


Chapter 10

Alex Shevchuk

PERSONALITY PROFILE



Alex Shevchuk, Russian broadcaster

A THIRTY YEAR JOURNEY

28 Moving from North China to Manila really isn't very far in terms of modern transportation, but for Alex Shevchuk the trip took thirty years and led him around the world and half way back again. Yet today when Alex reads letters coming from inside the Soviet Union in response to radio broadcasts for which he is responsible, he is more than sure that every step of the way was worth it.

His story really begins in Russia. After the Revolution in 1917 life became increasingly difficult for Christians in Russia. Many even found it necessary to leave the country. Among them was a band of believers in the Ukraine that experienced miraculous deliverances as they moved from place to place and finally crossed the Russian border in 1933. It was in the Sikiang Province of China that Alex Shevchuk was born and where he spent his younger days.

The peaceful years in North China passed quickly though and in 1946 the Russian Christians once again were forced to flee because of Communism. By horseback, in carts, wagons and trucks Alex and his family crossed China.

Arriving in Shanghai impoverished, worn out, and homeless, the little group had no one to whom to turn, but they trusted their God to lead. And they did—through the International Refugee Committee of the United Nations. The Christians were lifted out of China which was fast being engulfed by Communism, and placed on a tiny island near the southern end of the Philippines.

But there the brave band was not to find a permanent home as the Philippine government would not allow them to stay. In search of a country the journey led them to a refugee camp in Italy, on a trip by French vessel to Rio de Janeiro and on a flight to the central plains of Paraguay.

Russia and China had been cold to Paraguay was very hot. Life on the deserted farms in which the believers had been settled was not easy, but through it all Alex saw his parents remain steadfast and with singleness of heart serve God regardless of circumstances.

When Alex was 16 he personally received Christ as his Savior and, along with 14 other young people, was baptized in a creek.

The war years and life as a refugee had allowed little time for education, but Alex decided to go to the capital city

<https://wvusstatic.com/2019/magazine-archive/1970/WVUS%20Magazine%20MARCH%201970.pdf> (p. 30)

World Vision magazine:

Alex Shevchuk, Russian broadcaster, "A Thirty-Year Journey"

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When Alex was 16 he personally received Christ as his Savior and, along with 14 other young people, was baptized in a creek.

The war years and life as a refugee had allowed little time for education, and Alex decided to go to the capital city Asuncion to further his education. As he left, his father said: “Alex, before you find a job or enroll in evening school, you must find a church in which to worship.”

He did find a church and the Lord led a missionary there to give Alex a desire to go to Bible school. In 1955 the Shevchuk family immigrated to San Francisco and Alex attended Bethany Bible College in Santa Cruz.

During his school years, Alex worked among Mexican farm laborers living near the school, and after graduation he became an evangelist to Ukrainian and Russian communities across Canada and the eastern part of the United States. Then he was asked to be an associate pastor in his home church, the Russian Gospel Temple in San Francisco. In due time the church exchanged the store building where they met to worship for a beautiful church building which they built.

It became a center for many former refugees who used the new educational facilities.

From the time Alex started working in the church, he was in charge of a weekly radio broadcast, and the newly built church included a radio station. But Alex didn't dream that he would one day be in full-time radio work.

Then the Far East Broadcasting company was faced with dismantling several transmitters which they had bought from the government with the condition that they be removed from the site in a very short time. Knowing that the transmitters would be used to beam the gospel message to Russia, the men in Alex's church responded to an urgent call for help. Radio was fast becoming a part of church life—and of Alex's life. Even the choir practiced with new zeal to prepare songs to use on future Russian programs.

"Something else" also became a part of Alex's life—lovely Ann Tkachaeff. Her background was similar to Alex's—in fact they had been born in the same village in North China. Alex and Ann were married and continued working in the church. That is—until an executive of the Far East Broadcasting Company asked them to go to Manila to head FEBC's Russian and Ukranian departments. It was then that Ann told Alex about how that when she was a little girl in the Philippines she had promised the Lord that one day she would return there as a missionary.

In 1965 the Shevchuks left for the Philippines. On the deck of the ship, as they waited to sail, Alex's father with tears in his eyes said, "Many times I wondered why it was that out of all my brothers and sisters in Russia God led me to leave Russia. Now you are going back to the Philippines, and I can see that all along it was God's plan. God bless you, son."

For five years Alex and his wife have faithfully broadcast the gospel message to the land of their parents' birth, thankful that the Lord has led all the way from North China to Manila.

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Shanghai was filled with thousands of Russians, and no one wanted us. The president of the Philippines finally agreed to take us. We were sent to a small island called Tubabao. We lived there for two years.



Missionaries To Speak

Assemblies of God missionaries will be guest speakers this week at the First Assembly of God, Benton Harbor, according to the Rev. Raymond Rueb.

The Rev. Robert Krist, missionary to Spain, will speak at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 23, and the Rev. Alex Shevchuk, radio missionary to Russia, will

speak at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 24.

The public is invited.

Rev. Krist has served as national treasurer and was engaged in evangelism and establishing churches. Before entering the ministry, he attended Central Bible college where he received his bachelor of arts degree in Bible.

Krist has pastored churches in Cedar Springs, Cass City and Clinton, all in Michigan.

Rev. Shevchuk and his wife, Ann, were stationed in Manila, Philippines, where they were active in radio ministry to Russia, teaching in Bethel Bible Institute in Manila, pastoring the Chinese Assemblies of God and holding evangelistic services in the islands.

Through the Far East Broadcasting Company, the Shevchuks daily broadcasted three hours and 13 minutes of programs into Russia.

Shevchuk immigrated to America from Russia in 1955. He graduated from Bethany Bible college, Santa Cruz, Calif. Mrs. Shevchuk, also Russian, attended Sacramento City college, Sacramento, Calif., and

Simpson Bible college, San Francisco, Calif.

After graduation, Rev. Shevchuk ministered as an evangelist to the Russians and Ukrainians on the East Coast and Canada. He also was associate pastor of the Russian Assembly of God in San Francisco for five years before his missionary appointment.



REV. ALEX SHEVCHUK

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1956

Benton Harbor - St. Joseph, Michigan

THE HERALD-PALLADIUM

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Working in conjunction with Alex Shevchuk's radio ministry was Rev. Paul Demetrus. (see Chapter 11)

In 1950 several hundred Russian refugees arrived in San Francisco aboard the General W. G. Haan. This group of Christians who had to flee communism, suffered severe hardship in their long trek to freedom. They were first driven from the Soviet for their religious beliefs, later from Turkestan for the same reasons. Many of them had good farms and cattle that were destroyed when the Chinese communists drove them from their midst.

They traveled by horse, by carts and trucks through bitter cold. In order to save the children they had to put all the clothing on them that they could get. Many of the older people could not survive the ordeal and were buried on the way.

Finally they arrived in Shanghai. Through Christian friends in America it was made possible for them to be transported to the Phillippines where they were interned for several years. Sponsors were found for them in South America, Australia and the United States.

Most of those that landed here in 1950 still cling together. They have found a goal and are now devoting their time to a very worthy project.

Paul Demetrus, a former member of the Orthodox church, after his conversion dedicated his life to the task of evangelizing his own Slavic people. Born in Chicago, he studied for the ministry in Moody Bible Institute and after graduating from Central Bible Institute in Springfield, Missouri, he made application for missionary work to Russia. He and his wife Ruth were sent to a Russian language school in New York City to prepare themselves for Foreign missionary service. However, the opportunity to minister personally to the Slavic people in Europe was never realized because of communistic restrictions.

In God's providence Christian radio stations were built and the need for Russian and Ukrainian programs had to be met. At the same time by God's help, these Russian people immigrated to San Francisco and Bryte, California and were able to furnish the songs and choral numbers for the programs.

Paul Demetrus uses the facilities of the FAR EAST BROADCASTING CO. in Manila, P. I. and THE INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION in Stockholm, Sweden. These programs which are called THE VOICE OF TRUTH are beamed by these stations into the iron and bamboo curtain countries.

<https://wigowsky.com/RGT/Demetrus.jpg>



Alice Lookianoff Moure (with part of Al Sohourukoff), **Alex Shevchuk**, Vera Dumanovsky Dubenko, Boris Prasoloff, Bill Davidiuk, Stanley Wigowsky, Nida Lokteff Wigowsky, Nila Samosvatoff Neciuk, Susie Shevchuk (forgot married name), Cathy Prasoloff, Nellie Krapivkin Ilyin, Raya Soboleff Bespaly, Lily Soboleff Ilyin, Walter Korzuchin.



<https://wigowsky.com/RGT/Geary St/Geary5.jpg>

Seated: Pastor Gabriel Avramenko, Gabe Krapivkin

Row 1: Nick Akimoff, Olga Wigowsky, Mr. Froloff,

Row 2: Nick Kravchenko, Kathy Prasoloff, Alex Souhorokoff, Andrew Shevchuk

Row 3: Alice Loukianoff, Dina Shevchuk, Mrs. Avramenko, Mr. Krapivkin (Lee)

Row 4: Irene Loukianoff, Peter Dubenko, Alex Shevchuk, Dusya Zakatchenko, Valya Dubenko

Row 5: Adolf Wigowsky, Bill Dubenko, George Dubenko, Andrei Akimoff, Ivan Zakatchenko, Raissa Fedoroff, Ted (Fedor) Dubenko, Stanley Wigowsky



The Builders (workers) on the Russian Gospel Temple, SF (1961)
 Peter Shevchenk (left), then Al Souharukoff, Adolf Wigowsky, Alex shevchuk, Ruben Velichko, Alex Shevchenko, Stanley Wigowsky, and Kiril Ilyin (below).





Russian Gospel Temple Choir

**Russian Gospel Temple Choir
17th and Potrero
San Francisco, CA**

First Row: (left to right) Pastor Alex Shevchenko Sr., Peter Ilyin, Lily Soboleff, Raya Pustobaeff, Susan Shevchuk, Tava Soboleff, Nida Lokteff, Nellie Krapivkin, Luba Pustobaeff, Luba Shevchenko, Vera Brachinoff, Choir Director Joseph Lokteff

Second Row: Nilla Samosvatoff, Alice Brachinoff, Vera Dubenko, Kathy Prasoloff, Ruth Ilyin, Luba Solovieff, (unknown), Tamara Fedoroff, Raya Soboleff, John Iliyn

Third Row: Alex Riltzeff, Ben Shevchenko, Boris Prasoloff, Alex Shevchenko Jr., Fedor Dubenko, Stanley Wigowsky, **Alex Shevchuk, Paul Ilyin, Peter Dubenko, Alex Souhorukoff, Peter Dumanovsky**

[Note: Maiden names are used for the women.]

<https://wigowsky.com/images/misc/choir.htm>

According to online sources, Alex Shevchuk served as a missionary in the Philippines. His mission involved broadcasting a Christian radio program intended for an audience in Russia. The theme of the program was "Good News".

A directory of Assemblies of God ministers published in 1969 lists an "Alex Shevchuk" with a Manila, Philippines address, suggesting a possible affiliation with the Assemblies of God during his missionary service.

Alex Shevchuk is also mentioned in connection with the Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC) International Archive, which features photos of missionaries and staff, including him, who worked in the Philippines.

Alex Shevchuk in Lodi News – Sentinel – Mar 31 1965

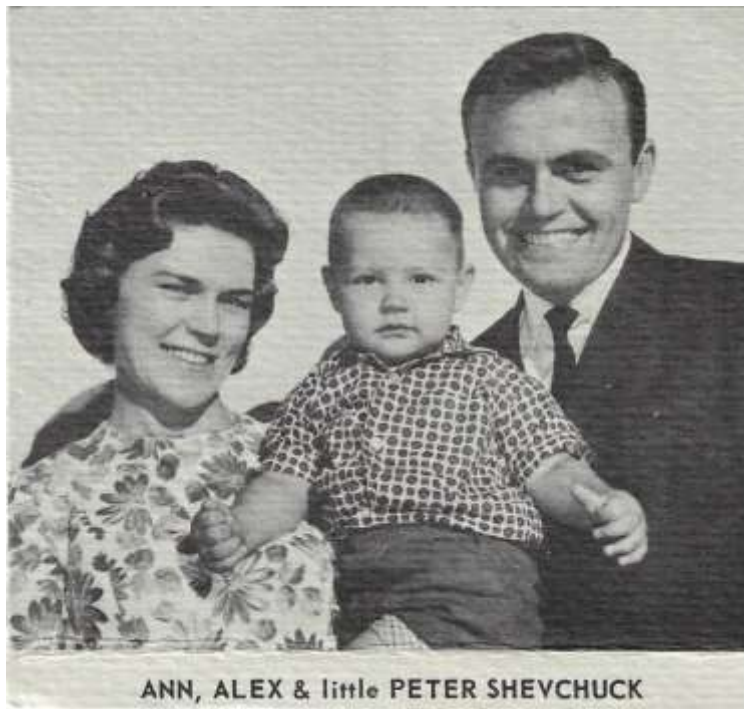
MISSIONARY and Mrs. Alex Shevchuk, Assemblies of God missionaries to the Philippines, will be guest speakers at 7 tonight at the First Assembly of God Church, Walnut and Washington SU. Missionary Will Tell Of His ..."

Publication place: Lodi, San Joaquin County, California, United States



Alex and Anna Shevchuk

<https://archives.ifphc.org/index.cfm>



Alex Shevchuk, Peter Ilyin, Boris Prasoloff, Walter Korzuchin, Al Akimoff, and I attended Bethany Bible College. Our church supported us in going to the college to learn about the Bible and perhaps enter the missionary field or church ministry.

I recall when I was attending Bethany in 1963-1965, Alex Shevchuk visited me in the new men's dorm that was built. He talked to me about becoming a missionary like him. Needless to say, my mission in life was to become a teacher.



Craig Memorial Chapel (#15)

There were many memories created here. We had daily chapel services at this small chapel, which seated about 250 students. One memory that stuck with me was the way we were seated in this chapel; men were seated on the right side (facing front), and women were seated on the left side. This seating arrangement reminded me of the conservative way I grew up with in the small Russian church I attended in San Francisco. Later, our church (Russian Gospel Temple) started a more liberal way after young married couples complained that they wanted to sit together, like other American churches were doing.



<https://wigowsky.com/PauJ/Bethany/BethanyUniversity2008.pdf>

Alex Shevchuk moved up to Oregon when the Lokteffs, Wigowskys, and others moved there in 1974-6. Alex Shevchuk became the first pastor of the

newly built Russian Gospel Church in Hubbard, Oregon. It was founded in 1975.



During the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Russian Gospel Church, Alex Shevchuk came to participate in the celebration. He was 92.





Alex spoke for several minutes. July 13th, 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srkr2nztvuk>

Here is the live streaming of the entire four-hour service:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIDvoU8ZCxU>

ADDENDUM:

This information about Alex Shevchuk was found online – an account written by Vladimir Franchuk: “Pre-war exodus of Pentecostals from the USSR through China to America”

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160304195457/http://perchatkin.com/perchatkin/archives/3934>

During the struggle of the USSR Christians for the exodus from the country of God's enemies in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, there was a Pentecostal evangelical diaspora in America and to a lesser extent in Argentina and Australia. The one that believed the revelations of the Holy Spirit in the 1920s in Ukraine about the upcoming extermination of the people and the church and went out to the east, to China, according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The twists and turns of this first exodus of Pentecostals (and there were other exoduses from the Russian plains: Mennonites, Jews, Doukhobors, Molokans,

Protestants under the tsars, through Germany during World War II) are touched upon in historical documents and testimonies. In America, everyone knows the representatives of this first exodus: Ilyin, Ionko, Shevchenko Sr. and many others. . . .

Unlike the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, where all the Jews were united by a common history, close family and clan ties, common life events and a common leadership in the person of Moses, as well as a common route of the Exodus to Palestine, this Pentecostal exodus from the Soviet Union represents a completely different, completely amazing type of migration. It is the story of families and individual groups from different sides, who, not controlled by anyone, not having any central leadership, went their separate ways, listening only to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, as the only compass of their journey. And sometimes, like on the Silk Road, these were very different roads. But there was one common direction.

They came to China from different places from Ukraine, the Urals, Rostov-on-Don, among them were believers who joined them along the way from Georgia and Azerbaijan. They went to different places. The participants of this exodus and their descendants live today in Australia, Canada, the United States, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Uruguay, Paraguay, Israel... But they all had one common crossroad in their history.

This crossroad was the church in Ghulja. . . .

And for the group that Alex Shevchuk was in – their path led through the Philippines:

The young then future radio missionary **Alexander Shevchuk** also ended up on the island of Samar. Of course, at that time no one could have imagined that years would pass and after the war one Christian mission from the USA would buy a complex of the most powerful military radio station in the vicinity of Manila for a ridiculously small price - only 1,000 dollars - which during the war provided communication between the ships of the US Navy in this region.⁵⁰⁹ After the war, this complex lost its significance and was prepared for

dismantling and destruction. The mission decided to buy a radio station for the purpose of conducting Christian radio broadcasts to many countries of Asia in many different languages. This vision became a great blessing in the work of God for many countries.

In particular, the radio broadcasts of this station reached not only the Far East region, but also the entire Asian part of the former USSR, in good weather - as far as the Urals.

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In October 1965, **Alexander Shevchuk** and his family arrived in Manila and began their blessed work at this radio station. A few weeks later, Shevchuk wrote the following in his letter to Ivan Zub-Zolotarev:

“My wife and I are from that group of settlers from northern China who were evacuated in 1948 from Shanghai to the island of Tubabao (Samar), Philippines. After some time, with our parents and a group of believers, we left our island, which had given us shelter and refuge for eight and a half months, and sailed towards South America.

“After a long voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, we arrived in the beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. After a short rest, we were transferred from Sao Paulo on two motor airplanes to the central part of Paraguay, to the town of Carmen del Parana. We were joyfully and open-heartedly greeted by our brothers and sisters in faith, who showed us great love morally and with good advice on how to live on the chakra, and what to sow and harvest when. We were encouraged by the living meetings at Colonia Fram, where we had come to live. With a group of young people who had come to know the Lord as their personal Savior, I was baptized by **Brother Onesimus Koval**. In 1951, I moved to the capital city, where my two older brothers were already. At that time, Missionary Antony Giordano arrived in our city, and through his ministry and exemplary life, the Lord spoke to my heart to also go out to spiritual work. My wish came true when I was able to leave for North America with my whole family and after some time enroll in a

Bible school in California. We arrived to live in San Francisco the day before New Year's 1955.

“After finishing Bible school in 1959, I went to Canada and visited all our Slavic churches, as well as the eastern part of America. Since then, I have had several such visits with the word of testimony about our Lord Jesus Christ. The Pentecostal Church in San Francisco (my home church) asked me to stay on as an assistant pastor almost until the time when the Lord was pleased to call us to the missionary work of radio broadcasting in the Philippines. The pastor of our home church is **Brother A. E. Shevchenko**, who married us before the dedication of our new prayer house in 1962. This church of Christians of the evangelical faith "Temple of the Good News" (Храм Благой Вести) sent us here as their missionaries.

“We appeal to all brothers and sisters in faith, pray for us to God, that He may give us inspiration to convey His Word with boldness, to convey the Word of Life to our countrymen in Russia through the powerful stations of the Far East in Manila, Philippines. Many of us now have good apparatus. Well recorded on tape sermons, songs, poems and testimonies sent to us at the station, we promise to play in the direction of Russia if possible. This will be a great encouragement to our brothers and sisters in the homeland.

“We did not think that we would return to the Philippines when we were here as children, but we did not want to resist the voice and the call of God to His field. We arrived during the rice harvest, which is the bread of the eastern countries. May God grant that our labor here and your prayers will bring sheaves to the Lord.” 510

The group, which included the Ilyin and Shevchuk families, had the opportunity to see many amazing countries of the world on their way to Paraguay. The ship arrived in Australia, in Sydney, where some families who had chosen Australia for residence disembarked, then the route ran through the island of Ceylon, passed by Africa through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, visited Italy and France. Then there was Dakkar on the west coast of Africa, then they crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and finally docked in Brazil. Due to the length of the journey,

they, with the permission of the captain, constantly held their services in the spacious hall on the ship, literally "singing on the great waters" their gratitude to the Lord. From there, planes delivered them to Paraguay. They saw the land of Paraguay for the first time on December 19, 1949, exactly 3 years after leaving Kuldzha.

And now, with excitement in my heart, I began to unravel the thin threads of this incredible story, which began in one of the Pentecostal communities of the Odessa region. It was the story of an extraordinary “bridge” between Odessa and San Francisco.

My further search soon led me to a curious publication by Pentecostal pastor Zabronsky entitled “A Group of 135 Russian Xinjiang Pentecostals Arrived in San Francisco.”

25.1.51 (January 25, 1951) The sea transport General Haan arrived in San Francisco with 1,127 Russian refugees from the IRO camp in Tubabao, Samar Island, Philippines. With this transport arrived a group of 135 Russian Xinjiang Pentecostals, sponsored by the San Francisco Russian Pentecostal Church, operating through the Assemblies of God, from Church World Service. . . .

Alex Shevchuk was on that ship!