

New Gospel Frontiers

Operation Kazakhstan Mission Briefing



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Welcome to New Gospel Frontiers!

We have probably all had a window of opportunity to witness to a person in need of Christ, only to have procrastinated until suddenly that window closed and the opportunity was lost. That is the situation right now for the country of Kazakhstan. Christians have a rare and historic window of opportunity to turn an entire nation to Christ. If we procrastinate, that opportunity could be lost as it has already been lost in neighboring countries.

New Gospel Frontiers hopes to use this window of opportunity that God has provided in Kazakhstan to further the spread of the Gospel. We trust and pray that God will raise up Christian churches with the burden of turning the nation of Kazakhstan to Christ. It is an enormous goal, but the Kazakhstani people are open to Christ and they are waiting to hear the Gospel message.



Traditionally Dressed Kazakhs in Front of a Yurt

The purpose of this Mission Briefing is to provide church mission boards with an understanding of the religious background, the challenges, and mission needs in Kazakhstan. Thus equipped, mission boards can consider in a prayerful and knowledgeable manner whether God would have them support this area of foreign missions.

Information in this report has been gathered in Kazakhstan through meetings with local Christian leaders, such as Oleg Korotky, the former Director of the Almaty Bible Institute. To quote him, "We have been praying for years that God would provide a way to support the needs that we have to reach Kazakhstan for Christ. We hope that New Gospel Frontiers is the answer to that prayer." New Gospel Frontiers believes that we have been led of God to meet these needs. To learn more about New Gospel Frontiers and our strategic approach to evangelizing Kazakhstan and Central Asia, please read on.

About Us

New Gospel Frontiers is comprised of a federation of volunteers who work with U.S. churches to support this mission effort. The one and only objective of New Gospel Frontiers is to win souls for Christ. We have extensive experience in Kazakhstan and a heart for missions in Central Asia. Our personnel have been in Kazakhstan over 50 times, starting in the 1990's.

Over the last five years, New Gospel Frontiers has interviewed Christian leaders and pastors in Kazakhstan to better understand the cultural background, the people and the spiritual needs of the country. We have identified the critical issues that need to be resolved in order to evangelize Kazakhstan and the Central Asian region for the first time in history. Our hope is that the resulting strategic approach will enable U.S. churches to begin critical missions work immediately, saving you the significant time, money and effort required to perform independent research.

New Gospel Frontiers exists to support you and your church. Nothing would make us happier than to pass on as much information to you as desired. We want to provide you with the information that your church needs to make an informed choice about missions work in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, and then to provide you with the financial framework necessary to implement your plan.

New Gospel Frontiers is strictly an all-volunteer organization, meaning that we do not accept money or payment for our services in any form, and that donations do not flow through our organization. All of the donated funds (100%) go directly and safely from your church to the mission field. We'll show you how. Then we provide multiple levels of authentication to document that your donation was used in the mission field as you intended.

Please visit our website for further information, including our Statement of Faith. We hope that you find our Operation Kazakhstan Mission Briefing useful, and we invite you to consider the strategic plan described in the next few pages.

The Challenge

In the heart of the Former Soviet Union, the newly independent Republic of Kazakhstan is poised for a spiritual awakening. This country of 15.2 million people has never in history been evangelized. The people of Kazakhstan have traditionally aligned themselves with either the Islamic or Eastern Orthodox faiths, but today these associations are more cultural than spiritual and the majority of people are not religiously active. A small Protestant minority has been established, but the Christian population is estimated to be less than 1%.

With their newly won religious freedom, Kazakhstanis are now searching for spiritual truth. They are finally free from the oppression that they experienced under the Soviet Union, and they remain free from the repressive Islamic form of government that has already claimed their



Republic of Kazakhstan Regional Map

neighbors in Central Asia. However, over a thousand mosques have been built in Kazakhstan since it gained its independence in 1991; so their newly won religious freedom may not last long.

The people of Kazakhstan are open to the Gospel as never before. Tragically, due to a critical shortage of Biblically trained church planting missionaries, most areas do not have a single Christian church to evangelize and minister to the people. Furthermore, once churches are established, many churches do not have pastors, and those that do, share an itinerant pastor. The few trained pastors in Kazakhstan minister to average of seven churches at one time. But even in light of this, there are over 150 churches in Kazakhstan that do not have a pastor or even an attendant (a layperson with no pastoral training).

The critical factor limiting the spread of the Gospel in Kazakhstan is a lack of Biblically trained, domestic pastors and church planting missionaries.

The Beginning of a Solution

In 1991, shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, an amazing event occurred - an Evangelical seminary opened its doors in Almaty, Kazakhstan! The Almaty Bible Institute offers pastoral and missionary training, and is filling a critical gap in the Christian infrastructure of Kazakhstan. The seminary also serves as a primary regional training center for the other four former Soviet Union countries that comprise Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Thus the Almaty Bible Institute serves a region that is populated with 100 million people, the vast majority of whom have never heard the Gospel.

Many of the domestic pastors and missionaries who serve in Kazakhstan and Central Asia have been trained at the Almaty Bible Institute. However, the success of the Institute in equipping this first generation of Christian leaders is limited by two issues. First, due to the economic inflation in Kazakhstan and their limited level of operational funding, the Almaty Bible Institute has been operating at a financial deficit. This situation is unsustainable. Second, because of this financial deficit, the Institute must charge the students for their attendance. Unfortunately, many of those called to the ministry live at near poverty level. As a result, many of those called by God to be pastors or missionaries do not have the funds needed to pursue seminary training.

The critical factor limiting the number of Biblically trained, domestic pastors and missionaries in Central Asia is the lack of financial support for the Almaty Bible Institute to accept and train students who are called to the ministry.



Almaty Bible Institute Facility and a Pastoral Studies Classroom

Our Vision

The vision of New Gospel Frontiers is simple - to raise support from U.S. churches for the Almaty Bible Institute, in order to increase the number of domestic pastors and church planting missionaries who are equipped to evangelize the 100 million people who have never heard the Gospel in Central Asia.

This strategy has several advantages:

- *For the same amount of funding needed to support one foreign missionary in Kazakhstan (\$80K in training/relocation expenses and \$5K-\$7K/month), full support can be provided for an entire seminary that trains up to 50 pastors and 50 missionaries at a time! Due to this cost effectiveness, a far greater number of God's servants can labor in Kazakhstan. For example:*
 - *If an additional 50 pastors were trained in a single graduating class, with each becoming an itinerant pastor serving 7 churches, then 350 churches that are in need would receive a pastor.*
 - *If an additional 50 church planting missionaries were trained in a single graduating class, with each founding 5 home churches, then 250 new churches would be planted. This would result in reaching ten-thousand for Christ if each church grows to even 40 members.*
- *This missions approach utilizes and supports existing evangelical Christian infrastructure (the Almaty Bible Institute) in Kazakhstan.*
- *Kazakhstani pastoral and missionary students receive seminary training in their native Kazakh language or in the regional business language, Russian, which is the most widely spoken language throughout Central Asia.*
- *If persecution or government restrictions against Christian activities return to Kazakhstan, domestic pastors and missionaries are in a much better position to continue their ministries than foreign missionaries, who are more easily expelled. This is a key consideration given that, as of 2008, measures have been instituted by the Government of Kazakhstan to track and control foreign missionaries and missionary organizations.*

Getting Involved

This strategic approach, with the inherent financial leverage of developing local Christian infrastructure, means that your church can make an immediate and major impact in evangelizing the entire Central Asian region of the world! You can make a dramatic difference in two ways.

- First, U.S. churches and individual Christians are desperately needed to sponsor the operations of the Almaty Bible Institute via monthly donations. This recurring support will allow the Institute to continue operations. If this seminary were to close its doors, Evangelical Christianity would lose its foremost tool for evangelizing Central Asia. This operations support is needed to not only maintain but also to continue to improve the quality of theological education that is received by students from all five Central Asian countries.*
- Second, U.S. churches and individual Christians can adopt a seminary student. New Gospel Frontiers is working with the Almaty Bible Institute to connect students who are in need with U.S. sponsors. We are asking U.S. churches and individuals to prayerfully consider supporting a seminary student. Note that these students actively serve in the ministry during their education. Depending on the candidate's field of study, funding would be needed for a period of 1 to 3 years to provide all tuition, fees and books for that student to complete their seminary education. The monthly support level needed per seminary student is \$125/month. A student biography which includes the student's personal testimony and picture will be provided to each sponsor. Direct communications via e-mail between the student and sponsor will also be provided.*



Russian Orthodox Church and Muslim Mosque in Kazakhstan

Contact Information

For more detailed information related specifically to Kazakhstan and Central Asian missions, please refer to our Internet web site listed below. Our web site also provides prayer requests from the Almaty Bible Institute, as well as describing our secure method for sponsors to contribute funds directly to the mission field.

We look forward to the opportunity to work with you to evangelize this region of the world. We would be happy to answer any questions that you may have by e-mail, over the telephone, or to meet with you in person to discuss mission opportunities.

We urge you to get involved now. This window of opportunity to reach Kazakhstan for Christ may close at any time, and the Kazakhstanis may not have another opportunity to hear the Gospel. Please prayerfully consider whether God would have you support this ministry.

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