mistakes and several religious misunderstandings on the part of the Orthodox Church, we consider it possible to continue to strive for peace, mutual understanding, and tolerance in accord with the words of the Bible (Ephesians 4:3-6).

In accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and current legislation, we demand:

- practical implementation of equal rights for all registered Christian churches;
- the prohibition of provocative statements in the mass media directed at inflaming religious hostility among the populace;

- the creation of an Expert Advisory Commission under the government of the Udmurt Republic from representatives of churches of all confessions and opinions, for the monitoring and practical implementation of international rights to religious freedom provided by the laws of the Russian Federation and the Udmurt Republic.

Respectfully,

Pastor Peter Kibukevich  
Pentecostal Church "Voice of Hope"

Pastor Pavel Zhelnovakov  
Church "Philadelphia"

Pastor Mikhail Beloglazov  
Pentecostal Church "Light to the Urals"

Pastor Alexander Popov  
Baptist Church "Resurrection"

Pastor Clay Brooks  
Izhevsk Christian Fellowship

Pastor Igor Sharychev  
Baptist Church "House of the Gospel"

Pastor Yuri Degtar  
Church "Act of Faith"

Izhevsk, Republic of Udmurtia, Russia  
22 September 1995

*Submitted by Sam Herrin, Project Cross;  
tel: 501-882-3958; e-mail: ProjectCross@XC.Org.*

**Editors' Note:** The Udmurt Republic has drafted a law which would ban foreign missionaries from working within the republic, not only Western missionaries, but also Ukrainians and others who are not from the Russian Republic. Evangelical pastors have lodged a strong protest.

# News Reports on the Internet

Computer users have access to daily, weekly, and biweekly news summaries on East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union from a variety of sources via the Internet.

	PUBLISHER	FREQUENCY	CONTENT <sup>1</sup>	LENGTH <sup>1</sup>	ACCESS	COMMENT
<i>Daily Digest</i>	Open Media Research Institute (Prague)	Daily	70% political 20% economic 10% social	10 pp.	Send the command "subscribe omri-l (first name, last name)" to listserv@ubvm.cc. buffalo.edu.	Highlights recent events in two sections: former Soviet Union and East Central Europe. No charge. Also available by fax or postal mail for a fee.
<i>Transition</i>	Open Media Research Institute (Prague)	Weekly	70% political 10% economic 20% social	80 pp.	Contact Open Media Research Institute (OMRI Publications) for options and costs.	Analyzes recent events in the former Soviet Union and East Central Europe. Also available by fax or postal mail for a fee.
<i>Monitor</i>	Jamestown Foundation (Washington)	Daily	80% political 10% economic 10% social	8 pp.	Contact the Jamestown Foundation for options and costs.	Highlights developments in the former Soviet Union only. Also available by fax or postal mail for a fee.
<i>Prism</i>	Jamestown Foundation (Washington)	Biweekly	60% political 30% economic 10% social	10 pp.	Contact the Jamestown Foundation for options and costs.	Analyzes developments in the former Soviet Union. Also available by fax or postal mail for a fee.
<i>News Digest</i>	ITAR-TASS Russian News Agency (Moscow)	Daily	70% political 10% economic 20% social	1 p.	Access on the World Wide Web at the URL <a href="http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/friends/news">http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/friends/news</a> .	Presents Russian government perspectives on events with English-language news briefs. No charge.
<i>Romanian Press Review</i>	Balkan Media Group (Bucharest)	Weekly	30% political 50% economic 20% social	15 pp.	Access on the World Wide Web at the URL <a href="http://www.halcyon.com/rompr">http://www.halcyon.com/rompr</a> .	Discusses recent events in Romania from an independent Romanian point of view. No charge.
<i>St. Petersburg Press</i>	St. Petersburg Press (St. Petersburg)	Weekly	20% political 30% economic 50% social	25 pp.	Access on the World Wide Web at the URL <a href="http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/friends/news">http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/friends/news</a> .	Highlights events and trends in the St. Petersburg, Russia, area. No charge. Also available by postal mail for a fee.
<i>Ukrainian Weekly</i>	Ukrainian National Assoc. (Jersey City, NJ)	Weekly	30% political 10% economic 60% social	5 pp.	Access on the World Wide Web at the URL <a href="http://world.std.com/~sabre/ukraine.html">http://world.std.com/~sabre/ukraine.html</a> .	Presents Ukrainian-American views on current events in Ukraine. No charge.

<sup>1</sup>Content and length estimates are averages based on recent issues.

For orders or further information:

OMRI Publications, Na Strzi 63, 140 62 Prague 4, Czech Republic; tel: 42-2-6114-2114; fax: 42-2-426-396; e-mail: [omripub@omri.cz](mailto:omripub@omri.cz) or [transition@omri.cz](mailto:transition@omri.cz). See *EW&M Report* 2 (Fall 1994), 14, for additional background information on OMRI.

The Jamestown Foundation, 1528 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036-1306; tel: 202-483-8888; fax: 202-483-8337; e-mail: [eckert@jamestown.org](mailto:eckert@jamestown.org).

*St. Petersburg Press*, 6th Floor, 5a Razyeshaya ul., St. Petersburg, Russia, or Box 8, SF 53501, Lappeenranta, Finland; tel: 7-812-119-6080; fax: 7-812-314-2120; e-mail: [mcgeou@sppress.spb.su](mailto:mcgeou@sppress.spb.su).

*Romanian Press Review*, e-mail: [avery@rompr.eunet.ro](mailto:avery@rompr.eunet.ro).

*The Ukrainian Weekly*, 30 Montgomery St., Jersey City, NJ 07302; tel: 201-434-0237; fax: 201-451-5486.

Compiled by Matt Miller.

# An Orthodox Response to Don Fairbairn, "Eastern Orthodoxy: Five Protestant Perspectives"

Fr. John Maxwell

I want to express my appreciation for your Spring 1995 article "Eastern Orthodoxy: Five Protestant Perspectives" [Vol. 3, pp. 5-7]. It really shows that we have a long way to go in understanding one another. Don Fairbairn made a sincere attempt at showing five different ways in which Evangelical Christians view Eastern Orthodoxy. He certainly was correct when he observed that Evangelicals often confuse Roman Catholicism with Eastern Orthodoxy, that they often have a knee jerk reaction to Orthodoxy because the externals of this faith are misunderstood by them, that some have an uncritical acceptance of Orthodoxy because of Orthodoxy's steadfastness in proclaiming the true doctrines of the Holy Trinity and the person of Jesus Christ, while others naively assume that the difference between Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism is merely cultural.

It is a shame, however, that Mr. Fairbairn, when attempting to articulate three of the differences between Evangelicalism and Orthodoxy, namely a different understanding of sin, grace, and salvation, grossly misunderstands and misrepresents Orthodoxy, thus adding to the misunderstanding. This is primarily due to the fact that he reads and interprets Orthodoxy through his Western Christian tradition.

1. Mr. Fairbairn claims that Orthodoxy is image-centered rather than word-centered. This portrayal is patently false. Orthodoxy proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ in Words and in Images. A casual observer of Orthodox worship would at once recognize that the Holy Scriptures permeate Orthodox worship. In the Divine Liturgy there are 98 Old Testament quotations and 114 New Testament quotations. In addition to this, the Gospel and Epistle readings are read for the day. This is customarily accompanied with the preaching of the Word. During the first week of Great Lent, the book of Psalms is read completely through twice, and during the rest of Lent it is read through once each week. In addition to this, during this period the books of Genesis, Exodus, Proverbs, Job, Isaiah, and Ezekiel are read. During Holy Week all four Gospels are read in their entirety. On Holy Saturday the entire Book of Acts is read. These are just a few of the examples of how much the Holy Scriptures are utilized in the context of public worship. One can hardly say that Orthodoxy neglects the reading of the Bible! But we do not only read it, we proclaim its message in liturgical actions and in images. What the Word is for the ears, so the liturgical actions and icons are for the eyes. What the Scriptures are for the literate, the icons are for the illiterate.

2. Mr. Fairbairn asserts that Orthodox believe that when man was created he was not in a state of fellowship with God. This is simply nonsense. The Orthodox Church believes that man was made to be in communion with God. We see that even before the fall, God walked in the garden with man.

3. Mr. Fairbairn contends that Orthodox believe that man was not created perfect. In a certain sense this is a true statement, if one understands perfection as fully mature. However, this can be a very misleading statement because it implies a static view of perfection. In Orthodoxy perfection is always something dynamic, forever moving from glory to glory. Adam and Eve were created perfect children, insofar that they were innocent and all that they could be at that particular moment in their existence. But they had a task to grow in the likeness of God.

4. Mr. Fairbairn claims that Orthodox believe that man at the fall simply made a wrong turn and that Orthodoxy takes a less severe view of sin. Moreover he states, "Because sin is not as severe, the remedy need not be as dramatic; we need only a course change to be put back on the road to fellowship with God." This understanding could not be further from the truth. It is true that Orthodoxy does not subscribe to the Augustinian idea that man is born totally depraved, unable to do anything good in God's eyes, or that man is a convicted felon at the time of his birth because of the one sin of Adam. If this were true Cornelius's works before he was a Christian would not have been recognized by God as pleasing to Him. However, this does not mean that Orthodoxy does not see the fall and sin in a serious manner or that the remedy for man's condition is less dramatic than in Evangelicalism.

When man fell into sin, death entered the world. Instead of living in communion with God, growing in divine love, spreading this love to all of creation, he went the way of separate existence. He became spiritually separated from God. In addition to this, sickness entered into the world, resulting in debility and death. Man living in fear of these things tries to grab for all the gusto he can, grasping instead of giving, lusting instead of loving. And when he sees there is not enough gusto to go around, he competes with others for it. And with this competition he becomes enslaved to sinful passions, such as envy, jealousy, wrath, sedition, murder, adultery, etc. Living like this, he reduces himself to the animalistic level. He even refers to himself in these terms: he calls life a rat

*Continued on page 10*

God is not restricted to Western ways, and he has not exhausted his wisdom and grace on North America and Western Europe.

race and he strives to become a faster rat.

Man becomes separated from God by spiritual death and because of his sins. He becomes a base slave of sin and prey for the devil. He cannot forgive, or become free from his sins; only God can do this. Nor can he achieve the ultimate communion with God, because God is radically different from his creatures. What man could not do, God did! God became man, uniting God with man. Through his life and teachings he taught us how to live. By his death and resurrection He conquered sin and death, and defeated the devil. By his ascension He united man with God. And it is now through Him, the God/Man Jesus Christ, and Him alone, that man can be restored, healed, freed from sin, and united in communion with God. Orthodox, then, take sin very seriously.

5. Mr. Fairbairn asserts that Orthodox understand grace to be almost a "substance," a divine energy or power enabling sinners to gain fellowship and acceptance with God, while Evangelicals see Grace as an "attitude" of God toward man of unmerited favor. First of all we should state that Orthodoxy does not believe that God has an attitude problem. He loves man, no matter how sinful man may be. He does not change from a God of wrath to a God of love, for God does not change. It is we who turn from Him, not He who turns from us. Grace is not just an energy enabling fellowship with God; grace is the uncreated Energy of God Himself filling us with the divine uncreated life of God Himself, which is itself not merely "fellowship with God," but communion/union with Him and in Him (John 14:20, 23; 15:4-5). And for us grace is not only received through material icons, but in countless ways (e.g. prayer, almsgiving, good deeds, reading the Bible, through the sacraments of the Church, through keeping God's commandments). Lest this last point be misunderstood, this does not mean that man earns or merits the grace of God. We do not

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## Don Fairbairn's Reply

**First**, one of my major concerns is that we not jump too quickly to the conclusion that Western Eastern Orthodoxy and Eastern Eastern Orthodoxy are the same. Fr. Maxwell criticizes me for being imprisoned by my Western categories of thought, but if he is honest, he needs to recognize that he is just as Western as I am. And I'm not sure that it is fair to present the Orthodox Church in America's view of salvation without the disclaimer that this may not be the same as the Russian Orthodox Church's view of salvation.

deserve His love, forgiveness, kindness, and mercy. Grace comes to us as a free gift. But like any gift, unless it is opened and used, it is of no use. Thus, we must stir up the gift of grace that has been given to us.

6. Finally, Mr. Fairbairn claims that "Orthodox do not focus on the beginning of Christian life because salvation is understood to be the process of becoming acceptable to God as I practice love, mercy, and justice, as I become more and more like God, acceptable to God, and in fellowship with Him." Here we must say that Orthodox would never say this! The problem here is that Mr. Fairbairn is so imprisoned by his Western categories of thought, so riveted on gaining God's "acceptance," that he imposes these categories onto Orthodox thought. In fact, he goes so far in his distortion of Orthodoxy that he claims that Orthodox believe that man becomes acceptable to God at the end of the process of theosis! This is a horrible idea, that God does not accept us until we become fully deified (like God)! Whoever does become fully deified, reaching the end of the process of theosis? We will always, even in heaven, grow in the likeness of the infinite God. Unlike the Evangelical counterpart here, Orthodox do not ask the question at all, "What is the least I need to do to get to heaven?" or "How can I get God to accept me?" The desire of the true Orthodox is to intimately know God, to ever participate and grow in His love and life. And if this is the thought, then there is no room for minimalism, or reducing the Christian life to saying a sinner's prayer. Orthodoxy is maximalistic! Perhaps this portrayal is not completely fair to Evangelicals, but the abuse mentioned here is a prominent feature with Evangelicalism. For the Orthodox, the Christian life begins and continues by being united to Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. And this is what we focus on, our communion with Christ and our participation in the Spirit.

Thank you for your patience with me as I tried to disentangle Fairbairn's confused but well intended interpretation of Orthodoxy. ♦

I do not think Orthodoxy is nearly as monolithic as most Orthodox insist.

**Second**, I fear that in some cases, Fr. Maxwell is responding very violently to things which I neither said nor intended. He does not appear to have read my full paper on Orthodoxy ["Partakers of the Divine Nature," cited on p. 7, *EWCM Report* 3 (Spring 1995)]. And the amount of the "Five Perspectives" article dedicated to my own view of Orthodoxy is extremely small. With such brevity, it is regrettably inevitable that some

statements go unexplained which desperately need fuller explanation. Fr. Maxwell seems to be assuming what I mean when such explanation isn't there (it is there in the longer paper), and I think some of his assumptions are incorrect. I never denied the immutability of God (as he seems to think I did). I never said that Orthodox believe we merit salvation (and in the longer paper, I specifically defend the Orthodox against that charge, since I know it is forthcoming from Evangelicals). I never said that icons are the only means of receiving grace (and in the longer paper, I again make this point clear; there are many ways of receiving grace). I never said that Orthodox see sin as unimportant. A view of sin which does not emphasize the idea of personal, individual guilt can legitimately be called "lower" than Evangelicals'; but that doesn't mean it is "low" in absolute terms. (Maybe it would be better if I had said, "not as high a view of sin.") So I think some of Fr. Maxwell's vehemence is the result of assuming that I meant what he has apparently heard other Evangelicals say about Orthodoxy, which was not always what I really meant to say. Some of my terminology has triggered this reaction, even though the substance of what I think about Orthodoxy may not be quite what Fr. Maxwell thinks.

**Third**, in several places I think Fr. Maxwell is quite right. When I said that grace is almost a substance, that was admittedly not the way Orthodox writers explain it and was probably an overstatement. I was trying to explain it in ways which a Western audience could grasp, but I think I did it poorly. In "Partakers of the Divine Nature" I do not use the word "substance," and I will not use it in discussions again. Similarly, when I said that man was not created in a state of fellowship with God, that was probably also an overstatement. Although that assertion came from Orthodox writers, this is one area where I think Orthodox ideas are a bit slippery. Adam and Eve were in contact with God to some degree, but I still insist that the Orthodox understanding that fellowship with God was set before them as a task to be obtained through deification is a different understanding from that of Evangelicals. In "Partakers of the Divine Nature" I try not to oversimplify, but in the lecture, from which "Five Perspectives" was drawn, I think I made that issue more black and white than it is. Again, I was trying in a very brief time to highlight some differences, and I was not able to do justice to all the complexities involved. Some of these issues are differences of emphasis, not necessarily absolute contradictions.

**Finally**, let me deal with Fr. Maxwell's major criticism, that I misrepresent Orthodoxy "grossly" because I am reading it through my own Western Christian tradition. Specifically, my talk of the issue of God's acceptance, according to him, comes from my being imprisoned by Western

categories. I will not pretend to be anything but a Westerner; nor will I pretend that I am objective. There is no such thing as objectivity. But I have lived in the East for five years and have had extensive interaction with people of an Eastern mindset (both Evangelicals and Orthodox, and even Slavic Evangelicals think in ways which are very clearly Orthodox, despite the fact that they use Western terminology). In addition, of course, I have studied Orthodoxy to some degree and have deliberately tried to study only the Eastern form of it as much as possible. So while my Western heritage has clearly influenced me, I don't think it makes me completely imprisoned; I can see Orthodoxy more clearly than a typical Westerner can. When I talk about "acceptance," I admit that this is not the terminology Orthodox themselves use. But what I am doing is trying to take Orthodox ideas and analyze them in terms of issues which are very important to Evangelicals.

Fr. Maxwell's criticism of the minimalism present in Evangelicalism is valid, but I'm not talking about "what is the minimum I have to do to get into heaven," even if some other Evangelicals unfortunately do talk about that. I'm talking about a conception of Christian life which sees sanctification as a result of a change God has already effected in a believer, rather than as a means to such a change. Again, the difference is one of emphasis, not absolute contradiction (and in "Partakers of the Divine Nature" I specifically say that some Orthodox theologians do talk about justification). But I am convinced that the different emphasis leads to a different understanding of Christian life and of acceptance, even though that is not terminology which Orthodox use. I have the right to analyze Orthodoxy in terms of concerns which are important to Evangelicals, even if that involves introducing issues which are not Orthodox emphases. If Fr. Maxwell wants to deny me that right, that is the same as if I were to deny him the right to critique Evangelicalism's understanding of the Trinity just because the concerns he has about the monarchy of the Father alone don't matter to Evangelicals. Maybe the monarchy of the Father alone should matter to Evangelicals, and he has the right to tell Evangelicals so. Similarly, maybe the issue of God's acceptance and when it takes place should matter to the Orthodox, and I have the right to suggest so. ♦

One of my major concerns is that we not jump too quickly to the conclusion that Western Eastern Orthodoxy and Eastern Eastern Orthodoxy are the same.

*Don Fairbairn is academic dean at Donetsk Christian University, Donetsk, Ukraine.*

## NEWS NOTES

The Editors of the *EAST-WEST CHURCH AND MINISTRY REPORT* recommend to their readers the standards adopted by the World Evangelical Fellowship in its Singapore Covenant, 5 July 1994. (Descriptions of standards have been abbreviated.)

**1. We commit ourselves to personal purity.** We affirm the need for vital personal growth in Christ, with transparency before God and our colleagues. Integrity, holiness must mark our personal walk with God.

**2. We commit ourselves to the spiritual disciplines.** We confess that as Christian leaders we have given too little time to prayer and the Word, and we ask God's forgiveness for this inconsistency.

**3. We commit ourselves to our family.** We affirm that parents and/or spouse and children are our initial responsibility. May our ministry not be at their expense, producing bitterness, but rather resulting in love and respect.

**4. We commit ourselves to a local church.** We will seek opportunities for witness and service according to our gifts and time.

**5. We commit ourselves to financial integrity.** We accept our responsibility as stewards of God's resources and will act with honesty as we raise, use, and account for funds.

**6. We commit ourselves to respect other Christian organizations and leaders.** We seek to build up the Body of Christ! We confess that too easily we can belittle others. We wish to be characterized as a movement that genuinely affirms other leaders and the ministries they serve. Where there is error, however, we will speak the truth in love.

**7. We commit ourselves to honest communication.** We will report stories and statistics accurately, without embellishment. We shall give credit to the individuals and organizations involved.

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission of World Evangelical Fellowship.

Source: *Evangelical World* (September-October 1994), 3. Gratis, unabridged copies available from WEF

Box WEF  
Wheaton, IL 60189  
Tel: 708-668-0440  
Fax: 708-668-0498.



In Moscow 386 public libraries serve 1,800,000 patrons. In November 1993 when Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries asked the city's library directors if they would like to have a **Christian book section in their libraries**, all but 14 responded positively. As a result, in 1994-95 Russian Ministries delivered approximately 70 Christian books to each library.



Nikolai Shalatsky, Russian Ministries coordinator for the public library project, also organized the first-ever **Moscow Christian Book Fair.** Held by joint agreement with Library #174 in July and August 1995, the exhibit featured 60 publishers in the Moscow area. The majority of the several hundred titles on display concerned the Russian Orthodox faith. However, the most popular title was the Evangelical reference work, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, first published in English by Victor Books (Wheaton, IL). This five-volume study provides Scripture text explanations in Russian in easily understood everyday language. Other popular books at the fair included *Women of the Bible* and the Russian translation of Walter Martin's *Kingdom of the Cults*.



The Board of Directors of **United World Mission (UWM)** appointed Rev. Eugene W. "Woody" Phillips, Jr. to the position of president, effective 1 August 1995. For the past several years he has served as vice president and Eastern Europe area director for UWM, as well as field coordinator for The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting, a network of over 60 mission agencies and local churches facilitating church growth in the former Soviet Union. UWM is a nondenominational, church-planting mission agency, with nearly 200 missionaries working in 27 countries around the world. Phillips succeeds Dr. Dwight P. Smith. Ms. Norie Roeder will serve as acting field coordinator for the Alliance in Budapest, Hungary. On 18 September the executive committee of the Alliance appointed Mr. Don Crane as the new field director. Contact:

1111-Budapest  
Budafoki ut 34/B III/3  
Hungary  
Tel: 361-371-0710  
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E-mail: 73611.1555@compuserve.com.



The Lithuanian Seimas (parliament) on 4 October 1995 adopted a **law defining legal relations between the Lithuanian state and religious societies and associations.** According to the law, there is no state religion in Lithuania. The state does, however, recognize nine Lithuanian religious societies and associations: the Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, the Lutheran Evangelists [Evangelicals], the Reform Evangelists [Evangelicals], the Orthodox, the Old Believers (a schism from the Russian Orthodox Church), the Jews, the Sunni Moslems, and the Karaites (an ancient, local Lithuanian-Moslem ethnic and religious community).

All other religious associations can only be

recognized as having joined Lithuania's historical, spiritual, and social heritage if they enjoy popular support and provided their teachings and rituals do not violate law or morality. To receive official recognition by the state, nontraditional religious associations must wait for 25 years to elapse following their official registration in Lithuania.

Reprinted with permission from *The Baltic Observer*, 12-18 October 1995, 2.

**Editors' Note:** While Baptist, Mennonite, Methodist, and Pentecostal churches were present in Lithuania prior to World War I, they have not escaped state discrimination as "nontraditional" religions with no prospect for "official recognition" for 25 years. Since Lithuania was the last European nation to convert to Christianity (13th century), neopagans might justifiably argue that all Christian churches are "nontraditional" interlopers. It all depends on one's date for separating "traditional" from "nontraditional" religion. Discrimination based on arbitrary definitions of "nontraditional" threatens religious liberty in the Russian Republic as well.



### World Orthodox Youth Meeting

Orthodox Christian youth from more than 45 countries gathered in Cyprus, 20-28 September 1995, for the 15th General Assembly of SYNDESMOS, The World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth. SYNDESMOS President Fr. Heikki Huttunen of Finland and Secretary-General Alexander Belopopsky of Great Britain presented reports on the work accomplished since the last assembly in Russia in 1992. During the assembly, 45 new member organizations were accepted into the fellowship from countries as far apart as Canada, Congo, Russia, and

South Africa. SYNDESMOS now has a total of 117 member organizations. Dr. Dimitri Oikonomou, a Byzantine specialist from Great Britain, was elected president of SYNDESMOS, and Mr. Vladimir Misijuk of Poland was selected to serve as secretary-general. It was also decided at the assembly to transfer the administration of major programs from Paris to a new office in Bialystok, Poland.

Source: Orthodox Press Service, No. 71, 25 October 1995.



**New Life Eurasia**, a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, organized a **prayer conference** in Moscow, 26-28 September 1995. More than 700 Baptist and Pentecostal pastors from 77 cities and regions of the former Soviet Union met for prayer and encouragement. This meeting represents one of the largest interdenominational gatherings of Evangelical pastors since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Source: "The New Life Eurasia Partners in Prayer Update," 1 October 1995.



### International Consultation Between Evangelicals and Orthodox

An international group of church leaders from Eastern Orthodox and Evangelical communities assembled in Alexandria, Egypt, 10-15 July 1995. The consultation followed a smaller gathering of World Council of Churches (WCC) leaders held in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1993. Forty participants from 22 countries gathered at the invitation of the WCC to examine the theme, "Proclaiming Christ Today." Participants included mainline Protestant Evangelicals and Orthodox from Greece, Syria, Jordan, Romania, Russia, the United States, and representatives of independent academic organizations such as the American-based Society for the Study of Eastern

Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism (SSEOE). Attention focused on areas of convergence and divergence between Orthodox and Evangelical churches, especially with regard to cooperative missions, worship, and the sharing of educational curricula. The consultation urged the traditions to commit themselves to an ongoing process of collaboration and search for deeper understanding. For further information, contact

George Lemopoulos and Hubert van Beek  
General Secretariat Office of the WCC  
150 Route de Ferney  
Box 2100  
1211 Geneva 2,  
Switzerland  
or Bradley Nassif  
SSEOE  
2701 Ridgeland  
Waukegan, IL 60085  
Tel: 708-249-8350.



**St. Petersburg Metropolitan Ioann died of a heart attack** at his home on 2 November, *Ekspresskhronika* reported. He was 68. Ioann began serving as metropolitan on 20 July 1990. In September 1992, he began publishing a series of articles in nationalist and extreme Communist newspapers such as *Sovetskaya Rossiya* and *Den*. Denouncing "the imperialist West" and "money-grubbers" who "ravage and sell out Russia," he supported building a strongly centralized state. He also wanted to reintegrate Ukraine and Belarus into Russia.

Source: *Open Media Research Institute Daily Digest*, 3 November 1995.

See *EWC&M Report 3* (Summer 1995), 3-5, for additional comments on Metropolitan Ioann.



## RESOURCES

**OMS International** has compiled **Magyar Mission Link**, a directory of Protestant organizations serving in Hungary. It provides addresses and telephone numbers for 72 organizations and 126 individuals. OMS plans to update the list twice a year. Ministries working in Hungary which are not listed may mail or fax their contact information to OMS-Budapest. OMS will supply the list free of charge inside Hungary. *Magyar Mission Link* is available outside Hungary from Wheaton College's Institute for East-West Christian Studies for the cost of photocopy, postage, and handling: \$4.00 (U.S. and Canada, 1st class) or \$6.00 (Europe, printed-matter airmail). Contact:

Rev. David B. Cosby,  
Field Director  
OMS International  
Sümegevár köz 10,  
H-1118  
Budapest, Hungary  
Tel/fax: 36-1-209-2308.



**The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World**, a new four-volume work edited by John Esposito, includes substantial entries on Albania, the Balkan states, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. This collection of 750 articles covers religious thought, political practice, social developments, and literary trends. The encyclopedia may be ordered for \$395 from

Oxford University Press  
2001 Evans Rd.  
Cary, NC 27513  
Tel: 919-677-0977;  
800-451-7556  
Fax: 919-677-1303  
E-mail: bwb@oup-usa.org.



Barbara von der Heydt's report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "**Corruption in Russia: No Democracy Without Morality**," is available from The Heritage Foundation 214 Massachusetts Ave. NE Washington, DC 20002-4999

Tel: 202-546-4400  
Fax: 202-546-8328.



Harvard University's Ukrainian Research Institute publishes **Perspectives on Contemporary Ukraine**, a bimonthly newsletter which analyzes political, cultural, and economic issues. Annual subscriptions are \$25.00. *Perspectives 2* (July-August 1995) featured an article on the Peresopnytsia Gospel, one of the most beautiful surviving East Slavic manuscripts.

Contact: HURI  
1583 Massachusetts Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
Tel: 617-495-4053  
Fax: 617-495-8097.



The **U.S. Department of State** issues **travel warnings** and **consular information sheets** on all nations via the Internet. Sheets provide details on entry requirements, medical facilities, crime, and locations of embassies and consulates. Readers may find many of the suggestions to be overly cautious. However, the sheets often provide useful advice, such as emergency telephone numbers and warnings against specific criminal activities. These postings are available at the URL: "<http://www.stolaf.edu/network/travel-advisories.html>" or by dialing 202-647-9225 with a modem.



## RESOURCES

**"How To Work With Russian Customs at St. Petersburg Pulkovo Airport,"** a practical guide for travelers, can be read at the URL "<http://solar.rtd.utk.edu/friends/economics/nis.fis.bus.docs/russian.customs.airport.html>."



**The Society for Romanian Studies Newsletter** is available free of charge via e-mail. Contact Paul Michelson at [pmichelson@huntcol.edu](mailto:pmichelson@huntcol.edu).



The Central European Foundation (SEN) recently published **"The Situation of Abandoned Children in Slovakia,"** a paper by Marek Rohacek and Vladislav Matej. This study advocates alternative family care (AFC), either foster care or adoption, for institutionalized orphans as a more humane means of meeting the needs of children lacking parents—or lacking caring parents. It also favors a redress in the legal balance of parents' rights (seen as overemphasized) versus children's rights (seen as too limited). In Slovakia 9,700 institutionalized children reside in 21 Ministry of Health Care (MHC) facilities with 1,100 children ages 0-3 years old, 73 Ministry of Education and Science (MES) facilities with 4,500 children ages 2-18, MES dormitory schools with 2,000 children, 40 Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Family (MLSF) facilities with approximately 2,000 children under the age of 18.

The report states:

*Only an insignificant number of children are placed in alternative families. Almost all abandoned children stay in an institution until they are "legally" adult. Even the relatively better chance in the case of very small children is lost after they are more than three years old. It is a*

*well-known paradox in Slovakia that children's homes are full and at the same time hundreds of applicants for alternative family care have to wait several years (four or more) to adopt a child or to have him/her in their foster care. Why is that so? The legislation about the Alternative Family Care needs to be amended and made up-to-date. The "Law Concerning the Family" dates from 1963 and its renewal is not projected in the near future (p. 28).*

This paper is available for \$15.00 from SEN

Box 150  
81000 Bratislava 1  
Slovakia  
Tel/fax: 42-7-68-348  
E-mail: [miro@](mailto:miro@sen.ext.eunet.sk)

[sen.ext.eunet.sk](mailto:sen.ext.eunet.sk)  
or [100273.270@compuserve.com](mailto:100273.270@compuserve.com).



**NGO Law in Brief** explains legislation relevant to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Central Asia. This 28-page document includes discussions of tax and employment regulations and extensive coverage of the May 1995 Russian Republic law "On Public Associations." To request a gratis copy, contact:

World Learning Inc.  
1015 15th St. NW  
Ste. 911  
Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: 202-408-5420  
Fax: 202-898-1920  
E-mail: [5663077@MCIMail.com](mailto:5663077@MCIMail.com).



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**9-11 January 1996**  
**Ministry Training in Russia, Myerstown, PA**  
Contact: Dr. Wayne Kenney, Director of Continuing Education  
Evangelical School of Theology  
121 S. College St.  
Myerstown, PA 17067  
Tel: 717-866-5775  
Fax: 717-866-4667



**24 January 1996**  
**Lecture by Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia, Romania, Westminster Cathedral, London, England**  
Contact: Keston Institute  
4 Park Town  
Oxford OX2 6SH  
England  
Tel: 01865-311022  
Fax: 01865-311280



**26-28 April 1996**  
**Remaking National Identities: Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, NY (Includes panels on "Religion in the Post-Soviet Era" and "The Politics of Islam [in the former Soviet Union].")**  
Contact: Dr. Alexander Motyl  
The Harriman Institute  
Columbia University  
New York, NY 10027  
Tel: 212-854-4623  
Fax: 212-666-3481  
E-mail: [AJM5@columbia.edu](mailto:AJM5@columbia.edu)



**7-18 May 1996**  
**Magazine Publishing Institute, Odessa, Ukraine**  
Contact: Cheryl Warner  
Box 3  
Odessa 66  
270066 Ukraine  
Tel/fax: 0482-554351  
E-mail: [71764.551@compuserve.com](mailto:71764.551@compuserve.com)



**1-6 September 1996**  
**Christianity of Central-Eastern Europe: Between European East and West, Lublin, Poland**  
Contact: Institute of East Central Europe  
Czartoryski Palace  
Plac Litewski 2  
20-080 Lublin, Poland  
Tel/fax: 48-81-229-07  
E-mail: [europasw@golem.umcs.lublin.pl](mailto:europasw@golem.umcs.lublin.pl)



**1-6 October 1996**  
**Russian Orthodox Liturgical Music: Tradition and Practice at the Threshold of a New Millennium (10th Annual Russian Orthodox Church Musicians' Conference), San Francisco, CA**

Contact: Professor Olga Dolskaya-Ackerly  
Conservatory of Music  
University of Missouri-Kansas City  
494 Cherry  
Kansas City, MO 64110  
Tel: 816-235-2859  
Fax: 816-235-5264  
E-mail: [ackerly@cctr.umkc.edu](mailto:ackerly@cctr.umkc.edu)



**13-17 November 1996**  
**American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Convention, Boston Park Plaza Hotel, Boston, MA**  
Contact: AAASS  
8 Story St.  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
Tel: 617-495-0677  
Fax: 617-495-0680  
E-mail: [aaass@hcs.harvard.edu](mailto:aaass@hcs.harvard.edu)



## Slavic Orthodox/Evangelical Similarities

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as well as by Orthodox priests (when the state does not interfere), it is not surprising that Western Evangelicals sometimes read Eastern church leadership styles as authoritarian, controlling, and contradictory to the Reformation's priesthood of all believers. That apostolic succession legitimizes clergy is a given in Eastern Orthodoxy. But the laying on of hands in the act of ordination is a moment of great sanctity for Slavic Evangelicals as well, more so on the average than is the case with Western Evangelicals. Interestingly, the Russian Evangelical Christian denomination's deemphasis upon ordination (via early Plymouth Brethren influence) did not prevail over Baptists' stress upon the laying on of hands when the two churches merged in 1944.

In the same authoritative vein, the role of women in church life is more one of passivity and resignation in the East than in the West. In Western churches, even where women have remained subordinate in theory, they often have managed to exercise substantive leadership roles in practice: for example, in the temperance movement and in missionary endeavors.

In general, Slavic Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals have had less experience with, and less appreciation for, the exercise of individual initiative, compared to Western Christians. For example, Orthodox and Evangelicals in the East are more likely than Western Christians to frown upon direct clergy participation in politics, and have less of a tradition of prophetic challenges to sweeping social evils in their midst.

Finally, Slavic Evangelicals, unlike many of their Western counterparts, but like their fellow Orthodox Slavs, hold tenaciously to belief in their free will to accept or reject God's gift of salvation. Following the Evangelical Christian-Baptist merger of 1944, the former's Arminianism prevailed over the latter's Calvinism. In addition, Slavic Pentecostals from the outset have been Arminian in their theology. Thus today a large majority of Slavic Evangelicals have free will in common with Eastern Orthodox, in contrast to Western Evangelical church and parachurch missions which frequently are Calvinistic, at least as regards eternal security. Given this background, one can more readily comprehend what appears baffling to many Westerners—that, for example, Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the former Soviet Union have more in common theologically with freewill Nazarenes than with most U.S. Southern Baptists. East-West, Arminian-Calvinist tensions receive very little press, but almost certainly will loom larger

in time—unless Orthodox and nationalist pressures effectively curtail Western Evangelical missions in the East.

The differing outlooks of Eastern and Western Christendom confound more traditional Orthodox-Catholic-Protestant confessional distinctions and in some ways place Eastern Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals in closer proximity than most would imagine. Delineating East-West Christian distinctions hopefully will aid in alleviating—or at least in comprehending—the cultural and theological tensions increasingly evident in East-West Evangelical partnerships.

One could also hope that recognizing the psychological and cultural common ground shared by Slavic Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals might be a first step in reducing the longstanding hostility between the two, now much in evidence. Before the collapse of Soviet power Orthodox in the East had little experience with overlapping, competitive jurisdictions such as has plagued Orthodoxy in the West. Likewise, only since glasnost have post-Soviet Evangelicals had to deal with pronounced fragmentation, so characteristic of Western Protestantism. More so than with Western Christians, it seems to me that Slavic Orthodox and Evangelicals are stunned by this spectre of increased disunity within their own traditions. In the East will Orthodox territorialism and Evangelical triumphalism prevail? And will Orthodox and Evangelical mutual anathemas persist? Both abhor the disunity within their traditions. Might that, plus hopefully a growing realization of the damage to witness caused by mutual recriminations, be a first step toward greater civility among Christians emerging from the ultimate incivility of Communism's coerced "utopia"? ♦

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Mark Elliott, editor

Might growing realization of the damage to witness caused by mutual recriminations be a first step toward greater civility among Christians emerging from the ultimate incivility of Communism's coerced "utopia"?

## EDITORIAL

# Eastern Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals: What Sets Them Both Apart From Western Evangelicals

Christians of all confessions in the West, more commonly than in the East, stress the understanding of God over the mystery of God.

With all the troubling evidence of growing enmity between Eastern Orthodox and Evangelical Christians in post-Soviet societies, it might be worth noting a surprising number of *similarities* between the two confessions that usually go unnoticed. [Differences, always more readily apparent, were highlighted in the *EAST-WEST CHURCH AND MINISTRY REPORT* 1 (Summer 1993) in "For Christian Understanding, Ignorance Is Not Bliss," pp. 5-7.] In this instance I do not have in mind the widely recognized common ground of Scripture, the Trinity, Christ as fully God and fully man, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and the Nicene Creed, as important and profound as these bedrocks of Christian faith are. Rather, I have in mind common characteristics of Slavic Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals (especially Evangelical Christians-Baptists and Pentecostals) that appear to set both apart from much of Western Christendom, especially Western Evangelicalism.

First, Slavic Christianity, in both its Orthodox and Evangelical expressions, strongly emphasizes God's awesomeness, majesty, and holiness. God's perfection and purity contrast sharply with human sinfulness, the chasm being so great as to prompt Slavic Orthodox to infinitely plead, "Gospodi pomilui (Lord, have mercy)," and to lead Slavic Evangelicals, often throughout life, to feel less than full assurance that their sins have been forgiven. Whereas Western Evangelicals sing "What a friend we have in Jesus," Slavic Christians more often see their Maker as Master and Judge (Pantokrator), with fear of punishment frequently outweighing the love of God as a

motivating force. In the East this reverence and respectfulness is seen in both Orthodox and Evangelical insistence upon standing or kneeling for prayer and in the shared requirement for women's headcoverings in worship. Slavic Christians' fear of the Lord and the weight of their suffering through untold centuries may also help explain why to Western ears the Divine Liturgy and much of Slavic Evangelical hymnody sound somber, haunting, melancholic, even dirge-like.

On the average, Christians of all confessions in the West, more commonly than in the East, stress the understanding of God over the mystery of God. In contrast, Eastern Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals, in Don Fairbairn's terms, "are reluctant to describe God too completely," seeing that as beyond human capacity.

It also strikes me that Eastern Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals have a more sacramental understanding of faith than is typical for Western Evangelicals. This goes without saying as regards Orthodox, but appears to be true for Slavic Evangelicals as well. The latter are more likely to see baptism as the completion of salvation than are many of their Western counterparts. Feast days receive greater attention in the East, among Evangelicals as well as Orthodox. Likewise, Communion in the East is more central in worship than is often the case among Western Evangelicals. Again, the point is obvious in the case of Orthodox, but holds true for Slavic Evangelicals who, a week prior to Communion, regularly focus worship services upon the importance of the forthcoming celebration of the Last Supper. Slavic Evangelicals take great care with the elements, seeing that the host is completely consumed. And despite being teetotalers, they typically employ wine in Communion. In addition, Eastern Orthodox and Slavic Evangelicals, far more regularly than Western Evangelicals, reserve to ordained clergy the serving of the elements. Again in the East, the Orthodox Divine Liturgy and Evangelical Communion both are seen as mysteries, with only modest attempts by Slavic believers to explain or define what actually happens to the elements, compared to voluminous theologizing on the subject by Western Catholics and Protestants.

A strong sacramental emphasis in worship generally accentuates the role of priest or pastor, thereby placing limitations on laity. Such is the case with Slavic Evangelicals as well as with Eastern Orthodox. Given the strong leadership typically exercised by Slavic Evangelical pastors,

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