

HISTORY OF THE MISSION BOULEVARD BAPTIST CHURCH

The Russian Baptist church in Castro Valley began their ministry in November of 1990. Since April 1990, five Russian families, who arrived through Italy, lived in Hayward, the nearby town. They all went to The House of Gospel church in San Francisco which was shepherded by Efimov Aleksandr Fedorovich. However, on Fridays, they gathered in their homes and had a Bible Study. With the arrival of new families, they began to gather at the First Baptist Church of Castro Valley.

In September of 1990, Aleksandr and Galina started attending this church, and they invited Boris and Nadia Shiva, and Vladimir and Nina Yurkov to join them. First Baptist Church was very friendly towards the Russian Baptists and were helping in studying English and provided clothes and various household items. At the beginning of December 1990, with the arrival of more families, the Russian congregation of 40 people by that time was allowed to have their own church service from 1:00 to 3:00 at the church and have a Bible study on Fridays.



Boris Vladimirovich Shiva

Because many families became members at the English-speaking church, the church did not require us to pay rent. Boris Vladimirovich Shiva, who already had experience of pastoral ministry in Novosibirsk, Russia, was unanimously elected the presbyter of the Russian group. Aleksandr Zherebnenko, Vladimir Yurkov, and Vladimir Odushkin were the deacons.

Arkadiy Zherebnenko was the choir conductor, and later on, he had help from Vladimir Odushkin. Then Vasiliy Zherebnenko arrived with his family and became the head conductor of our choir.

The Russian church was very friendly with the English-speaking congregation, and many of them attended the morning church service in English, and then went to the Russian-speaking church service. The Yurkov family and Aleksandr Aleksandrov started to sing in the English choir. We helped them in additional construction of church buildings, attended church retreats, and played volleyball together. The Americans helped the Russians in finding employment.

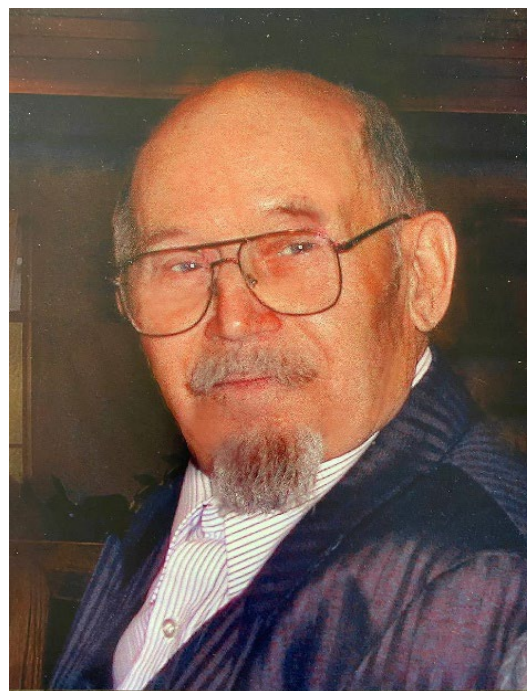


Group picture of the church with its pastor Boris Vladimirovich Shiva

Bible studies were arranged in a large circle so that everybody could see everyone. There were also youth Bible studies, and during the 1991 New Year celebration, seven people repented before the Lord. This was a time of great joy for the church.

At the beginning of 1992, due to financial difficulties (the family had 11 children who didn't work yet), the church's pastor, Boris Shiva decided to move with his family to Spokane, WA. During that time, Vasiliy Emelyanovich Zhrebnnenko, who was a pastor for a long time in Novosibirsk, arrived. He was ordained as the main pastor in order to do communion and baptism. However, Vladimir Yurkov was elected to lead the church service, and resolve routine issues of ministry.

The first baptism service was in July 1992 at the Don Castro park and was officiated by Vasiliy Emelyanovich Zhrebnnenko.



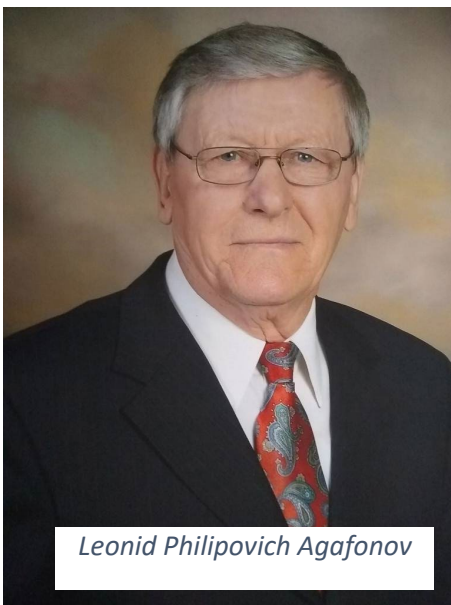
Vasiliy Emelyanovich Zhrebnnenko



First baptism service with Vasiliy Emelyanovich Zherebnenko

The church focused on training Sergey Kulikov, Nikolay Sokol, and Vladimir Yurkov as preachers among the youth. Nina Yurkov was responsible for the youth and children's program. In 1993, the church took an active role in evangelism in San Francisco. In the fall of 1992, the church became a part of the Union of the Mennonite brotherhood. In 1994, Boris Grigoryevich Poshelyuzniy became the head

pastor of the Russian group, and since 1995, the deacons Aleksandr Zherebnenko, Alekandr Skrenchuk, and Yurkov Vladimir started to lead the church services as well.



Leonid Philipovich Agafonov

In 1997, the Russian Baptist Church of Castro Valley elected Leonid Philipovich Agafonov as the head pastor. Previously, he was a pastor at the Hillside Baptist church in San Francisco. The Sunday's church services were in the morning in San Francisco, and in Castro Valley in the afternoon. On June 8, 1997, the two churches merged. Previously, Hillside Baptist Church had 13 members, and the Russian Baptist Church in Castro Valley had 48. The church grew due

to the arrival of families from the former Soviet Union, as well as through repentance, and baptism of people.

With the change of leadership at the First Baptist Church, and the fact that the Russian congregation grew, we were asked to pay a high price for rent, and we were forced to find another church building. After much searching, we settled at the Calvary Community Center in 1998, where the church was gathering until November 2016.

In March of 2002, there was another important event: merging with the church from San Lorenzo. Along with the church's pastor, Sergey Kulikov, 23 church members joined the Hillside Baptist Church.

In 2002-2003 our church had a stringed orchestra which played on the holidays. In March of 2003 the church changed its name to Slavic Church of Evangelical Christian Baptists and had 217 members at that time. By the end of the year, the church members number grew to 235 people.

Our church always had youth services of various kinds: Bible studies, as well as the choir ministry which was headed initially by Tatyana Gorbenko, and then by Vitaliy Gerhard.

In 2004, Yuriy Nikolayevich Zherebnenkov became the head pastor of the church. Together with Leonid Philipovich, they served in leading the church until Leonid Philipovich retired and moved to be with his son Sergey in Vancouver.

In 2005, Vladimir and Vera Pikalov and the members of the youth went on a missions trip to Teykovo, Russia where Sergey Tuzlov was serving. There were some complications: Vladimir was prevented from leaving, and he had to go through court, but through the three-month prayer of the church, and appeals to higher authorities, everything was resolved. This was the last trip to Russia. Beginning next year, the church began an annual missions trips to Ukraine with the Medical Association's support, which were led by Aleksandr Nikolayevich Doroshenko. In 2008, he came to America with his brother Georgiy Nikolayevich for teaching sessions at our church.

In 2004, the church was supporting the ministry for the blind, which was led by sister Galina Kogut in Ukraine. In 2005, there was the first children's camp at Bakersfield. Andrey Gerasimov, Yevgeniy Ignatchuk, and Vladimir Kravets were ordained as deacons in 2007.



The church photo with the new deacons

In July of 2007, with the blessing of the church, in order to preach the Gospel in Concord, a new sister church was planted. Alekandr Skrenchuk and 12 more people transitioned from our church to serve in this newly-formed church.

During the time of financial crisis, many people lost their jobs and started moving out the city, so 28 people left our church.

Beginning in 2006, the youth started camping at Bear Valley and have Christian fellowship.

In 2014 to 2018, our church had the teaching sessions of the “Blagovest” Institute; 10 people finished this training and received a B.A. degree in church ministry.



In October of 2011 two more brothers were ordained as deacons: Anatoliy Kharchenko and Aleksey Remizov. In February of 2016, Viktor Deryabin, Aleksandr Korzhov, and Sergey Moroz were ordained as deacons.

Beginning in 2015, Vlad Zherebnenko hosted youth gatherings of English-speakers, many of whom became our church members. That is why, beginning in 2017, there was a need to organize two church services: one in English and one in Russian.

The church also had women's conferences organized by the PCSBA, and conferences for Sunday School ministry. There were also conferences such as "Fathers and Sons", "Mothers and Daughters", and there were always small groups that were gathering regularly. The church also provided financial support for the Theology Mission in Paraguay, as well as help in ministering to Mexico.

Every year for Thanksgiving, the church gathers resources for widows and orphans for all the regions of our former home country. Our church is very sacrificial, and we helped many to acquire their church buildings. God also heard our prayers, and beginning in 2016, we began gathering in our own building.

In December of 2018, Denis Gerasimov was ordained as a pastor. In 2021, our church was renamed to Mission Boulevard Baptist Church. The church has men's Bible study on Mondays which is led by Vasiliy Nechayev, and there is a women's prayer group as well.



Prayer group of our church which exists for 30 years now

We helped three pastors to get Bible training: Dmitriy Zherebnenko, who is serving as a pastor at Grace Family Church, Denis Gerasimov, who was the second pastor of our church, and Vlad Zherebnenko, who is working with the youth.

From the beginning, we had the Sunday School, which was led by Vladimir Yurkov. After he passed away, it is being led by Anatoliy and Anna Kharchenko. Those who were the students of the school are now serving.

At the present time, the choir ministry is headed by Viktor Deryabin and Nina Korzhova.



Our church choir

There was also a lot of investment into the video, internet, and sound ministry by Yevgeniy Ignatchuk and his team.

From 2017 to 2019 under the oversight of Igor Zhrebnenkov and Aleksey Remizov, there were a lot of construction projects that took place. The construction demonstrated how unified our church is! Many brothers and sisters came on Saturdays in order to serve in any way that they could in construction of the church.

The success of our ministry depends on our dedication to the Lord. He is the One who blesses us. Every year we have more baptisms, and more children are born. Thanks be to the Lord for all His doing: for spiritual blessings, for new souls who are coming to Christ, and for the acceptable year of Yahweh!



*Current head pastor of the church,
Yuriy Nikolayevich Zherebnenkov*

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Service Times: Sunday: 8:45 a.m.(Eng.),
11:00 a.m., Friday: 7:00 p.m.

Nina Yurkov,
01/17/2023