



SIBERIA: EQUIPPING FOR SERVICE

Though the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia (ELCR) was subject to persecution, repression and abandonment during the communist era, it managed to survive by the grace of God and the faithfulness and perseverance of its members.



THE NEED

From 1922 to 1991 the Russian government only tolerated the practice of religion behind closed doors, executing or exiling Lutheran bishops and pastors, closing church buildings and requiring Christians to worship in secret. Now free to re-engage in its ministry and mission activities publicly, the ELCR hopes to reach more people with God's word.

Today the ELCR has 50,000 members in 300 congregations spread across the eight time zones of this expansive country. The church's repressive history, combined with the vast distances between churches and the lack of resources, has made it difficult to offer formal theological training and equip a new generation of leaders. These needs are especially noted in the region of Siberia.

Together, through Siberia: Equipping for Service, we have the opportunity to build up the Lutheran church in Russia. With a goal of \$500,000, the project will enable the development of a new short-term residential and online learning curriculum suited for the Russian Siberian context. The project will support a full-time program director, guest teachers and translator; allow for the maintenance of a website and media services; and provide scholarships, travel expenses and lodging for lay and clergy students.

Bradn Buerkle, ELCA missionary in St. Petersburg, Russia, shared, "When I saw how many great laypeople there were whose circumstances were such that they wouldn't get to seminary, I decided to talk with church leaders about developing a program to promote theological education on a local level. In the Russian context, you have to be willing to endure great hardships to be Lutheran, so seeing the way the church grows stronger through this ministry is very rewarding."



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God's work. Our hands.

ABOUT ELCA GLOBAL MINISTRIES

The ELCA has deep, long-standing relationships with more than 80 Lutheran churches around the world. As part of a global Lutheran community, we work alongside our brothers and sisters to spread the good news of Jesus Christ near and far.

Because we can do more together than we can as individual congregations, the ELCA listens to our companion churches around the world and responds to their requests for financial support to expand their ministries – to start new congregations, extend outreach in urban areas, and train pastors and evangelists. We call these joint evangelism projects Global Ministries.

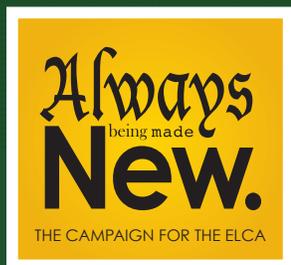
The initiative in Siberia is one of 14 new Global Ministries introduced as part of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*.



Make a gift to Siberia: Equipping for Service.

HELP US DO MORE!

- ONLINE** Make a secure credit card donation by visiting community.elca.org/russia-siberia.
- MAIL** Make checks payable to ELCA Global Church Sponsorship with "Siberia: Equipping for Service – GCS4030" in the check's memo line. Mail checks to: ELCA, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.
- OTHER WAYS TO GIVE** For other ways to give, including multiyear pledges, gifts of securities or real estate, and planned gifts, please call 800-638-3522, ext. 2612, or email CampaignforELCA@elca.org.



Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA is our moment to look toward the future of this church and boldly respond to the needs of the world with a living, daring confidence in God's grace. This five-year, \$198 million campaign will help our church grow our communities of faith, form new leaders, welcome our neighbors, overcome malaria, confront hunger and poverty, accompany our global churches and so much more. Together, we can achieve things on a scale and scope we could never do otherwise.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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