



CHRISTIAN RADIO FOR RUSSIA

Sponsor of the New Life Radio Satellite Network

FALL 2015

www.CRFR.org

Looking at how NLR reaches the world in obedience to the Great Commission

Continuing challenges for evangelical radio

Outreach potential for Russia and Ukraine during times of war



When Jesus commissioned us in Matthew 28:19 to *go and make disciples of all nations*, He gave us the ability to realize this goal in our own generation. Using satellite, Internet, and FM radio to proclaim the age old GOOD NEWS of NEW LIFE in CHRIST, New Life Radio has the means to reach the Russian-speaking people in every nation today. Even more unique, is the partnership of a small group of Christians in America and Russia who make this happen. As we often tell people, NLR is not a Russian radio station, but a Christian radio station located on the territory of the Russian Federation. Our audience and those we seek to reach are all over the globe. So lets see how we can carry this mission out in practice!



New Life Radio's nerve center is situated within the *Christian Center*, located at 15 Namyotkina Street in Moscow. Built by four US-based evangelical ministries back in the mid-1990s, NLR has three studios in the Center that allow us to program a 24/7 radio schedule as operated by two full time and three part time radio missionaries. Headed by station director Dima Vatoulya, NLR acts as a primary mass media site for the nation's evangelical denominations and ministries that seek to use radio to reach domestic and international audiences for evangelism and discipleship.



Our main control room sends a primary signal to our satellite earth station facility located just outside of Tel Aviv, Israel, in order to connect to our HOTBIRD satellite channel, which is located within Europe's most popular direct to home satellite service with over 100 million claimed viewers/listeners by its owner *Eutelsat*. In addition, NLR has a direct routing of its studio signal to our US-based Internet streaming service that provides the station unlimited user connection status worldwide, and is configured to stream to hand held media devices like I-phones and Android-based cell phones. NLR has 2 FM radio affiliates located in the Russian towns of Aktubinsk, and Dudinka.

NLR's Andre Mironov hosts an afternoon airshift, bringing encouragement



and Biblical counsel to listeners scattered across Russia, Ukraine, and even lands in Asia and South America.

With over 84 million Russian Internet users, NLR uses the most popular online sites



like *Vkontakte* and *Facebook* to inform listeners about programs and share Christian resources to build their faith.



Users like Katerina Fedotova of Moscow, are part of the NLR family who seek daily encouragement while listening to the latest Christian music from the station's international collection of artists who join our network in order to fulfill their own calling to share the Gospel in song.

Sometimes our staff has to remind themselves that while they are speaking into a mic inside the middle of Moscow, in reality, they are sharing with people in the middle of remote areas of Russia, or within major urban centers like Kiev, London, Berlin, New York, or Seattle. Each person we reach uses a different media device and has a unique perspective, but they all need to know about the love of the Savior who died to set them free.

NLR has been the pioneer in Christian FM and Satellite broadcasting in Russia solely out of concern that every city and village have access to Christian radio. Even after 23 years of freedom, 99% of Russian towns have no local Christian station. Later in this report, we will update you with news to explain why this sad statistic will continue. Listen to us at:

www.NLRadio.net



Challenges for Evangelical Radio

In our last newsletter, Station Director Dima Vatoulya outlined recent events that revealed the difficulties of maintaining a Christian radio station in 2015. Despite what is happening, we know that the Lord is in control and we need not fear the future, as it is HIS ministry. Yet as one of the few remaining evangelical *and* independent media operations in Russia, it is our duty to inform the global Christian community of Russian state actions against the evangelical Church and its various ministries, so we can pray effectively and address decision-makers when possible.

Sadly, the development period of Christian broadcasting in Russia ended upon the inauguration of President Vladimir Putin in 1999. Since that time, the evangelical Church has not been able to secure radio licenses from the government, save in a handful of cities, some of which are now shut down. NLR lost 5 FM radio affiliates during this time, including its initial FM station in Magadan. New laws against freedom of the press, freedom of religion—including restrictive religious extremism laws that threaten any church that claims the superiority of their faith claims—and recent laws against foreign financial and logistical partnership with western Christians make the environment a most threatening one for new evangelical movements, especially in media.

This July, the Russian State Duma passed a law that eases the procedure for registration of new religious associations (churches). However, a number of restrictions have still been established for such organizations with implications for new Christian radio. For example, for a period of the next ten years after registration they will **not** be able to create educational institutions; to found news media (including radio); to have as partners the representation of a foreign religious organization (including evangelical denominations in America); nor to invite foreigners for engaging in professional activity, **including preaching and religious activity**. This action is a complete reversal of the openness that the evangelical Church experienced domestically and with spiritual partners from around the world since the demise of the USSR in 1992. However, we work while we have the opportunity.

What this means for New Life Radio, is that we have no realistic chance to establish new FM radio affiliates around the country; will have increased government scrutiny of our finances and questions about our cooperation with Christian partners from the west, and face, along with the few secular, independent media operations, an aggressive State media watchdog agency that will threaten the closure of any broadcast station after two violations of subjectively-applied media laws. The few evangelical stations that remain today face this possibility of shutdown every time they express Christ's exclusive claim that "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me."

Now more than ever, we need your prayers for protection, and the means to continue this important Christian radio outreach.

NLR Listeners tell us this:

a translated sample...

Dear NLR Staff, You are a super radio, dear blessed people! All of your programs are good, instructive, encouraging! Everything is all good about you! **Emily, Israel**

Hello New Life Radio! We listen all the time at our drug rehab center. Great radio! Thank you for keeping our spirits on fire, giving us needed information. Everything is great and fine! Keep on! **Alex, Russia**

Dear beloved New Life Radio! Thank you for keeping on doing your job! Thanks for being there! **Vitaly, USA**

Dear New Life Radio! Praise the Lord for you. I listen all the time with pleasure!
Insta, Great Britain

Peace to you New Life Radio! I always listen to you at my pottery workshop, and get inspired for work all the time. May the Lord bless you!
Vitaly, Belarus

Hello guys. I am a truck driver, and I always listen to you on the road. Thanks for being so positive all the time!
Dina, USA

Hello to you NLR friends! This is our warm greetings from Odessa. And the Lord bless you always!
Alexander, Ukraine

Greetings NLR! I wish you blessings! I am with you all the time.
Eldar, Russia



My horizons are getting wider, my heart is getting filled with love when I listen to NLR!

Hello dear brothers and sisters! This is from Astrakhan! It is so good to be able to listen to our beloved NLR while driving home! Bless you in the name of our Lord Jesus!
Alexander, Russia

Hello to you NLR from sunny Moldova! God bless you in every way! Thanks for being with us!
Michael, Moldova

THANKS to our donors who help NLR reach out to these and many listeners

Outreach potential for Russia and Ukraine during times of war: bringing Christians together via radio



The headlines in major papers in Europe and the US lament the seeming return of cold war relations with Russia, given its conflict with Ukraine and increasing hostility of its foreign relations strategy. The Russian government condemns the West of seeking its demise through political and economic interference and lack of respect. Daily reports of fighting in eastern Ukraine, economic sanctions, and massive propaganda in the media bolstering each nation's claims gives the appearance that the solutions of men are not able to bring peace and hope to this troubled part of the world. And that is true.

For the evangelical Church in each land, there should be a spirit of cooperation and partnership that can overcome the politically-based passions that try to force Christians into a mindset that places their patriotism and nationality above their ultimate allegiance to the Kingdom of God. Sadly, this is not always the case, and we are witnessing a split in the Body of Christ between these countries that seeks a solution, since Christ calls us to be one. This is where our mission comes into increased relevance.

NEW LIFE RADIO's challenge is to be a media bridge of Christian unity and truth during this crisis time of political, cultural, and spiritual war between these closely connected peoples. Our satellite and Internet signal know no national boundaries, and our independent, non-denomination orientation and track record through these many years of broadcasting gives us a credibility that assures listeners that our priority is God's Kingdom and the Word of God as the highest reference and guide that addresses all the problems of life faced by mankind.

When hostilities between Russia and Ukraine began, our audience wondered why our newscasts were not covering the conflict, nor why we had not taken sides, either for Russia or Ukraine. Our mission staff purposely focused on discussing what Scripture has to say to address these general issues that fiercely divide people. And while even pastors in both nations engaged in discussions about the military conflict, with viewpoints partially conditioned by the censorship and propaganda over the state-controlled national TV and radio networks that they consumed, New Life Radio had to step back from those in church leadership and state that we would remain above the hostilities in our broadcasts by focusing on Biblical answer and little else.

When we encourage our Ukrainian and Russian listeners to think about what Jesus would have them do; or as patriotic pastors on each side struggled to find the proper response to give to their parishioners on what is right, or how to respond, NLR continued to stand strong for a biblical response over the air.



The strategy has paid off, as we retain a loyal listening audience in each country that seeks to be in unity of spirit, representing the best of Christian conduct even in the worst of times, and carrying out the command of our Lord, to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to be kind to our enemies.

That NLR as a radio station with license permission from the Russian state does not fall in line with Kremlin information policies and can be shutdown for any favorable reporting on Ukraine, is the risk we take in following Christ's call seriously. Again, we petition our donors and listeners to pray for a hedge of protection around NEW LIFE RADIO, that we might proclaim boldly as the Psalmist states, "IN THY LIGHT, we shall see light." It is our privilege to broadcast the light of the Gospel to the people of Russia and Ukraine, and for your partnership in this great task, we are grateful!



Help NLR keeps its signal coverage of Russia and Ukraine via the HOTBIRD satellite

cost: \$2200/month *seeking \$1000 more for higher audio quality (\$3300)

NLR Internet coverage costs: \$1000/month

Co-sponsor a missionary \$1500/month



CHRISTIAN RADIO FOR RUSSIA:

Background and news update about our organization

Listeners to NEW LIFE RADIO would never know what *Christian Radio for Russia* is, where it is from, and what its connection to the radio network in Moscow is. Our listeners in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the former Soviet states don't know that NLR is supported by a small group of American Christians who are integral partners with the radio missionary staff at NLR studios. And no one listening to the station is aware that the network manager and founder is a middle aged man living in a small Pennsylvania village. There are reasons for this secrecy: its just our way of honoring the dictate of our Lord when it comes to tithing and good works by not letting the right hand know what the left hand is doing. Its all about building the next generation of the Church among a Slavic ethnic group that for decades had to suffer under repressive governments whose political philosophies were based on the notion of a humanism that had no place for acknowledgement of a loving Creator God.

The key is that after 14 years of operating a foreign radio network in a hostile political, religious and press environment, using a business model of giving away all of our airtime for free and having no advertisements, and not asking listeners for money on the air, this ministry is still operational and serving the Lord on a global basis! That is part of the miracle of CRFR and New Life Radio. Our job has always been to equip our brethren in Russia and other Slavic nations with the means to reach their own people via radio—and no one cares who gets the credit for it is all done to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

CRFR began its ministry as a non-profit mission support entity that took over the administrative and financial role of the Evangelical Covenant Church denomination—based in Chicago—that had first set up New Life Radio in Magadan and later oversaw the development work (1998-2001) leading to the initiation of NLR's satellite broadcast network in Moscow.

Registered in March 2001, the founding Board members included Dr. Robert Larson, Rev. Raymond Dahlberg, Jerald Thelander and Matt Hagberg, with Daniel Johnson named as president and legal trustee of the Russian company that oversaw the radio operations. Its office was based in the facilities of First Covenant Church in Jamestown, NY.

In 2015, CRFR, led by Rev. Ken Wagner (chair) and board members Rev. Randy Vaught, Brian Bettger, Serge Taran, and NLR advisor Dr. Robert Larson, continues its efforts to make the NLR network an integral mission tool of the Church, not only in Russia, but to all nations that have Russian-speakers needing to hear the Gospel. CRFR is committed to developing mission partnerships with evangelical denominations and ministries that desire to reach into Russia and beyond. To realize this, CRFR

offers the services of NLR to our partners with air time and programming opportunities in order to communicate with thousands of communities, millions of homes and individuals, as well as churches and ministry sites.

CRFR, as a tool of the evangelical Church, focused on evangelism and discipleship, is inclusive to all who adhere to the Apostle's Creed and have as their primary emphasis, the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Our orientation as a non-denominational outreach gives us the ability to work with a wide cross section of Churches that need to come together to witness to an unbelieving Slavic world.



NLR radio missionaries

Andre R, Vladimir, Andre M, Nadia, Dima

FUNDING CHALLENGE needing your help in 2016

A Christian foundation that has provided NLR with equipment funds and personnel support for our part time staff has ended their 5 year grant to CRFR. WE NEED to replace their generous yearly donation of \$20,000 from new partners. Can you assist in helping us make up the difference?



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all contributions are tax-deductible