

the NORTHBOUND NORTHCUTTS

serving in Arctic Siberia



Winter Happenings

Learning to live in a new location is unique enough, but your first full winter in the Siberian north is always one to remember! With temperatures ranging from a high of +5* Celsius (40* F) to a low of -50* Celsius (-58* F), we have learned how to adapt and how to live even in the extreme cold. Needless to say, you don't do much outside in those extreme temperatures, but life pretty much goes on as usual in spite of the cold.

One of the challenges of living in Vanavara is planning for your yearly supply of groceries and consumables. While groceries and goods are flown in by plane during the summer, it is much

cheaper to buy in bulk in Krasnoyarsk during the winter and freight everything up on the winter road. Katie diligently kept track of everything that we used this past year and prepared a thorough list of things we needed to buy from the city.

In December, Bro. Dean and I were able to drive down to the city and spend almost two full weeks in Krasnoyarsk purchasing many needed items for ourselves and for others in the village. The trip was not without incident, but we are thankful for the Lord's protection on the road. On the way back from Krasnoyarsk, we caravanned with two other vehicles and were able to get acquainted with two other men who live in Vanavara.



Family Corner

Our first full winter in Vanavara also brought with it some great family happenings! Without a doubt, the highlight of the season was having Katie's parents come for a visit. It was a great joy to introduce them to our neighbors and friends here in the village and the kids were completely spoiled by their time with "Mimi" and "Bumpa". Upon their departure, we flew down to the city with them and spend a few days showing them around in Krasnoyarsk before they returned to America.



Elliot celebrated his 8th birthday in December and requested a "Hunting Party", so we decked out the house in Realtree camo and blaze orange and invited a number of his friends for the party. His party came complete with an authentically styled Remington shotgun cake and shells.



Karalyn celebrated her 5th birthday at the end of January and she wanted a "Minnie Mouse Party". Thankfully she didn't request a Minnie Mouse cake, but instead she opted for a chocolate-chip cookie ice cream sandwich cake! Pink, purple and polkadots galore made for one satisfied birthday girl.



The need for prayer for safety on the road cannot be overstated. On our supply run down to the city in December, about 255km (160 miles) outside of Krasnoyarsk, the ignition wiring harness in Bro. Dean's van shorted out and melted through. We limped it into the closest city and parked it and continued into Krasnoyarsk in our vehicle. Two days later Bro. Dean returned for the van and was able to get it back to Krasnoyarsk for repairs. After having the van completely rewired, he was again roadworthy and ready to return to Vanavara. Upon our arrival back to Vanavara, his clutch went out and the engine developed other mechanical problems. He is currently working to get these problems sorted out and will be looking for a replacement vehicle in the near future.

Vehicle Dramas

Our vehicle problems began in Krasnoyarsk when I tried to renew the truck registration. When the inspector could not find the engine serial number, the truck was impounded and an investigation was opened. After a full week of needless paperwork and inspections, I finally obtained a sworn statement from the mechanic who rebuilt my engine last year, which resolved the issue and I was able to complete the registration. Upon our arrival back to Vanavara, the truck developed a horrible engine knock and rattle and it looks like I will have to have it towed down to the city for at least partial engine rebuild (*for the 2nd time*). If it turns out to be anything more serious, I will probably be looking at selling it and buying one with a more reliable engine.

Laborers Together

There have been about 9 cases as a result of the new law on religious freedom. There are 3 categories pertinent to religious freedom in Russia: personal freedom, unregistered religious groups and gatherings, and incorporated religious organizations.

The first case involved a Hare Krishna who was distributing information about his personal faith. His case was dismissed - a victory for personal rights.

Another case concerned an incorporated church holding a children's festival on their own property. After an initial ruling against them, they won on appeal. This is a victory for incorporated churches.

The final group is the most difficult, but one of the most important when starting new churches; groups who have not met the status of incorporation or have not petitioned for recognition as a religious group. An American missionary in the city of Oryol was charged with violation of the law and convicted because his group is not incorporated or registered. He appealed the initial ruling and has continued the appeal process all the way up to the federal courts in Moscow. As of the last update, the Russian Superior Court rejected the appeal, thus making the last possible step an appeal to the Constitutional Court (the Russian Supreme Court).

Please pray earnestly for a victory. This is a precedent setting case, and if it is lost, it will have a chilling effect on church planting! We praise the Lord for the two victories He has given so far and the proof that continued evangelical witness can continue in Russia!!

As always, we truly appreciate your faithful prayers and support of our ministry. We are honored to be your representatives to the people of Siberia.

The Northbound Northcutts

Prayer Requests

For the upcoming hearing of the American missionary's appeal in the Russian Supreme Court - that the charges would be dropped and the ruling of the lower courts reversed

For the young family with whom we have been working

For wisdom and finances to repair or replace both our vehicle and the Deans'

For wisdom and direction as we work in Vanavara - especially in regards to the new law

Prayer Praises

Safety on the winter road in travels both to and from Vanavara

A wonderful time spent with Katie's parents

Increasing contacts in the community and friendships being established

Being able to re-register our vehicle in the city

Katie and Elliot's residency permit extended for another 5 years

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