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# MAN DONATES 19TH-CENTURY CHURCH BOUGHT AT AUCTION TO RUSSIAN CHURCH




Another church, built in the 19th century and lost during the Soviet era, has returned to the bosom of the Russian Orthodox Church. And this time it occurred in an unusual way.

The Church of the Great Martyr Demetrios in the village of Zavalovo, Tula Province, was donated to the Russian Church by Pavel Osipov, a Moscow businessman who bought the church at auction late last year. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the land and church building were privately owned, changing hands several times. When the last owner went bankrupt, the church had to be sold.

With an initial asking price of $6,175 (450,000 rubles), in the end it was purchased for just $2,560 (186,300 rubles). Osipov was the only one who participated in the auction.

The church is designated as an architectural monument of regional significance, and thanks to the efforts of Church and public figures, the local parish will be revived again, and the church will reopen for its true purpose, states the Belyov Diocese.

The building is in passable condition, but requires serious restoration work.

News of the church being put for sale caused a great public outcry last year. Thankfully, Pavel Osipov was able to purchase the church in December for its preservation, revival, and transfer to the Church and its faithful.

It took several months to coordinate the procedure for donating the church to the Moscow Patriarchate. All the formalities were settled by mid-April, followed by the final decision on the transfer of the church building and the plot of land to the local parish community.

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The Church of St. Demetrios in Zavalovo was built in the 19th century. Little is known about its origins, but it is known that it was a wooden church until 1836, after which a sturdier stone church was built. It is not known exactly when the parish was closed, but it is known that it suffered the same fate as so many other churches under the godless Soviet authorities.

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