

In late May I was privileged to take a missions trip, traveling to Gdansk, Poland, Minsk, Belarus and ending with a visit to St. Petersburg, Russia.

## Poland

The timing of the trip was to enable me to attend our annual Christ For The Nations Poland official association meeting and graduation ceremony. This year's meeting was a milestone for us: we installed both a Polish President and Vice President of the association to carry on the leadership of the Bible School. This has been a long term goal and is now a reality. I know both of these people personally and look forward to the positive influence I expect them to have for the school.



**ChDN Association Meeting**

When I go to these places my role is an encourager. Just making the effort to show up means a lot to most of the people I meet with but I also look for ways to help them and strengthen them any way I can. While in Poland I was able to attend and preach at a Church in Pruszcz (a town just outside of Gdansk).



**Jeff Preaching with Translator**

I was also able to meet with the worship team from a Church in Tczew (sounds a bit like Jeff) in order to do a little teaching. We were able to gather around the table, and have deep discussion including time for questions and answers. This is a great format for some in depth training.



**Jeff with worship team in Tczew**

## Minsk, Belarus

The last time I was in Minsk was in summer 1999 to do an evangelistic concert with Tommy O'Dell and our church worship team. While there, I was privileged to meet Pastor Pavel and his wife Ira. It was incredible for Lyn and I to see the work that the Lord had done through Lyn's parents; Roger and Myrna Eilers. We saw

literally hundreds of lives that had been transformed through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the influence of Roger and Myrna. The reason I returned to Minsk is to strengthen the relationship that our church has with Abundant Life Church in Minsk through our relationship to Pastor Pavel. I am happy to report Pavel and his family are doing well and so is the Church. We had a great time of renewing our friendship which was much easier now since Pavel has learned so much English. Brian Eager, from our sister church in Stillwater, MN was in Minsk at the same time as me. He has been returning regularly to Minsk for the last 9 years to build a relationship with Pavel and encourage him. It was a pleasure to see the level of friendship and trust that Brian has established with Pavel and many others. He is a great encouragement to them.



**Pastor Pavel, Ira and family**

## **St. Petersburg, Russia**

In about the year 1990, I sat in my living room in River Falls playing Duck Hunt and Mario Brothers with “Paul” Dimitri Poliakoff. He miraculously got a visa to come to the USA to go to Bible School. He and his wife, Anya and 2 year old daughter, Dascha, lived with us in our tiny house for a couple of weeks when they first came to the States. We became fast friends.

Since then, Paul became a pastor and started a church in St. Petersburg, Russia. Paul has been very instrumental in pioneering the “Union of Christians” that has over 800 member churches all across Russia. I have had a standing invitation from my friend “Paul” (Pastor Dimitri) in St. Petersburg, Russia to come and visit for many years. I finally was able to do so and it was well worth the trip.

I had a great time renewing friendship with Paul and Anya. I was able to rehearse with their worship team and play with them for their Sunday church service. We had “international” worship that day with 3 languages, Russian, English and Polish. It was a real treat to get to know some of their worship team members.



**Jeff with worship team in St. Petersburg**

I also was privileged to meet and share with their “Old Faithful” small group. This is a group of older women in the church. These women have seen more than their fair share of hardship in their lives. As I was busy “teaching” them, I was thinking that there was probably a whole lot that they could be teaching me. Nonetheless, I believe that the Lord used me to bring a word of encouragement to them to be an example to the younger generation of believers in being quick to forgive.



**Jeff with “Old Faithful” group**

I had the chance to do some sightseeing while staying with Paul and Anya. One of the amazing things I saw in St. Petersburg was the “Church on the Spilt Blood”. It is a Russian Orthodox cathedral which was built as a memorial to one of the Czars who was assassinated on the site where the cathedral was built – thus the name “on the spilt blood”. It is amazing for its incredible artwork: It is covered with over 4 square meters of mosaics inside and out which are absolutely stunning. It is also amazing that it was not destroyed by either World War II or the Communists who looked at all religion, particularly Christianity, as the enemy of the state. While it had not been completely destroyed, it had suffered severe smoke and flood damage. It was used for storage for many years but in the 1970’s the government decided to restore it to its former magnificence. Since the restoration, government employees give guided tours everyday telling of the birth, life, miracles and resurrection of Jesus via the stories that each mosaic picture portrays. It is absolutely amazing!

## **What’s Next?**

I plan to continue to serve on the board of ChDN Poland making personal visits for our association meetings, encouraging ChDN graduates, pastors and leaders across Poland, Belarus and wherever else the Lord gives me the opportunity. I love to be able to do this and am so grateful for other people who help to send me. Regular monthly gifts over the past couple of years enabled me to save enough money to plan ahead, make commitments and follow through. Thank you to all who have prayed for me and supported me with your gifts. I hope that you will continue to do so.

If you have not contributed in the past, I ask that you please consider a small regular monthly gift. I am not too proud to receive the help and regular small gifts make a huge impact.

Gifts can be sent via check made out to Abundant Life Church and earmarked for “Poland”.

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Or go online to [www.AbundantLifeOnLine.org](http://www.AbundantLifeOnLine.org) and use the convenient and secure online giving form. See picture below.

Jeff in Poland, Belarus and Russia June 2008



[www.AbundantLifeOnline.org](http://www.AbundantLifeOnline.org)

Thanks again for your interest and support.

Jeff Knowlen - A.K.A - Jeffski