



Mission Trip to KZ

Where is KZ, you ask? Jennifer Anderson, senior at Concordia University, Seward, NE, is one of the few who will have the right answer. Jenn, daughter of Pastor Russell and Harriet Anderson from Ocheyedan, IA, shares some of her amazing experiences as a missionary to KZ this past summer. Sit back, relax and enjoy Kazakhstan through the eyes of Jenn.

“I cannot believe that my trip to Kazakhstan (KZ) has come and gone. God has taught me so much through this short experience. A few things I’ve learned are to never take anything for granted such as hot, running water, the ability to speak and understand another language, and the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Many people do not know much about Kazakhstan so here are a few facts about KZ:

- Located in Central Asia
- 47% of the population is Muslim
- 44% of the population is Russian Orthodox
- 60% of the people have a desire to learn English
- Common foods: Horse meat☺, soup, flat bread, Shashlik, Monte, Logmon
- Common drinks: Tea, fruit compote, and fermented horse or camel milk.

“The first week that I was in KZ I stayed in Taldy Korgan with David and Rachel Baker, who are missionaries there with LCMS. The very first day, David and I visited a village where some of his friends live. I do not remember much about it since I was still feeling the effects of jet lag. I do remember they wanted to kill a sheep for me because it was my first time in Kazakhstan. I felt very honored, but because of a lack of time they served me my very first Kazakh tea instead. It was delicious!

“The first week I taught a five day English camp at an organization for the disabled. Each day we had 15-20 students who were on various English levels. All of these young people had a smile on their face no matter their disability, and they were eager to learn. I believe we made some friendships that will continue to grow.



“No one knows what will actually happen in life. This is especially true in KZ. The culture is very relaxed. The plan was for me to go to the orphanage a few hours a day and do some teaching but the orphanage decided to do some remodeling and keep the children at camp for a longer time. This was very disappointing to me, but we were able to meet with the director and discuss *possible* future plans for teaching English to the orphans.

“After seven days under the hospitality of the Bakers, I went to Almaty to a camp where I did not know anyone, did not know whether I would have a translator, or even what I was supposed to do at this camp. I was fully relying on God. Proverbs 3:5-6 states ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart.’ The camp was once again a great experience that made me step out of my comfort zone, but God did provide two great translators for me.



“There are many stories I could share, but one that is strong in my mind is about the young girl, Damira, who is fourteen years old. She came to camp the last five days. She was somewhat competent with English. The second day of this camp we went on a hike, and, while we were talking she asked me if I was a Christian. I said ‘yes’ and asked her if she is a Christian. She said she is not, and that she is Muslim. I was not expecting that answer. Later on that night I was preparing my devotion for the camp and she came and sat next to me and asked to read my Bible. Throughout the whole camp she asked me to read my English Bible several times. I sat with her a number of times and explained several things. She did not ask many questions, but the whole time she was intrigued with it. Every time she would read the Bible I would pray so hard that God would work in her heart and show her the truth.

“I have met many believers and unbelievers in KZ, and I thank God just like the apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 1:12, ‘I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.’ There is such a need for Christ in KZ. I ask that you continue to pray for the people of KZ, the Bakers, and for myself as I finish up at Concordia University and prayerfully consider serving in KZ for a year.”

Ellie Menz, IOWAY Director
515-386-8420
ellie.menz@idwlcms.org