



Introduction

WELCOME to the Administrative Center of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. We hope your visit will be a pleasant one.

The complex of buildings you are visiting is called Bethel, which means "House of God." This Biblical name is fitting since those who live and serve here are ordained ministers. They have dedicated themselves to Jehovah God and devote themselves full-time to supporting the work of Kingdom preaching.

These facilities are used to support the ministry of over 160,000 Witnesses of Jehovah in more than 2,400 congregations throughout Russia, and over 4,600 Witnesses in more than 50 congregations in Belarus.

In 236 lands, there are now more than 7,500,000 Witnesses of Jehovah carrying out the commission Jesus gave his followers to preach the "good news of the Kingdom." (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) To organize this work, there are more than 90 Bethel homes such as this one worldwide.

Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia

Jehovah's Witnesses have been active in Russia for more than a century. Thousands of them were persecuted in the Soviet Union and exiled to Siberia and the Far East. In 1996, a presidential decree exonerated them as victims of political repression.

Today, Jehovah's Witnesses enjoy freedom of worship throughout Russia. Our activities were first registered in 1991. In 1999 our religious organization received the official status of a recognized religion in Russia. Construction on this Bethel complex in the village of Solnechnoye, about 25 miles north of St. Petersburg, began in 1992 and was completed in 1997. Later, because of the tremendous growth of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia, two new residence buildings and a new storage facility were added. These were dedicated on May 17, 2003. All construction on the Bethel complex from its very beginning was carried out by volunteers—Jehovah's Witnesses from Russia, Scandinavia, and other countries.

It is our sincere hope that your visit to Bethel will help you to appreciate how Jehovah's Witnesses are organized to serve God unitedly as a worldwide Christian brotherhood.

WE SINCERELY hope that your visit to Bethel has been a rewarding one. No doubt it has helped you to become better acquainted with the work that Jehovah's Witnesses are doing to aid people in their quest for a better future through God's Kingdom. May your visit with us be an encouragement to you in your efforts to learn more about our loving Creator and to live by his righteous standards.

Visiting Hours

Visitors are welcome to take a guided tour of our facilities from Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The tours begin in the main reception lobby. No tours are provided on the weekend. We appreciate it when large groups notify us in advance of their visit.

Location: Ul. Srednyaya 6, Solnechnoye, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation 197739

Telephone: +7 812 702 2690

Web: www.jw.org

You may also visit our Assembly Hall at 21 Kolomyazhskiy Prospekt, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation 197341.

Welcome to the Administrative Center of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia





The Bethel Family

The Bethel family in Russia has over 300 members. Each is provided with a room, meals, and a monthly allowance to assist with modest expenses. In addition to their activity at Bethel, each member of the family personally participates in the Kingdom-preaching activity with one of the nearby congregations. Although those serving here at Bethel come from a variety of ethnic groups, they can truly be called a family because of their unity in serving their heavenly Father, Jehovah God.—Psalm 133:1.

Each workday morning, the Bethel family comes together at the breakfast table to consider a Bible text from *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. A chairman presides over this 15-minute discussion, and members of the

family are asked to comment on the text. After prayer, breakfast is served.

On Monday evenings, the Bethel family gathers to study the Bible with the help of a Bible-study publication. Occasionally, there are special programs, such as lectures after the family study. Each family member also makes time for personal Bible study and has access to our library that contains more than 3,700 volumes. These include the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses and other reference works.

Some family members serve in the kitchen where they prepare three wholesome meals each day for the entire family. Other family members do cleaning, laundry, and maintenance. Much of this work contributes to the high standard of cleanliness.



Offices and Departments



Service Department

The Service Department supports the preaching activity of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Russia and Belarus. It handles correspondence with traveling overseers, congregation elders, and pioneers. It also compiles records of field service activity, congregation territories, and pioneer assignments. Those serving here schedule circuit and district assemblies and special assembly days. They also arrange various educational programs that help Jehovah’s Witnesses to become capable preachers of God’s Kingdom.



Preparing a display for a medical conference

Hospital Information Desk

This desk provides the latest information on bloodless medical procedures to Hospital Liaison Committees, which number 77 in Russia and 5 in Belarus. In turn, the congregation elders serving on these committees make this information available to doctors who are willing to provide high-quality medical care without the use of blood.

Producing publications

Translation Department

About 80 translators serve in our administrative center. They help to translate Bible literature into Russian, Tatar, Ossetian, Chuvash, and other languages. Over the years, this administrative center has supervised about 150 translators who have translated material into more than 30 of the languages spoken in Russia. The Russian sign-language team works with the video team to provide videos for the growing sign-language field. It also prepares material for sign-language district conventions.

The magazines and publications translated under the oversight of our office are composed using the Multi-language Electronic Publishing System (MEPS), which was developed by Jehovah’s Witnesses. This computer system can process text in over 600 languages. Once material for publication is translated and composed into pages, it is sent to one of several branches for printing.



Translators work in teams for video and printed publications



A proofreader prepares text received from the Translation Department, which is then read by a reader. A coach checks intonation, and a proofreader checks for correct pronunciation and stress. A sound engineer produces and edits the recording.

Audio recording of publications

Audio and Video

This department makes video recordings for sign-language publications. It also makes audio recordings for convention dramas, video sound tracks, and audio editions of the Bible and Bible-based publications. In addition, it records vocal renditions of Kingdom songs.



Sign-language workflow



1. Sign-language translation



2. Video recording

3. Proofreading and editing of sign-language publications





Public Information Desk

The Public Information Desk supplies the news media with accurate information on our organization's activities and important events. It reports violations of the constitutional freedoms of Witnesses through various media channels, including the Web site *Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia* (www.jw-russia.org). It also assists congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses who are affected by local media coverage of their activities.



Legal Department

The Legal Department provides assistance to congregations and to the registered legal entities used by communities of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. The Legal Department also provides authorities with accurate information about the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses as they exercise their lawful right to enjoy freedom of worship and to preach the good news of the Kingdom.—Philippians 1:7.



Engineering Department

The Engineering Department designs various facilities for the use of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. It works closely with municipal authorities to meet the requirements for natural resource consumption, construction standards, and safety.



Kingdom Hall Construction Desk

The Kingdom Hall Construction Desk supports the construction of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and other necessary projects. It also assists congregations in obtaining property and permits for building Kingdom Halls.

Computer Department

Those who serve in this department install and maintain computers and network systems. They also train and support members of the Bethel family in the use of various computer programs.



Maintenance

The family members serving here care for Bethel's electrical and plumbing systems as well as for the machines and equipment used in the offices and residences. Our vehicles are maintained in a well-equipped garage.



Shipping

Each month literature comes from Germany prepacked according to congregation requests. The literature is then shipped to congregations all across Russia. Our own Bethel trucks deliver literature to the northwestern part of Russia.

