



<p><i>Bashkortostan, Russia Caught in Between</i> June 2003 Part 03, Ch. 13 CRF Media Chronicles</p>	<p>Final: 01/31/13 Time: 15:56 © 2013 Carl and Arline Ryan</p>
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Carl: June 2003 found us standing in the middle of Red Square.
Overlay: Red Square, Moscow

Lenin's body is on display in the building behind us.
Overlay: Lenin's Mausoleum

This is the same place that the Red Army, ... with cannons, tanks and missiles, ... passed in review for Russian dictators – Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev. These same men made churches and cathedrals into museums. All around us are symbols of this bastion of communism ... and, yes, its downfall just 13 years ago.
Overlay: Saint Basil's Cathedral

To Arline and I, this is an incredible and unbelievable experience since we grew up in the 1950's when Russia was indeed our enemy.

Tourists were everywhere and I was gleefully filming this once restricted area when told by a policeman to not use my camera mounted on a tripod. With tripod in one hand, my camera in the other, I continued filming the people and the place representing the heart and soul of Russia.

Arline: Our time in Moscow was short and our friend, missionary Chris Carr, ushered us around to more of the city.

There was the home of the Bolshoi Ballet just across from Red Square. All around were impressive statues but Lenin was always in a prominent location. We posed for a picture at one of the massive structures ... but, nearby was a McDonald's! How could Karl Marx possibly explain this piece of capitalism?
Overlay: Karl Marx, Father of Communism

To meet friends for dinner that evening, we traveled on one of the deepest underground metro systems in the world, ... the Moscow Metro. WOW! What an experience! Chris told us to get on and off fast or get run over!!

The next day the three of us rode in a van to the domestic airport and onto an Aeroflot airplane to Ufa, the capital of the autonomous Republic of Bashkortostan.

Insert Map: Moscow - Ufa

Carl: We were in Bashkortostan for nearly two weeks; ... time enough to experience first hand the people and place that we had only read about. We knew Chris, Eileen and their family from working with him on the mission web site we sponsored. It was also good to finally meet in person Larry and Josie Moon.

While in Ufa, we were able to observe the places which Chris and Larry had told us about including the statue of Salavat Yulaev, the most revered hero of the Republic. This monument overlooked the White River and the city skyline. Even so, there was much more to see including a Baskin Robbins ice cream store.

Overlays:

- Russian Orthodox and Sunni Hanafi Islam are the dominant religions.
- A supermarket
-]Vodka: A big seller
- Kvass, another popular drink – Tastes like vinegar
- Fresh and warm cow's milk is better.

We visited several cities and towns located throughout the Republic.

Insert Map:

- Neftekamsk
- Ufa
- Ishimbai
- Kumertau
- Beloretsk
- Krivlya

Overlay: Chris Carr and Peter Zook

Peter Zook, Senior Pastor of the Baptists of Bashkortostan, accompanied us on most of these visits.

Arline: There are about 7,000 Evangelical Christian believers out of the four million population of Bashkortostan. Approximately 1,000 of these believers are Baptist. Baptist churches are few in this Republic with only about 17 congregations. We felt very fortunate to visit 11 of the Baptist churches in Bashkortostan.

Join us with a quick overview of our tour and listen to the beautiful music we recorded during our attendance at the worship services.

Overlays:

- Ufa Baptist Church – Founded 100 years ago.
- Chernikovka District, Ufa
- Good News Church
- They meet in the basement.
- Valentine has a prison ministry.
- On the way to Neftekamsk – 140 miles N.W. Of Ufa
- 10 year anniversary at this church.
- A meal is planned after the services.
- The celebration lasted 6 hours!
- Back in Ufa
- Ready for trip South
- Sterlitamak: 75 miles South of Ufa
- Small church in Sterlitamak
- On our way to Salavat - 120 miles South of Ufa
- Strawberries in bloom next to Salavat church.
- Waiting for service to begin.
- Peter Zook spoke at each church.
- Passing through Kumertau – 160 miles South of Ufa
- Arrival Krivlya at 10:24 PM – 180 miles South of Ufa
- Dinner was ready and the people were waiting for us.

- Fresh warm cow's milk
- The meeting was in the pastor's home.
- At 1:48 AM, we went to a nearby home for the night.
- Our hostess was out milking the cows.
- Her daughter was a delight.
- It was a short walk back to the pastor's home.
- Breakfast and Kumis, fermented mare's milk.
- Not my favorite drink!
- Sharing pictures
- Pastor and his wife
- Nearby town of Ermolaevo
- Pastor and Family
- On the way back to Ufa
- Ishimbai: 103 miles South of Ufa
- Sterlitamak: 75 miles South of Ufa
- New Baptist church
- Back in Ufa
- On the way to the Ural Mountains.
- The Ural Mountains
- Beloretsk: 152 miles S.E. Orf Ufa
- A famous quote from Lenin.
- The Baptist church in Beloretsk.
- A famous quote from the Bible, "GOD IS LOVE".
- Food and rest

Arline: After lunch at the church, there was a surprise and a moving experience for me when I was presented with a special gift for my birthday. Valentine was happy to explain the significance of this Russian doll. Today, she is one of my memory treasures.

Overlays:

- Heading back to Ufa.
- Back in Ufa

Our time in Bashkortostan was very active with all the places we visited.

We were truly encouraged by the believers that we met during our tour and inspired as we worked on the video chapters for the DVD, "*Caught in Between*". There are a total of 18 chapters; three of which are in both English and Russian. Over 1,000 copies of the DVD were distributed.

Overlay:

CRF Media Chronicles
© Filmed: 2003

Narrators: Carl, Arline

Background Music:

From: Churches visited in Bashkortostan



Caught in Between

Ch. 14 (4:51) Filmed June 2003

The Peoples of Bashkortostan, Russia, are caught in between the hope of the Gospel and the barriers of: personal insecurity, lack of trust, and spiritual apathy caused by generations of suppression. Most seldom think of matters of eternity or a personal relationship with God.

Along the western slopes of the Ural Mountains some 700 miles east of Moscow in a land known as the Autonomous Republic of Bashkortostan, lives a people who are truly caught in between.

They are a people caught in between the continents of Europe and Asia, ... a hybrid culture possessing a curious mix of eastern and western traditions. They are a people caught in between two monuments -- one commemorating one of the many bloody uprisings of the Bashkir indigenous people group against their Russian overseers and the other commemorating the oft times uneasy friendship that they forged with Moscow.

They are a people caught in between the antiquated and the modern, between grayish, soviet-style apartment blocks and modern luxury cottages, between traditional markets and trendy malls, between street vendors and modern supermarkets.

They are a people caught between their urban, multi-cultural capitol of Ufa and the decidedly rural, provincial villages found in the rest of the Republic, ... between the city's brick and mortar and the countryside's invariably wooden structures, ... between the running water and tiled toilets one generally finds in the capitol and the more rustic accommodations found outside Ufa.

They are a people caught in between the crushed soviet dreams of senior citizens who live dreary lives on a pittance of a pension and the budding entrepreneurial aspirations of 90,000 college students, ... between simple, heavy, dark clothing and mini-skirts with stylish European boots, ... between the ballets and orchestras favored by older folk and the throbbing techno beat at the bistros and discos favored by generation now, ... between Rachmaninoff and Madonna.

They are a people caught in between the life-style of the average wage earner and that of the new Russians, between the average Ivan's daily commute on Bus #31 and the chauffeured white Volga's of the elite.

They are a people caught in between their great desire for societal control and the shadow economy, ... between a myriad of Ministry of Internal Affairs officers and most business' common practice of keeping two different sets of books kept by most businesses.

They are also a people caught in between a public mask and a private openness, ... between the expressionless, unapproachable faces that one finds on the streets and the open, generous demeanor that one discovers in a Russian home, ... between the smiles of foreigners and the local's oft asked question -- "What is there to smile about?"

And tragically, they are people caught in between the spiritual wasteland of scientific materialism and the ritualistic emptiness of both Sunni Hanafi Islam and the Russian Orthodox Church, ... between the false notion that one's ethnicity determines one's faith and the equally false notion that one can earn one's way to heaven via good works, ... between a mile wide religiosity and an inch deep spirituality, ... between hopelessness and despair.

That is why they so desperately need people like you, ... people willing to live Christ-like lives in their very midst, ... in between, ... in the gap. If you desire to make an eternal difference by investing anywhere from a week to several years of your life in what God is doing among the peoples of Bashkortostan, ... if you wish to bring hope to every heart and a church planting movement to every people group in Bashkortostan, ... then please contact us today.

Are you willing to stand in between for Christ?
(fade to song BLESSED ASSURANCE Verse 2 and the Chorus English translation of Russian words in subtitles)



Asphalt or Mud?

Ch. 15 (11:10) Filmed June 2003

Located on the Western edge of the Ural Mountains, Bashkortostan provides magnificent scenery for those who drive along the highways that crisscross the Republic. To the East is the Ural Mountain Range with its clean, fast flowing streams replenished by the frequent spring rains. Rail fences, ... green fields, ... and small stacks of hay provide a postcard like landscape along the slopes of these majestic mountains. Forests of birch and fir trees add to the picturesque beauty of the foothills of the mountains. Cattle browse along the roadside and provide an interesting diversion for tourists. Fences are seldom used to confine these friendly milk cows and goats. Occasionally, you will see a large herd of dairy cattle tended by skilled herdsmen as

they guide the cattle from their home village to a fresh pasture. They will return the cattle to their owners in the village for the evening milking.

Mountain towns and villages punctuate the landscape with their small wood-frame homes. The sagging and rusty sheet metal roofs provide evidence that these homes have withstood many harsh winters.

Occasionally, a Russian Orthodox chapel or Muslim Mosque overlooks the nearby mountain town.

Some 160 miles East of Ufa, ... nestled in the Ural Mountains, ... is Beloretsk. ... This quaint city with its high elevation and cool crisp air is known throughout the Republic as part of little Switzerland. Here you can shop for souvenirs, ... stroll around the town square, ... or relax in a nearby park. Vendors display their wares on the sidewalk. For the more adventurous, Kumis ... fermented mares milk ... can be purchased.

Leaving the foothills of the Ural Mountains, oil wells are common along with fields planted in small grains. The mainstay of the economy of the Republic is petroleum and agriculture. Roadside stops are located on the more heavily traveled highways providing an opportunity to purchase soft drinks, snacks, souvenirs, and converse with the friendly staff. And, ... if it is lunchtime, ... chicken or pork barbecued to perfection is waiting on a skewer. In the larger cities, small cafes are available serving local specialties such as shash-LEEK, sha-OOR-ma, chebu-RYEK-i, chak-chak, ooch-poochMAK, & bel-YOSH.

Access to almost any place in Bashkortostan is less than a half days drive from Ufa, ... the capital and largest city. This city, ... with a population of over one million, ... is the economic, industrial, and academic center of the Republic. New construction sometimes masks the beauty of the city sitting on a bluff overlooking the Ufa River. While automobile travel is most common, many places can be reached by rail. Travel by boat is limited to the Ufa and White rivers.

Most of the cities of the Republic are miniatures of Ufa. Their streetcars, fast moving traffic, new construction and well-kept parks and city office buildings show vitality and a life that looks to the future. This is evident in Neftekamsk, Northwest of Ufa. Another mark of similarity to Ufa ... and much of Russia ... is the box-like apartment complexes.

To the South is Sterlitamak, ... the Republic's second largest city, ... with its tall smoke stacks attesting to the importance of the petrochemical industry.

In the city of Ishimbai ... like most other areas of Bashkortostan during mid-June ... the Poplar trees are in full seed production. These seeds ... called Pookh ... cause little harm although they get into homes and cars ... as well as ones nose and mouth as they drift through the air appearing as snow.

The cities, ... all connected by ribbons of asphalt, ... appear as the future of Bashkortostan, but the past suddenly appears when one leaves the well-traveled highway. Driving becomes an art of dodging potholes and avoiding some of the muddy roads. Horse carts are the transportation of choice. ... More cattle are seen on the roads than cars. In these rural areas, the variety of single-family homes is in stark contrast to the rows of cookie cutter concrete apartment complexes of the cities. The many repairs on the roofs attest to the struggle of the residents to provide a place for their family.

There are over 4,600 villages in Bashkortostan. A typical Bashkir village is the home of non-Russian minorities including, the

Bashkirs, the Tatars, the Chuvash, the Mari, and others. They generally all live close together in the village where they care for livestock and maintain highly productive gardens of potatoes, onions, squash, cucumbers, cabbage, and even strawberries. The summer days here are long, but the growing season is relatively short, with harvest coming in late August or early September. In the villages, the summer months do not mean vacation or rest from one's labor, but instead a season of frenetic activity as village people try to prepare and store enough food for themselves and their cattle as well as firewood to get them through the ensuing long winter. Almost every home has a small barn housing their cow that supplies milk for the family. The path to the outside toilet may lead you into the barn lot with the family cattle. Many villages are located near a river. The water table is high enough that little effort is required to hoist a water bucket with a small windlass... A small sink provides a place for washing up after a hard day in the fields.

Usually, rural homes are heated with a wood-burning boiler located in the kitchen. Hot water is piped into other rooms in the house. The kitchen furnishings are generally spartan. The kitchen table and the refrigerator are small. The dishes are few and occasionally the cupboard is almost bare. Running water is a luxury for families here.

There are a few more recently built homes in town that are of masonry construction with very thick walls. But, the older, wood frame homes serve most families well. There are few yards or lawns to speak of around a village home, as much of the land is taken up with gardens, barn lot, and storage buildings. The flowers outside this home are a welcome sight.

All in all, the people in the villages are self-sufficient. ... Much as one would have encountered in the American countryside some 100 or more years ago.

Before entering a village home, shoes are left outside or just inside the outer door. Once inside, the atmosphere is almost always warm and friendly. On this rare occasion, a group of four American missionaries accompany a Russian pastor and the senior pastor of the Baptist Association of Bashkortostan on a hastily arranged visit to the House of Prayer in the village. Soon after the arrival of the guests, the small Baptist congregation begins to assemble for worship. ... But ... there is a minor problem with protocol. The hosts have not yet fed the guests ... unthinkable in village culture. And so, ... even though it is already late and a worship service is to follow, ... the congregation waits patiently while the guests enjoy large bowls of delicious chicken soup, fresh bread, a salad of tomatoes, cucumbers, and onions, tea, fresh warm milk, and cookies. The worship service does not begin until after 11 p.m. and does not conclude until nearly 1 a.m. ... Yet ... no one seems to be bothered. The villagers are so overjoyed by the chance to share worship with outsiders, that they linger in conversation and fellowship.

The next morning comes all too early for the six visitors. Finishing a worship service at 1 a.m., ... at least for the Americans, ... is a new experience. Little do they know that yet another new experience awaits them at breakfast! The host decides to honor his guests by serving the homemade beverage known as Kumis, ... fermented mare's milk. Great care needs to be taken when sipping this sharp tasting traditional drink. After a quick meal, the guests say their goodbyes and hurry on to yet another worship service in the nearby village.

There are 20 believers in this community out of a population of over 5,000 souls. Seventeen of these are grandmothers known as "babushkas" over the age of 60. They call their meeting place "the House of Prayer". For the next two hours, there are multiple sermons, ... scripture readings, ... special music, ... group singing, ... and prayer. The love of Jesus shines through the smiles and glowing faces of the assembled worshippers. A lovely young pastor's wife ministers to her church family with kindness and tenderness. And the four Americans worship with the Russians as one body, in a language and culture that is not their own, in a land so very far from home.

Join with us as we celebrate Jesus together!

Summer, Winter, Spring, or Fall YOU are needed to help here in Bashkortostan.

The door is now open to Bashkortostan.

We must act quickly to meet the urgent need to share the Gospel with the peoples of Bashkortostan.

Contact us today!

www.hope4ufa.com



Living Day by Day in Ufa

Ch. 16 (9:48) Filmed June 2003

For generations, the young and old of Ufa have shared common goals and aspirations but changes are rapidly taking place. An ever-widening gap between the generations is occurring. As these changes come about, many are left behind. The dichotomy between the old and the new, ...the antiquated and the modern, ... is everywhere one looks.

There are the grayish soviet style apartment blocks built in the aftermath of World War II. These buildings ... with their distinct box like utilitarian construction ... are located throughout the city and are home to 75% of Ufa's populace. Some of these apartment complexes have a playground for the children enabling them to escape the confines of their

small apartment. The balconies provide some measure of openness for the residents, but ... most often ... they are used to dry laundry and for extra storage. Security is a continual problem. Access to Ivan's stairwell is often through a steel door leading to a bare concrete hall that is frequently decorated with graffiti and then through double locked doors into the individual apartments. If he lives in a building taller than five stories, he may have an elevator. The single elevator is usually very small, slow, dirty, and unreliable.

Heat for much of the city is provided from huge ... centrally located ... boilers that furnish hot water to apartment buildings. Temperature control in the individual apartments is impossible since thermostats are not available.

The small parking lots accommodate some who have cars. For a monthly fee, above ground, as well as underground, garages are readily available. These steel door concrete bunkers are secure but ice build up around the door is a continual problem during the long, cold Russian winter.

New apartments are arising from the drab surroundings. These are more colorful ... more luxurious and ... more costly. They are built wherever land is available ... sometimes along busy streets ... sometimes near older apartments and ... other times ... overlooking the older style wood frame structures. But they always remind the residents of the housing boom in Ufa as they head for work, shop for daily needs or just stroll along the edge of the construction zone. This construction boom is spurred on by the "New Russians". These young entrepreneurs are seeking a better life style and business opportunities than that available elsewhere in Russia. In prime locations, luxury cottages and condos are also rapidly changing the landscape. These are for the "New Russians" who are already well on their way to financial success.

Despite the new construction, many very old one and two story wooden dwellings are also present throughout Ufa. The rotted ... but ornate wood shutters ... the double pane windows ... and the faded paint attest to their age. They are sometimes cold and drafty in the winter and hot in the summer. Even with their age ... and their serious need of repair ... they are home for many. Living here are those who cannot afford ... or do not want ... to live elsewhere ... those that remain locked in their antiquated dwellings.

The old and the new are very much in evidence when purchasing food, clothes, or other household items. There are street vendors and kiosks on nearly every block. The kiosks carry a variety of small items. Candy, soft drinks, newspapers, and even toys can be purchased at these tiny buildings. There are many markets where one can haggle over the price of anything. These markets may be inside, outside, or a combination of both. The huge Central Market is in two buildings containing many, many vendors selling their wares. Here kerchiefed grandmothers called "babushkas" with thick reddish hands prepare vegetables for customers ... others call out the virtues of their wares ... "look at this beef," one cries, ... "look at the quality; only sixty rubles!" ... A vast array of goods is available and ready to choose from ... flowers ... produce ... fresh fish and meat. Because many of the goods must be purchased fresh, a daily trip to the market is a part of life for many. Stalls are open year round ... rain or shine. Even the winter snow and cold does not deter many of the vendors or their customers

Many ... especially the younger ... prefer to shop at Gostijnii Dvor ... *The Guest's Courtyard*. This is the modern showcase mall with its hip, trendy music, and cafes. A variety of high tech consumer goods are also on display. The products available mirror that found in most western department stores. The Courtyard and its chicly dressed clientele and upscale products seem oddly out of place. They are on a twenty first century island in an early twentieth century culture.

The entertainment tastes of the city's residents point to another, ... still greater ... dichotomy in Bashkir culture. Attend a

ballet or an orchestra at the relatively new Center for Performing Arts and one finds mostly a senior audience. While ... if you want to find the younger set ... you must visit the clubs, bistros, and movie theatres. To the chagrin of the gray hairs ... billboards advertise the attractions coming soon to the theatre on Lenin Street. Bashkortostan is truly a land caught between the older generation ... who lived the bulk of their lives under Communist rule ... and generation now ... between Rachmaninoff and Madonna.

The seniors prize group and community relationships ... while the younger populace is beginning to put more emphasis on the individual. The older generation looks back on a glorious Soviet past and longs for the good old days of Communism ... whereas the youth look with both pity and disdain at their elders and the seventy years lost to an empty Leninist legacy. Grandfathers and grandmothers live a dreary existence as they try to supplement their meager pension. Often, they bitterly denounce high prices and insist that profit seekers should be arrested. Meanwhile, a lifetime of high wages ... in a career of their choosing ... is the dream of Ufa's 90,000 college, institute, and university students.

But today the average Ivan must take whatever job is available. The pay is low ... about \$100 per month for the 6-day workweek. The massive petrochemical plants in the northern region of the city offer many employment opportunities. ... During World War II, these plants were moved east to Ufa to escape Hitler's advance on Moscow. Crude petroleum ... from the many oil wells within Bashkortostan ... is used for producing gasoline, diesel, fertilizer, and plastic products.

Thus ... the people are caught in between the reality of taking whatever job is available and the dream to choose a career. ... They are caught in between the antiquated and the modern ... between the old and the young. ... Tremendous cultural change is occurring in Bashkortostan.

Won't you come and help us show these people that a personal relationship with Jesus should be central to this change? ... Won't you come for at least two weeks and help us minister among ...

Students

Industrial workers

Professionals

Open-air markets

Home-based Bible studies

YOU are needed in Bashkortostan. Won't you come?

Closing Scene

www.hope4ufa.com



A White Volga or Bus 31?

Ch. 17 (5:57) Filmed June 2003

Ufa, ... 6 A.M., ... and the screeching, clanking, and roaring of the city's mass transit system begins afresh. ... Ivan groggily looks out the window of his 5th story apartment as he quickly downs his morning tea. Many of his neighbors are already up and about and he must be off also. He has a neighbor that drives a dump truck; ... another will be pouring concrete or perhaps fixing broken steps today. Many people work at the petrochemical plants located in the northern part of Ufa. Ivan is fortunate with this job at the university where he is paid regularly...about 3000 rubles per month ... equivalent to \$100. ... His salary is barely enough for the rent, utilities, food and clothing. Leaving his apartment, he greets Mrs. Nadia (*NAHD-dya*) already set up

with her produce stand and trudges toward his bus stop. Ivan cannot help but think of those who have a car ...or those who have time to go to the ice-cream store with their family. Those who are known as the "New Russians" seem to have a much better life. ... Yet, ... today could be worse. ... The snow could be falling ... adding to the piles all around and his walk to the bus could be treacherous. ... Perhaps some of those with a car have a hard time in the winter getting the garage doors open that have ice and snow in front of them ... or ... they might have a hard time digging their car out of the parking space at their apartment building. ... Maybe driving wouldn't be so good in the winter ... but it has to be better than standing in the biting cold waiting ... waiting ... waiting. ... At least today is a warm day ... too warm ... but it's not bad to walk.

Standing with all the others at the bus stop, ... Ivan comes back to reality ... and thinks about the options that he has for public transportation. The fastest way to get around town, ... other than a taxi, ... is in the 15 passenger vans called "marshrutkas". They go fast and are convenient, ... but are expensive ... 6 to 8 rubles ... about 25 cents per trip. Ivan rides one only occasionally.

A slightly slower alternative is a microbus. They are built for around 20 passengers, but at times are filled with twice that number. Still, the six-ruble fare seldom fits Ivan's budget.

A more realistic option is the trolley bus. These electric powered buses are slow, uncomfortable, and their routes are confined to the available overhead power cables, but ... the fare is only 5 rubles.

The most economical choice is the tram. These outdated vehicles called tramvays (*tram-VIE long "i"*) creep along at a snail's pace, ... make frequent stops, ... and the tracks are in serious need of repair. Still, there is almost always a tram near by and you can't beat the four-ruble fare.

Ivan likes the idea of paying no more than four rubles, but he prefers a little quicker commute than the tramvays allow. And so he, ... like so many others, ... chooses one of the many large city buses. Bus 31, ... a tandem, diesel powered vehicle, ... was built for 60 passengers, but at rush hour ... on a typical work day, ... 150 or even 200 passengers will cram aboard. Today is a holiday for most workers and few passengers are on board. Still, there is scarcely a seat available, however, in keeping with Russian culture, a gracious passenger gives up his seat to a visiting American lady. In between bus stops, the conductor collects the four-ruble fare. After approximately 20 minutes of bouncing down perennially rough roads, the bus' squeaking, rattling, and roaring finally comes to an end. The turn around point is reached and the bus empties, leaving behind the ever-present odor of oil and diesel fuel, and #31's well-worn seats. The driver takes a well-deserved break and prepares for his next circuit. And so goes the daily commute for the majority of Ufa's million plus citizens.

There are those who have little experience with public transportation. The young entrepreneurs called the "New Russians" by some don't take the marshrutkas, the microbuses, the trolley buses, the tramvays, or the city buses. Instead, they travel in privately owned vehicles. Near the top of this economic elite, are those who are chauffeured around town in white Volgas and more expensive imports. These upscale luxury automobiles can be seen throughout the city ... almost always dazzlingly clean... and most sporting dark, tinted windows. Their occupants, with the almost obligatory cell phone in hand, are seemingly always in a hurry, being spirited off to their next business deal. And so, ... the citizens of Ufa are a divided people ... caught in between the privileged and the masses ... in between riding in comfort ... and squeezing one's way through a mass of humanity ... between the white Volgas and Bus 31.

Do you have at least two weeks to help us reach the people that God loves no matter how they transit the length and breadth of our city? Do you have at least two weeks to be a witness to God's love to the hundreds aboard Bus 31? ... to the few in the white Volgas? If the Lord is speaking to your heart about the 1.2 million souls in Ufa, then please don't delay; contact us today.



European or Asian?

Ch. 18 (7:16) Filmed June 2003

Located between two continents, the Peoples of Bashkortstan are caught between a European and an Asian identity. ...

Some 700 miles East of Moscow and a mere ninety miles to the west of the Ural Mountains lies Ufa, the capitol and administrative center of the Republic of Bashkortostan ... a city between two rivers in a land between two continents. The city rests upon a bluff that extends northward from the confluence of the White and Ufa rivers, which roughly form the eastern and western boundaries of the city. The culture of the Republic, ... like that of Ufa, ... is a rapidly developing mix of ideas and people groups lurching forward

without knowing where they are going. They are a people who are struggling to discover who they are, a people who, for the first time in decades have a confusing, and to them, often frustrating myriad of choices to make. They are a people in between a frightening past and an uncertain and, therefore, frightening future.

They are a people caught between two monuments in Ufa that stand less than two miles from each other. One appears to be no more than a man on a horse, yet it reminds the city's million plus inhabitants and the Republic's 4 million citizens of a bloody history between the Republic's ethnic groups. The Bashkirs look to the statue with pride. Once a nomadic people ruled over by the Mongol Hordes of Genghis Khan and his descendants, they comprise 22% of Bashkortostan's populace.

Following the collapse of the Khan Dynasty in 1574, the Bashkir leadership traveled to Moscow to obtain help from the Russian State in the form of a fortress to protect the land should the hordes decide to return. Thus began an uneasy relationship between the dominating Russians and the independent minded Bashkirs resulting in many wars and rebellions between the two powers. The last of these wars began in 1773 over the policy of allowing Russians and other nobles to buy up Bashkir land. The Bashkirs, ... led by Salavat Yulaev ... the man on the horse ... saw this as the embezzlement of their native land. The rebellion was crushed. However, the Bashkirs were allowed to live with a measure of independence unknown in the rest of the Russian Empire.

Ultimately, Bashkir nationalistic pride was placated when the Soviets declared Bashkortostan an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, leaving control of the area in the hands of the Bashkir Communist Party. In 1957, the Party decided to dedicate a friendship monument ... Monument Druzhbii ... proclaiming Russian and Bashkir friendship. But, the gesture rang hollow with many Bashkirs, because a wave of Russian immigration had left them a minority in what was said to be their land. Today, the Russians dominate the population but the declaration of a new independent Republic in 1990 gave the Muslim Bashkirs full control of the reigns of power. The Constitution of the Republic even requires the president to be fully fluent in the Bashkir language. Yet, Bashkir society, particularly in Ufa, is still psychologically caught somewhere in between Salavat Yulaev and Monument Druzhbii.

Legacies of the past continue to dominate the mind-set of the Russian populace. A large statue of Karl Marx ... near Red Square in Moscow ... is inscribed with the words "Workers of the world unite!" bearing testimony to the father of communism. Greatly influenced by this German philosopher, Vladimir Lenin saw the free market of Europe as an ideological enemy. Violently seizing power in 1917, Lenin and his fellow Bolsheviks transformed Russia into a repressive society where Western ideas were banned.

Although Lenin died in 1924, his well-preserved body is on display in a mausoleum in the center of Red Square. ... This is the most sacred shrine of Soviet communism. ... Sadly his legacy has imprisoned the hearts and minds of the people for 70 years.

In Ufa ... the long shadow of his image ... continues to remind the peoples of Bashkortstan of his teachings. Lenin taught the people that there is no God. Instead they were taught his philosophy emphasizing the "Party" as ultimate guide. 160 miles east of Ufa in the Ural Mountains is the city of Beloretsk. This philosophy ... "The Party – the Mind, the Honor, and the Conscience of Our Era" ... is inscribed for all to see high on the wall of a recently constructed apartment building. Yet close-by, hope is readily available. Across the street ... and easily seen from these apartments ... is another building. This small wooden structure is different than others. On its wall is a plaque proclaiming, ... "God is Love". The believers who meet here worship Jesus and are eager to share His love with all ... European or Asian, Eastern or Western. Still ... the

hearts, minds, and eyes... of most of the peoples of Bashkortostan remain locked in the emptiness of Lenin's legacy. They are not only caught in between two continents, but also in the debris of a failed political system.

PRAY that the peoples of Bashkortostan will no longer see Christianity as a foreign Western religion but instead will find the hope that comes through faith in Jesus.

PRAY that they will clearly understand the message of Revelation Chapter 7, verses 9-11, that salvation is for every nation, tribe, people, and language.



Why Smile?

Ch. 19 (5:05) Filmed June 2003

Breaking out of 70 years of Communist rule has given the whole of Russian society new opportunities and new freedom. The fresh air of freedom has allowed flowers to bloom. Behind this cheerful mask, however, lies a country still burdened by its past -- a dark inheritance of poverty and corruption. Unseen by most visitors are the small towns and rural areas gripped by wrenching poverty. There is little to smile about when a third of the population lives on a dollar a day. In addition to the discouragement of poverty is the lack of integrity in law and order. Bribery, at all levels, is accepted as a national way of life. It is estimated that Russians spend about half of the value of their national budget on bribes. It appears that Russia has a long way to go to enter into the 21st century.

Corruption is part of every fabric of the Bashkir society. Nowhere does corruption show its self more than in the practice of tax evasion. The extremely high taxes are a great impediment to business success. The average business owner avoids much of the taxes by keeping two sets of books -- one for their own use and one to show the tax authorities. This deception occurs even though Ufa is one of the most heavily policed cities in the world. As one moves around the city, rarely does 10 minutes pass without seeing an officer in uniform. Some of these officers are students from the large Ministry of Internal Affairs training facility in Ufa. Others are officers of the Road Police Service. They are the Russian version of the Highway Patrol.

These highway patrolmen, seem to be everywhere at the same time. ... You see them in dark blue uniforms with bluish white stripes, wielding a short black and white stick. If they point the stick at you, pull over to the curb immediately. Once they have you on the side of the road, the officers will check your documents, ... ask you a few questions, ... and let you go, or ... you will be invited to the officers' car. Once in the car, possible violations of the law, ... both real and imagined, ... are alluded to. The motorist ... without even asking what the violation is ... will begin negotiation of the bribe ... "skol'ko?" -- How much? ... "100 rubles," the officer will reply.

When missionaries are pulled over by the DPS, It is important that they remain courteous, that they have their papers in order, ... and that they not pay the bribe. Rather, this inconvenience can be seen as a witnessing opportunity.

The intimidation of seventy years of state-sanctioned fear makes life hard. People often say. ... "What is there to smile about?" Instead, they wear an expressionless, unapproachable face. The Bashkir populace is a people that live somewhere in between a public mask and a private openness. On the streets ... on public transportation ... no matter where one travels ... one quickly learns that smiling in public is considered strange. A bus ride can be uncomfortable for an American used to smiling. Not only are you viewed with suspicion ... but at times you are made to feel very unwelcome. For not only is it taboo to smile ... but to approach someone in public and speak to them about anything other than the time or ask directions is seldom done.

Years of oppression have left their mark on the people of Bashkortostan. They are suspicious and it takes time to gain their trust. Once taken into their confidence, however, a friend for life is made. They are a people caught in between two opposing roles out of historic necessity to subdivide their lives into public and private spheres.

YOU can bring the Bashkir people the message of hope! ... The Gospel message can break the bonds of oppression. The time is NOW to become involved in this work in Bashkortostan. Come and share the love of Jesus with these people. Bring them Jesus. Bring them hope. Bring them a reason to smile.

A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep

Ch. 20 (8:16) Filmed June 2003



Spirituality ... for most of Russia's history ... has been defined by the desires of the ruling monarchs and dictators. The choice of "proper worship" has been made on the basis of political, economic, and social advantages. Little opportunity was given for the development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Eleven centuries ago ... when Russia was forming as a nation ... Prince Vladimir of Kiev sought emissaries of Islam, Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Judaism. While he liked the structure of Islam, it was rejected because alcoholic beverages were forbidden. Eventually, Orthodoxy was chosen because of their elaborate worship methods. Once

chosen as the official state religion, the Russian rulers built elaborate cathedrals. These cathedrals developed their own style and soon exceeded the grandeur of those in Constantinople ... and ... Russian Orthodoxy came into being.

The ensuing style of worship focused on visual images of God. The priest and his elaborate robe, the fixtures and icons, and the chapel itself are designed to illustrate God's majesty. The imagery is further enhanced by defining the icons as windows through which the worshippers communicate with God. This style of worship became dark and impersonal.

During the time America was developing as a nation under God with freedom to choose whom to worship, ... Peter the Great was redefining his nation under the tsar. The tsar was defined to be a messenger of God. ... The Russian Orthodox Church became an instrument of political control.

Soon God was all but abandoned and man became the center. A large statue of Karl Marx near Red Square in Moscow is a prominent feature. Inscribed in the granite are the words "Workers of the world unite!" bearing testimony to the father of communism. The Russian populace was indeed united, ... united in their suffering while the ruling class continued their opulent life style.

The workers eventually revolted against the tsar and the ruling class in the early 1900's. The fall out of the Bolshevik Revolution resulted in Vladimir Lenin as the new leader. Lenin assumed draconian dictatorial powers ... declared that there is no God ... and converted many of the cathedrals into museums. Scientific materialism soon became the religion of Russia. ... The Russian Orthodox Church became an instrument of the Communist Party.

With the success of their Sputnik, ... Khrushchev in the late 1950's ... justified the efficacy of Lenin's scientific materialism and declared that all Christians in Russia would be gone in twenty years. In 1958-1964 there was a massive closing of churches.

It was not until the fall of communism in Russia in 1990 that one could hear the statement from a new Christian, ... "Lenin, Stalin, Communism ... all left me empty! They are lies and do not satisfy. I know that Jesus is the Way! I will follow Him."

Today, ... Communism is gone and, yet, the most sacred shrine of Soviet communism is found in Red Square -- a mausoleum containing the remains of Vladimir Lenin, the father of Russian Communism and the embodiment of the Russian Revolution. Although Lenin died in 1924, his well-preserved body is kept here on display. His legacy continues to cast a long shadow of over the populace.

Religion in Bashkortostan is largely determined by one's ethnicity. Thirty nine percent are Russian and, therefore, Orthodox. Fifty-one percent of the Republic is either Bashkir or Tartar and, therefore, Muslim. Baptists and other evangelicals are not considered to be Christians, and are said to have no right to evangelize the Orthodox.

Is it any wonder that today the spirituality of Russia is a mile wide and an inch deep? They have been at the mercy of the whims of tsars and dictators. ... They have had little opportunity to discover what Jesus said in John chapter 10 verse 10 ... "I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."

The legacy of these years of oppression has left a very deep mark on the Russian people as a whole with little to believe in. Vodka is the national drink and is readily available. Public drunkenness is commonplace. Many of the Russian men face a

premature death due to alcohol abuse.

Alcohol abuse also affects the very fabric of the Russian family. Degradation of the family is also evident in the high divorce rate and termination of unwanted pregnancies. Today, only one in four pregnancies are allowed to go full-term. Despite these overwhelming odds, there are young parents who are very proud of their children and seek to give them a better future.

Although the Bashkirs claim to believe in the God of the Bible or Allah of the Koran, faith here is only a shallow façade. Nothing concrete lies behind it as religious ritualism rarely results in behavioral changes. A recent survey conducted in the capital city of Ufa found that only five percent who claimed to be Muslim or Orthodox said that they attend a mosque or a cathedral more than once a year.

A team member on a recent volunteer mission trip returned with this observation. “Every time I have visited an Orthodox Church I have come away with oppression and deadness. The Bible seems to be a foreign book to these people and many say that the New Testament that we gave them is the first Bible that they have ever received.”

Even though they have little allegiance to their own religious belief systems, they vehemently reject those who seek to share with them the life-changing love of God. An evangelical presence has existed in Bashkortostan for over 100 years, ... but today, ... out of a population of over 4 million in the Republic, ... there are fewer than 7,000 believers. Of these 7,000 believers, about 1,000 are Baptists.

In a land of great spiritual emptiness and darkness like Bashkortostan, ... there is hope... hope through faith in Christ. YOUR help is needed to bring hope to the Bashkirs. We need your help to awaken the people from spiritual darkness and show them the light of Jesus.

- ◆ The door is open. ...
- ◆ God is working in Bashkortostan. ...
- ◆ Volunteers are an essential part of reaching the Bashkirs for Christ. ...
- ◆ YOU are urgently needed. ...
- ◆ Will you join God in His work?

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Baptist in Bashkortostan

Ch. 21 (13:56) Filmed June 2003

Bold are Peter on camera

The word “Baptist” sounds scary to many people. To be called a cult was the least offensive description. The Communist party propaganda circulated lots of negative rumors about Baptists, that Baptists were people who sacrificed children, who turned off the light and were involved in various types of immorality behind closed doors. And still many people believe that propaganda.

My name is Peter Ivanovich. I have been serving as senior pastor for all evangelical Baptist churches in Bashkortostan since 1993. At the present time there are

21 Baptist churches in Bashkortostan with a total membership of approximately 1000. Before the ‘90s there were only 6 small Baptist churches in Bashkortostan. And only after the establishment of democratic liberty and openness there appeared possibilities for starting new Baptist churches.

Growing up as Christians was very difficult, they were persecuted, and they suffered –this made a very big impression on me and was engraved upon my childlike heart. They knew that I was a believer at school, that’s why there was a lot of trouble and fear in my heart. But it strengthened me more in my faith that God exists. President Khrushchev said in the late 50’s that there would be no believers left in our country in 20 years.

The persecution continued on to adulthood. When I enrolled in a technical school my tutor gave me a negative

recommendation, writing in it that I was from a family of believers and that I was not a member of the Communist Party. Obtaining a good job was difficult for a Christian.

Baptists are people who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who believe in the Bible as the Holy Scripture, as the absolute authority and infallible Word, who strive for building up their lives upon the Words of God so they are in line with the Word and the commandments of God. Baptists believe in the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit. Baptists believe that salvation is only through Jesus Christ. As the Word says “There is no other name under Heaven given to men by which we must be saved”. It’s only through repentance, through accepting Jesus Christ as the Son of God that a person can receive salvation and eternal life. The life of a Christian should be different both on the inside and on the outside. People should view Baptists as believers, as peculiar people. And, praise God, there are such Christians who witness to people about faith through their lives and people by watching their lives say that you are different, you are not like other people. We would like to live as you do.

The church is what God and Jesus Christ created. Jesus said, “I will build my church”. The church is not a human organization. It’s God’s creation. We understand that the church is the people chosen by God Himself for salvation a people chosen by God for his glory, for serving Him. And they are united by God Himself, they are brought together by Him. The church is the bride of Christ as the Word of God says. The Bible compares the church with the body of Christ and Christ is the head of the church. He directs the church, He takes care of the church, He, as Paul; writes, is preparing the church for the second coming. He is the enlightenment of the church. Jesus is our light.

In our churches we all participate by singing praises.....as a congregation.....as small groupsand as solos..... We teach God’s Word through preachingand in classes. We value fellowship of believers as we share food and fellowship around a table.....We consider prayer a vital part of our church life. We pray from our heart.... we pray as a group.....we pray individually.....

We Baptists, recognize 2 ordinances. In other churches it is called sacrament but we recognize them as ordinances. Baptism is a symbol of complete renunciation from this world’s ways. It’s dying to our sinful way of life and resurrecting to a new life. Baptism, as apostle Peter says, is a promise of a good conscience. We recognize baptism as a necessary ordinance. Jesus Christ says, “Whoever believes and is baptized, will be saved”. Jesus said, “Go and make disciples baptizing in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”. **We baptize those people who have come to believe in Jesus when they have reached an age of accountability. That’s why we understand that a person should be baptized only if he has come to believe in Jesus.** For example, in Acts 8, as Phillip was baptizing the eunuch, he said to him “If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized”. That’s why we do not practice infant baptism and baptize only those adults who, as we see, have been born again, those who have been born of the Holy Spirit and those who promise to serve God.

The Lord’s Supper is the second ordinance, which Jesus gave. He said “Do this in remembrance of me”. It reminds us of Christ’s sufferings. We partake of the bread and wine as symbols, which remind us of Christ’s body and His shed blood. The Lord’s Supper unifies believers. This is God’s action. There’s one body and we are the many members of that body, as the Word says. We are united together in the Church of Christ; we are united in our confession of faith. The Lord’s Supper provides us a time for self-examining. 1 Cor. 11:28 “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup”. **It gives us an opportunity to examine ourselves, to check up on ourselves so we are always ready, so we are always vigilant. We should meditate upon the sufferings of Christ when we participate in the Lord’s Supper, when we partake of it.**

Our Baptist churches are multiethnic and that’s the way church should be. Christ is the Savior of all people and of all ethnic groups. He is no respecter of persons as the Scriptures say. And the Scriptures also say that there is neither Jew, nor Greek in Christ but we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. **There are probably far more than 10 ethnic groups in our churches. Now there are especially more Tatars and Bashkirs because 50% of the population of Bashkortostan is Bashkirs and Tatars. 22 % of the population is Bashkirs and 28 % of the population is Tatars. These are ethnic groups which consider themselves as adherence to Islam.** Before the 90s we unfortunately had neither Bashkirs nor Tatars in the church. Since 1990 after the establishment of democratic liberty when sermons were preached more openly Bashkirs and Tatars started to come to the church. What is surprising is that Bashkirs and Tatars who came to believe in Jesus are sincerely taking care of their people group. They are trying to tell about Jesus Christ to their relatives, to their nearest and dearest. Practically always this is met with a lack of understanding and even aggression. **There were cases when parents just turned their backs on their children or tried to keep them up at home so that they could not go to church or be baptized. They became hardened against them.** But in time when they saw the change in their children, that they had become new people, that they had been born again, the parents gave in and other relatives came to the church. There are more Tatars and Bashkirs coming to God than other people groups. We also have Germans, Latvians. There are lots of local ethnic groups too: Chuvashs, Maris and Mordovians. They are also believers.

I do not know much about Muslim rules and laws. I see that it’s very hard for them to come to believe in Christ. Their

teaching is harsh because the cross, for example, is a curse for them. The cross is the power of God for us. As the Word says the cross is salvation. And for Muslims the cross seems to be a curse. When they see a cross they do not want to talk, they do not want to listen. They accept Jesus as the Son of God, as Isa. But for them the most high prophet is Mohammed. By watching the lives of our Bashkirs and Tatars who believe in Jesus, I can see how hard it is on them, how hard it is to change their way of thinking after accepting Christ, whom Muslims do not accept as the Savior.

Living in the Soviet period no one even thought of the fact that a minister or pastor should be freed up from secular employment, that he should only serve the Lord. At that time no one even imagined or thought of sending out missionaries somewhere and providing for them. Growing up in that time this was not part of our thinking that churches should support their workers. The church was focused upon its concerns: the upkeep of its church building, remodeling and so on. That's it. But at the present time we are preaching about that and saying that the 1st goal of the church is spreading the Gospel. There is a need for finances and offerings. It was only since the '90s that we started to speak about tithing and preach about that. It was hard for many people to understand this especially for older people who lived under totally different conditions. Young believers reacted to this favorably. Churches are starting to understand, churches are giving offerings and they are partially supporting missionaries. Many churches have started to partially support their pastors in order to give them more time for the ministry and preaching the Gospel.

Churches are also poor, taking into account the fact that we had 6 churches and now there are more than 20 but there are only 10 church buildings. Many churches rent buildings like our church does. We meet in a basement room of a 5-story building.

I, as senior pastor in charge of all Bashkortostan, would like to send missionaries to every town and city so there can be workers. We have not yet reached the point that we have enough workers to go work in every city. There are still 6 towns, which do not have Baptist churches yet. Such towns as, for example, Meleuz with the population of more than 60 thousand people, Uchali – 33 thousand people, Durtuli – 30 thousand people, Yanaul, Agidel, Bimak. My biggest desire is to fill up Bashkortostan with the glory of God through churches. We are constantly working on this as much as we can.

Our desire, our primary goal and task, which I see in my ministry, is the development of missionary service, the education of ministers, missionary and pastoral training for service. I have a vision that every city, every county seat and every town has a Baptist church where people can go worship.



Hope for Every Heart

Ch. 22 (6:28) Filmed June 2003

Bashkortostan has 22 cities, 41 towns, and 4,600 villages inhabited by 4 million people from 112 different people groups. And, yet, among all these people there are only about 6,000 evangelical believers **Caption: (0.2% believers)** and approximately 40 Christian congregations. The religious beliefs of Suni Hanafi Islam and Russian Orthodoxy predominate, but ironically, few have a strong commitment to either. Bashkortostan's populace is caught in a spiritual wasteland of opposing beliefs, between shallow religious ritual and their official state religions.

Centrally located in the capital city of Ufa, a small team of Southern Baptist missionaries is working alongside the

Russian Baptist Union, independent Baptist churches, and other Great Commission churches in Bashkortostan. The strategy is to see hundreds of new house churches planted in Bashkortostan within the next few years. Part of this strategy is training and equipping nationals who will then be able to motivate and train their own people in the principles of church planting. Team Ufa's desire is that God will be glorified in the sparking of a church-planting movement with a rapid, exponential growth in the number of indigenous churches planting indigenous churches.

Team Ufa is also working among the 90,000-student population in Ufa. A great many students in the city want either to learn English or to practice their English with a native speaker. And thus opportunities abound to speak in Ufa's schools and universities about American culture, holidays, and life. Although openly preaching the Gospel is most often prohibited, the Holy Spirit often provides some creative witnessing opportunities.

Other opportunities present themselves with respect to humanitarian work. There are a great number of prisons and orphanages in Ufa. Too often, criminals and orphans in the Republic are seriously neglected. They are a needy lot especially when it comes to clothing and medicine. But in the process of providing for their needs, God often moves in the hearts of grateful guards who allow access to their charges. The sight of children weeping as they hear that God loves them is one that is not easily forgotten.

Team Ufa is also involved in Christian literature and Scripture distribution, the hosting of volunteer prayer walking and ministry teams from the U.S., summer evangelistic English and youth camps, Evangelistic tours in the Bashkortostan countryside with our Russian Baptist Union brothers, and the showing of the Jesus film.

Because of the small size of Team Ufa, accomplishing these tasks as well as others is often overwhelming. The situation is much the same as it was for Nehemiah when he cried out to the nobles and officials in Jerusalem saying, “The work is great and extensive and we are separated on the wall far from one another. At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.”

Overlay: Nehemiah 4:19-20

The regional vision statement for the Central and Eastern Europe region is **“Hope for every heart, a church planting movement for every people.” (also overlay)** A recent survey revealed that the majority of people in this region, by their own admission, are caught up in endless worship rituals. One often hears the well-worn equation that if you are either Bashkir or Tatar, then you are Muslim. In Bashkortostan, you are apparently born into the faith by ethnicity.

But, you who have the hope in Jesus can show them the way. There are several critical needs for those willing to live here.

- ◆ Will you join TeamUfa? Church planters are needed to minister among law enforcement and government officials, ...businessmen and professionals, ... workers in the chemical and oil industries, ...workers in the many open air markets in Ufa, ... and among the 90,000 institute, college, and university students in Ufa.
- ◆ Will you come and be the International Service Corps media development specialist?
- ◆ Will you come and coordinate volunteer groups who come to serve?

Will you come and join us here in Bashkortostan?

Overlay: Be a Part of Team Ufa

If you cannot give an extended period of time to God’s work here, there are still abundant opportunities for you to make a difference in the lives of Bashkortostan’s people. Could you come for 1 week to 2 months? Volunteers are needed immediately to share the Gospel through ...

1. Exposing residents to English, American History, religious influence, and music
2. Teaching English as a Second Language
3. Prayer walking the city of Ufa
4. Distributing Scripture and Christian literature
5. Showing and distributing the Jesus film
6. Diagnosing illnesses and treating patients in outlying areas of Bashkortostan
7. Ministering in the prisons or orphanages
8. Participating in an evangelistic preaching tour of Bashkortostan.

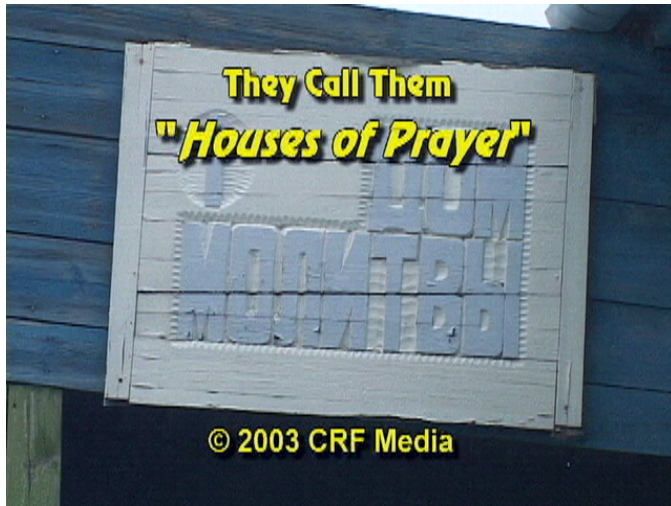
You are needed in Bashkortostan. Yes, we also need your prayers. Your prayers on our behalf are vital to everything we are attempting to do here. But, while the door is still open in Bashkortostan, the need is urgent for you to be personally involved in helping train the local believers and leadership to more effectively share their faith. The need is urgent for you to help them more effectively plant rapidly reproducing churches. Come and be an encouragement to the believers here.

YOU can stand in the gap.

(fade to choir singing LEANING ON THE EVERLASTING ARMS) Verse 2 and the Chorus English translation of Russian words in subtitles

(Fade to contact info during song)

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They Call Them "Houses of Prayer"

Ch 23 (1:41) Filmed June 2003

"Dom Molitvii"... House of Prayer ... in a home in a rural village ... in a sturdy brick building in the middle of town ... in rented space in an apartment building. As of 2003, ten of the Baptist churches in the Republic of Bashkortostan are called Dom Molitvii. The remaining 7 Baptist churches post a sign such as this that says "Church of Evangelical Baptists".

Calling their churches *House of Prayer* seems fitting. They are a place of earnest, fervent prayer ... but are also a place of worship ... a place of serving God. They are the evidence of "hope for every heart, a church planting movement for every people".

There are about 7,000 Evangelical Christian believers out of the four million population of Bashkortostan. Approximately 1,000 of these believers are Baptist. These evangelical churches continue to grow in the face of the dominating Muslim majority in the Republic and the opposition of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Won't you come inside with us and join the dear believers in Bashkortostan as they celebrate the risen Savior? Worship together with the family of God in Bashkortostan in music, prayer, and exhortation. You may not understand the words but move inside and feel the love of God that shines through these people. Welcome!



UFA (3:28)

The Dom Molitvii in Ufa is the mother church of Bashkortostan. Founded over 100 years ago and centrally located in Ufa, the church provides a meeting place for believers throughout the city. Join with those in attendance as they worship.

(church service)

- ◆ Pray for the pastor and the associate pastor as they minister
- ◆ Pray for the believers as they witness to their neighbors in Ufa.

BELORETSK (1:00)



Beloretsk is located in the Ural Mountains on the Eastern edge of Bashkortostan. A new church sets amid the gray Soviet style apartments. The sign on the outside of the building reads, "God is Love". This church is located directly across the street from an apartment building that displays a quote from Lenin, the dictator who proclaimed that God does not exist. There is no worship service in this church today but all are welcome.

- ★ Pray for this church that they may show God's love to those around them
- ★ Pray for the pastor and his family



CHERNIKOVKA (5:04)

The Blagaya Vest Church is located in the northern part of Ufa not far from the massive petrochemical plants. It is near a busy street in the Cernikovka district of Ufa and proudly identifies itself as the “Church of Evangelical Baptists: GOOD NEWS”. Located in the basement of a five-story apartment building, the worshipers here fill the available space as they lift their voices with songs, prayers, and exhortations.

(church scenes)

- Ð Pray for the church
- Ð Pray for Peter and his family as he ministers to this church and also serves as Senior Pastor of all Baptists in Bashkortistan



ERMOLAEVO (2:56)

When it rains, the roads turn to mud in the town of Ermolaevo. The wood frame buildings, ... some brightly painted, ... are in sharp contrast to the drab concrete apartments in larger cities. Among these buildings is a Dom Molitvii in the home of the pastor and his family. Here they have no musical instruments, ... not even a tape player. Most of the congregation is widows but the love of God is clearly evident as they worship.

- ★ Pray for those in this small house church
- ★ Pray for this young pastor and his family



ISHIMBAI (2:17)

An apartment complex is the home of the Ishimbai Dom Molitvii. Located on the bottom floor of one of the buildings, this church provides easy access for the local residents. The worship services usually fill the space to capacity with those from the area.

Worship with these believers as they sing praises to God.

(church scenes)

- ★ Pray for the members of the church
- ★ Pray for the pastor and his family



KRIVLYA (7:34)

Krivlya is located in the southernmost part of Bashkortostan. Farming is the primary source of income for this rural community.

The location of the church is well known even though it does not have a sign providing an identification of where the believers meet.

Entering the home of the pastor and his family one is greeted warmth and love... A quick meal is served to the honored guests while additional Christian believers arrive. Typical of the rural areas, as many as ten different ethnic groups are represented in the congregation. Because of the late arrival of the guests, the service does not begin until 11:00 P.M.!

Join this diverse group as they worship in song, praise and exhortation.

[\(church scenes\)](#)

Songs:

While on Others Thou Art Calling

Fairest Lord Jesus

How Great Thou Art

- ★ Pray for the pastor and his family
- ★ Pray for these believers



KUMERTAУ (2:58)

A few miles north of the city of Sterlitamak is the town of Kumertau.

This is the home of Nicoli, an elderly gentleman who longs for the return of Communist rule in Russia. Near his home is the Dom Molitvii, ... a prominent, recently constructed Baptist church.

Prior to the worship service, coffee, tea, and cake are served to the honored guests. Join the believers as they worship together.

[\(church scenes\)](#)

- ★ Pray for the pastor and his family
- ★ Pray for boldness as this church reaches out into the community
- ★ Pray that Nicolai will become a believer



NEFTEKAMSK (9:18)

Surrounded by green fields and oil wells, the petrochemical industry provides a good income for this large city located in the Northwest part of Bashkortostan. New construction appears everywhere.

On this day, the Dom Molitvii church is celebrating its tenth anniversary. This is an historic milestone and representatives from all of the Baptist churches in Bashkortostan are here to celebrate this event in songs of praise and worship as well as share in a celebration meal.

The following are excerpts from this time of thanking God for His provisions.

After the 6-hour service, the chairs and tables were set up in the auditorium. A multi-course meal was served beginning with delicious soup. This was a wonderful time of fellowship for those believers gathered from Bashkortostan.

- ★ Pray for the pastor as he leads
- ★ Pray for the believers not only in this church but believers across Bashkortostan



SALAVAT (0.50)

Salavat, located South of Ufa, is the third largest city of the Republic. New construction and recently opened office and apartment buildings are evident in many places throughout the city.

A Dom Molitvii is also in the final stages of completion. This church ... with its balcony ... will seat approximately 150 worshippers.

- ★ Pray for this pastor as he leads the believers here
 - ★ Pray for wisdom and insight from other Baptist brothers
 - ★ Pray for those living in the apartments nearby
- Pray for the church as they seek to reach the city of Salavat with the Gospel