**Russia Report 6th – 13th July 2015**

The A-Team (Steve Dalley, Nigel Elliott, LeRoy Johnson, Chris Macey) had an early start on Monday morning to ensure we could make our morning flight from London Heathrow. After a slight delay we arrived in St. Petersurg, with Nigel marvelling at the improvements made at the airport to increase the facilities & size. Things are definitely changing and much investment is being made. The roads from St. Petersburg to Kingisepp are also vastly improved; we saw a team working on them as we travelled. Nigel was a very happy man indeed, wondering where all the pot-holes had gone. We arrived at our hosts’ flat to find that we were going to be allowed to stay there on our own, with full use of keys and instructions to make ourselves at home and treat it like our own place.

We started the building work the next day – after the daily 9am prayer session. Nigel was very keen to show the rest of the team (especially LeRoy and Chris – who had never visited Kingisepp before) the layout of the church building. It was clear to Steve that massive amounts of work had gone into to improving the building since he was last there, some 5/6 years previously. Our main task was to lay a floor in the stairwell extension at the back end of the building (where we had dug and lay a foundation some years ago). Chris and LeRoy discovered a secret and previously untapped gift as cement-mixers. That evening we were invited to a meal and fellowship at Andre and Sveta’s home. Ask us about the game we played and we will tell you more.

The building work continued on Wednesday. By the end of the day we had completed our task, and were wondering what we would be doing the next day. That evening we had the pleasure of visiting the Drugs Rehabilitation Centre at Katle. We had a church-style service there, with LeRoy sharing his testimony. 4 men responded to LeRoy’s appeal to follow Jesus, and several people were healed of conditions. Please ask us and we will tell you more.

On Thursday we moved up to the top floor of the building and did a clean-up operation followed by measuring the levels and “mapping” the height of different beams to ensure that a floor could be laid accurately at a future time. Steve particularly enjoyed this architectural experience, under Nigel’s expert guidance. We joined the church meeting that evening and Steve spoke about the River of God and Living Water.

Friday was a lovely day as we were given a (well-deserved) lie-in and then invited to go out with the youth for some football, volleyball and touch-rugby by the River Luga. This was followed with a BBQ with the youth. The team split for the evening. Steve spent the time with the youth and the others visited Pretajenka (a Drugs Rehabilitation Centre). Once again LeRoy shared his testimony and this time 15 people responded to his appeal to devote their lives to following Christ. Thank you Jesus! There were also a whole host of healings, and much ministry. The team finally returned to the flat just before 2a.m, with Steve desperately trying to stay awake so he could let them in.

Saturday was our Peterhoff trip. We invited 4/5 Russians (which soon became 13) to join us for the day as a way of blessing and thanking them for their generosity and service. Unfortunately the weather wasn’t great; but we still had a lovely time and really enjoyed the fellowship. The “Jesus is Lord Church” takes place from 12midday on Sundays, so we had another lie-in. Steve spoke on “boldly approaching the throne” and God as our Good & Perfect Father. That evening we had a 6pm “Farewell to Friends” celebration which was lovely. We prayed with an older lady named Valya and saw her mobility dramatically increased.

We made our emotional goodbyes on Monday morning before heading off to the airport. We were back in Southend for 9pm ish, which was a blessing for those returning to work the next day. The trip was a real success and we were all massively blessed. New relationships had been built, some old ones had been strengthened, and it was great to be able to support & encourage the congregation. Roll on 2016!