

## Various Updates November 2005

### HEATING / WINTER WELFARE PROJECT

We're pleased to tell you that already over 1000 GBP has been spent on assisting with fuel bills and providing assistance. It's only November, there are still several months of Winter to run, and we hope to be able to update you more specifically as the Winter goes on. Thank you notes to donors will be sent to you as we deal with each case of need. We're awaiting the arrival of a brother from the UK to assist with some structural work on insulating homes. Everyone is truly appreciative of the help received, not least being relieved from the stress of simply not knowing how to face the Winter heating bills, as they are in some cases equivalent to the pension the elderly bre & sis in need receive. Without this help, they would be in a desperate situation regarding food and clothing. We're grateful for all the clothing received, and this is being distributed. Here are a few pictures: Sis. S was a former Jehovah's Witness, living in a very remote area. She has walked around the homesteads in her area, telling them she has been baptized and encouraging them to read Bible Basics. She has to walk 9 k.m. to the nearest road. Her husband hunts bears and other animals for food and they use the skins for warmth in their home. After a long journey over tracks to find our sister, we were able to break bread together and were much encouraged by her great love of the Scriptures. Her husband now only has one arm, and so she has to gather firewood to heat the home- they live in a derelict house in the forest, where hunters occasionally spend the night. We were able to give her a lovely coat donated by a kind sister from Horley ecclesia UK, and another of the patchwork blankets made by the sisters in Australia. Our sister was really delighted to get this, she was thrilled that other sisters far away remembered her. She so loves the Truth and reads all the time, but the long walk to the nearest road and the fact she's never travelled far from home, as well as her advancing years, means that she rarely travels anywhere to meet others. This Winter will be hard for her as they have only what they have grown this Summer to live on, carefully stored, and her husband is now not able to hunt much especially in Winter, now that he has lost his arm [from the shoulder downwards]. You will notice the metal boiler in the background, which our sister has to feed with wood every few hours and which is their sole source of heating.



Photo:

Sis. A. lives in an apartment which was so cold that she wears a fur coat all the time whilst there. She is continually being threatened with eviction. We were able to give her help, and here Bro. Martin presents her with some clothing from Holland.



Photo:

We also distributed clothes and welfare at the recent Bible weekend in Latvia.

We were delighted to have the presence of Bre Martin Rozestraten from Holland and David Webb from the Walton UK ecclesia. They both gave encouraging series of talks at our Bible School and elsewhere:



Photo: Bro. Martin speaking through translation



Photo: Bro. David giving an exhortation

They both travelled in Latvia with Marcus & Gwladys to visit some of those in need and to give pastoral support. We're really grateful for their presence. Br Marcus also distributed some copies of *Where Women Have No Doctor* to those who know some English but who don't have funds for or access to medical care. Here he presents a copy to a young sister who is a single mother and has very low income indeed:

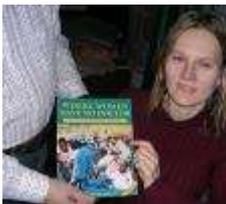


Photo:

Bre Martin & David were able to check out the situation of our sis A and her family. She works three jobs to try to get enough funds to survive and provide for her elderly mother and two children- although she still makes time to read with them each evening according to the Bible reading tables. They are busy producing scarves and we now have some in stock. Are there any of you who would like to purchase them for about 10 Euros each? Please contact us at [info@carelinks.net](mailto:info@carelinks.net) if so. This is a good way to help a sincere family who are really doing all they can to stand on their feet in difficult situations. Here Br Martin inspects the loom on which the children and their grandmother work constantly to make the scarves:



Photo:

Whilst talking about the self-help schemes, we're pleased to say that at least one sister in Latvia is now doing well with the chicken project. Having insulated a room with large amounts of hay, our sister is keeping chickens for eggs rather than meat. Along with Br Martin we were pleased to visit her and see them. She is now too weak to look after her two cows and so she has sold them. She lives alone in an isolated farm house. Whilst sitting there doing the Bible readings with her, a nice car drew up outside. Our sister explained to the woman that today, she couldn't sell her any eggs- because she was giving them to us to take to the Bible weekend which she couldn't attend! So the woman went away that day with no eggs. Our sister explained that she

sells some of the eggs to a this woman most days. It was a pleasure to eat the eggs at the Bible weekend, where we were self-catering so it was appreciated.

We've been very blessed in Latvia with several baptisms recently- we are delighted to announce the baptisms of ANDREJ, ALEKSANDR, IRINA and LILIJA, the latter as a result of our outreach to women living in terrible conditions in a woman's shelter in Riga. We offered to teach them English and were amazed to find that some of them were very educated and intelligent women who can speak English well, but who simply had ended up in a homeless situation due to problems with their documents and citizenship debarring them from employment. We are continuing our work there. Lilija and the other women sleep fully dressed, in the only clothes they possess, because the other women steal everything they have whilst they are sleeping. And yet Lilija has a driving licence and is fluent in six languages... such is the absurdity of the situation in the ex-USSR. By the way, the confession of faith of those we baptize and a set of baptism questions used for interviews can be seen at <http://www.carelinks.net/books/mh/bapqus.htm>

Our visitors joined with us in distributing fliers advertising the next seminar in the course, and on the Tuesday night we were surprised by the attendance of no fewer than 53 new visitors, all willingly signing up to read the Gospel of Mark with us in English. There were others who we had to turn away, as the hall was totally packed with people. We are now running four groups each week with those who wish to read with us and study the Gospel in English. The material used can be viewed at <http://www.carelinks.net/books/saj.htm>. The advertising literature we produced has a blank space on where other individuals or ecclesias can put their local details. If you'd like to try running such a course in your area, we'd be delighted to explain more. At the moment, we are really pushed to keep up with all the interest here.

So we are wondering if there's anyone who'd consider spending even 2 months here in Latvia, although preferably more, to come over to this Macedonia and help us reap a great harvest. The experience of our English seminars is showing that there are considerable numbers of people willing and eager to seriously study the Gospel in English. Any who feel so moved can contact Sis Cindy Heaster, [cindy@apollo.lv](mailto:cindy@apollo.lv)

Photos: Part of the group of 53 people who are studying Mark's Gospel in English with us.



Photos:

Other news is that our brother Hari has had his case deferred, but his wife is being actively persecuted in Nepal by Maoist rebels and he surely needs our prayers.

Our young Iranian refugees in Azerbaijan are still awaiting final clearance to leave for Canada. They are OK despite the recent mass rioting in Azerbaijan which you may have read about on the media. But they need our continued prayers.

We have been in touch with the UNHCR again in Turkey regarding the fate of our several Iranian brethren still there. There seems no way forward at the moment, and some of them are in hiding. Again, they surely need our prayers.

Our brother H is leading the ecclesia well in Izmir, and there have been some more baptisms, as well as violent threats against one of the sisters after she shared the news of her baptism in

October. They too ask for our prayers. They have written a very good study refuting Moslem claims that the Bible has been altered, making extensive reference to the Qu'ran's own claims- see <http://www.carelinks.net/books/dh/dbb/4-2-13.htm>