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## For the Life of the World

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*For the Life of the World* is mailed to all pastors and congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in the United States and Canada and to anyone interested in the work of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture verses are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

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# Where Are



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3.



Where were you on June 12, 1987? On that day, President Ronald Reagan delivered his famous “Berlin Wall” speech which included the stunning command, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.” Two years later the unbelievable happened; the wall was torn down and religious freedom returned to Russia and the nations imprisoned within the Soviet Union.

The Lutheran Church in Russia was founded in 1576 and by 1905 had grown to 3,600,000 members. Starting in 1917, the Communist Revolution under Lenin and Stalin began its vigorous oppression on religion and the church. Lutheran churches were closed or destroyed and nearly all Lutheran pastors were persecuted, sent to gulags, or worse. Atheism became the official “religion” in Russia. The laity hunkered down and went without pastoral care for decades.

In 1996 Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), launched the Russian Project to prepare Russian-speaking men to serve the Lutheran remnant in Russia and countries of the former Soviet empire who had

suffered under the Marxist tyranny.

Where were you on September 11, 2001? The shocking attack by Al-Qaeda on the World Trade Center and Pentagon changed America profoundly. The impact on foreign students studying in America was suddenly thrown into chaos and uncertainty. Overnight the State Department rehailed the entire process for obtaining international student visas and maintaining legal status. Though necessary, it was a bureaucratic nightmare.

By the grace of God, the 9/11 upheaval did not stop the Russian Project from moving forward. Amazingly, 50 Russian students have studied at CTSFW. Thirty-nine men studied in the Master of Theology and certificate

pastoral formation programs, as well as the Master of Sacred Theology (STM) and doctoral graduate studies. The 11 women include four deaconesses, two organists, and two translators.

At the same time, CTSFW established a seminary in Novosibirsk, Siberia, in 1997. At its inception, the Russian seminary relied entirely on visiting professors from America who taught with translators who studied theology in Fort Wayne.

The purpose of the Russian Project and the Siberian seminary, has been to help restore the Lutheran Church in Russia by preparing pastors to faithfully preach, teach, and administer the Sacraments. They travel across the vast Eurasian countryside providing pastoral care to the faithful and reaching out to the unchurched and the lost. The Russian Project also prepared indigenous Russian speaking men as seminary professors.

So where are they today? It would take many pages to tell the story of all 50 students who came to Fort Wayne from Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, and Ukraine. The vast

# ct 25 Years Later: --- They Now?

● Timothy C. J. Quill



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majority have returned home and serve as pastors or in other Christian vocations.

The first two students to arrive on campus in September of 1996 were Alexey Streltsov and his wife, Elena. Alexey enrolled in courses on pastoral training. Elena studied alongside her husband in preparation as a Lutheran translator. Following completion of their studies, they returned to Russia. Alexey was ordained as a pastor in the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) and worked with the CTSFW Russian Project to establish the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Novosibirsk. He has also earned a STM at Fort Wayne and a doctorate from the University of Tomsk in 2020. Dr. Streltsov has published several articles in Russian and English, taught intensive seminary courses in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Ethiopia, and has lectured at many international conferences including the annual CTSFW Symposium, and a Patristic Society in Cambridge, England. The Streltsovs have two sons and a daughter. Anastasia is still at home. Tikhon and Krill are university students in Moscow and Dortmund.

Pavel Butakov returned to Russia with an MA from CTSFW. He went on to earn a doctorate from the University of Novosibirsk. He now teaches history and doctrine at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Novosibirsk.

Pavel Khramov earned an MA and an STM at CTSFW and teaches pastoral theology, liturgy, homiletics, and catechesis at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Novosibirsk. His wife, Tatiana, earned a doctorate in mathematics and is now an assistant professor at the university.

Following his studies at CTSFW, Pastor Daniel Burlakov served St. Mary's congregation in Tomsk, Siberia. Also since 2019, he has served as a missionary in Israel.

Dr. Gennadij Khonin returned to Kazakhstan and served as rector of the Lutheran Seminary in Almaty. He was also visiting professor at the German Lutheran Seminary in Astana, as well as in Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. To this day, he continues to serve as pastor of the German Lutheran Church in Almaty. He received his DMin from CTSFW in 2011.

1. *Rev. Alexey and Elena Streltsov and family*
2. *Dr. Pavel Butakov, Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church, Novosibirsk, Russia*
3. *The Rev. Pavel Khramov lecturing at Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church.*
4. *The Rev. Daniel Burlakov and Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin in Tomsk, Siberia.*
5. *The Rev. Gennadij Khonin, Kazakhstan*
6. *The Rev. Sergey Glushkov at Evangelical Lutheran Parish of Saints Peter and Paul, Yekaterinburg, Russia*



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2.

1. *Olga Suhinina teaching Greek.*
2. *The Rev. Oleg Sevastianov and the Rev. Olav Panchu of the Ingrian Lutheran Church*

Pastors Sergey Glushkov and Alexey Trapeznikov have served Saints Peter and Paul Church in Ekaterinburg, Russia, on the edge of the Ural Mountains. They are active in outreach, mission starts, and evangelism/catechetical summer seminars. Svetlana Trapeznikov has started a Lutheran preschool.

Olga Suhinina served as a translator for visiting professors at the Novosibirsk seminary. She has undertaken extensive translation of scholarly texts, including a Hebrew Russian grammar, and continues the study of linguistics in the graduate department of the University of Novosibirsk. Currently she also teaches Hebrew and Greek at the seminary.

Gloria Vinogradov and Alla Shvetsova completed the Deaconess Program at CTSFW. Gloria is the director of the Christian Counseling Center located near the University of Novosibirsk. Her husband, Alexei Vinogradov, a brilliant computer programmer, also serves as seminary librarian. He studied library science at CTSFW, in the marvelous Wayne and Barbara Kroemer Library. Alla is helping with the Siberian Lutheran Mission Society outreach to Russian American immigrants.

Pastors Andrei Vladimirov and Oleg Sevastyanov serve as parish pastors in the Ingrian Church (a Russian Lutheran Church with strong Finnish ethnic roots), as does the Rev. Olav Panchu, who has served as parish pastor and probst (“district president”).

Pastor Sergei Mashevskiy returned to Kazakhstan to serve a congregation in the German Lutheran Church (ELKRAS). Following several years

in Kazakhstan, he received a call to serve a congregation in Ukraine. He was later elected Bishop of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ukraine.

The Rev. Alexey Streltsov, rector (president) of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Novosibirsk, pointed out already in 2000: “After 70 years of devastating atheism and 10 years of infiltration of all kinds of sects and cults into Russia, people long for a deep theology and for the real Sacraments. The Lutheran Church offers hope to people amidst this world of despair and chaos.” His words are even more relevant today in view of the cultural meltdown in the West. Streltsov continued, “We do not know the future of the Lutheran Church in Russia, but in view of the decay of Christianity in the West, it is not entirely impossible that the Lutheran Church in Russia will have something to offer to the Western world in the future.”

While studying in Fort Wayne, Andrei Folbort had emergency heart surgery. Without the operation, which was not available in Ukraine, he would have died. The surgery added 10 years to his life, which were spent preaching about the certain and eternal hope that comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

Gennadi Artine came from Moldova (a small country tucked between Ukraine and Rumania). He was converted to Christianity while studying at the University of Novosibirsk. He was sent by Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin of the SELC to study in Fort Wayne. Following his studies, Gennadi Artine was sent to the city of Tomsk, Siberia, where he served in prison ministry and a mission

start. It takes a great deal of money to train students in America and to build and maintain a seminary in Siberia. It takes a lot of time and work to complete seminary education, but Gennadi persisted. He was eagerly looking forward to being a pastor.

Shortly before his ordination, while in the sanctuary of the mission church, he was stabbed to death before the altar by a drug addict in search of money. What a heartbreaking tragedy! Was the entire effort a waste of time and money? No. Whenever Gennadi went home to Moldova, he would witness to his mother who was an unbeliever. When he was killed, she traveled to Russia to take home the body of her son. While she was there, she asked Pastor Lytkin to baptize her. So, was the time and money spent on Gennadi worth it? Absolutely. What if it had been your mother? 🙏

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*And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

**2 Timothy 2:2**

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