



Changing Young Hearts and Lives . . . One at a Time

SGA-Sponsored *Orphans Reborn* Team
Kirov Region, Russia

Greetings in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ! By God's grace—and with your faithful support and prayers, we are reaching orphan children in the Kirov region with the love of the Lord Jesus. We believe you will rejoice when you see the fruit of our regular visits through a few recent examples.

In one orphanage in a nearby village, we are ministering to children who have



Egor receiving a Bible.

developmental problems. It took us some time to get through their wariness of people—they were “sizing us up.” But today, their keen eyes are focused on every lesson, and they eagerly await our arrival. Our hearts just rejoice!



The labor can be long and difficult, but
wonderfully rewarding as boys and girls come
to know the Savior!

In this orphanage school, there is a special boy named Egor. We noticed him right at the beginning of our visit. At first glance, he seemed painfully worse than the other children. His speech is unclear and vague. But in reality he is a very clever boy, with an excellent memory! His teachers said that he has read through his children's Bible several times! When we have discussions with the boys on the lesson topic, his answers are like those you would expect from a long-time believer.

It's amazing! This time we gave him a full adult Bible as a gift.

The impact of *Orphans Reborn* is not restricted to just the children. There are always teachers or caregivers at our lessons, and you can watch how they catch every word, even themselves asking questions about life. When we leave, they repeat the lessons with the children about what we said. In that way, the truth is planted even more surely in them. The Bible is often quoted in this class, and the children in their daily lives remember our lessons. One day, as a teacher accompanied us to say goodbye, she cried—heartily thankful for the light that we are at their orphanage. She told us that these kids had not seen anything good in their lives or family relations. No one would tell them the truth or bring gifts to them like us. Gifts are rare occurrences. Such a testimony touched us deeply, and encouraged our hearts to keep visiting the children, to see that our labor is not in vain, and that . . . *the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword* . . . (Hebrews 4:12).

At Easter, we showed the Jesus film, which the boys watched with open mouths and eyes! At one orphanage where we took the film, the room was so quiet that the teachers who passed by looked us in the room and could not believe that the children were so quiet! After the film, some boys came up to us to share their innermost feelings, and we prayed with them about their problems! The Lord is doing His work in them, and in all of us!



The Jesus film and other Gospel presentations hold the children in rapt attentiveness.

Thank you, dear brothers and sisters, for our work together with you on God's harvest field, and for the financial and prayer support you have given us! May God richly bless your homes and families!



Tens of thousands of children have been reached through your prayers and faithful support of the SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* ministry.

Ministry and Martial Arts in Russia's Vast Krasnoyarsk Region

Aleksandr Paskhovets
SGA Missionary Pastor Coordinator for Russia

While traveling through Russia's vast Krasnoyarsk region recently, I had the wonderful opportunity to meet many SGA-sponsored missionary pastors. I would like to share the story of one special brother who uses martial arts as part of his unique church-planting and evangelism labors.

Alexander's* ministry encompasses a large area known as the Tuva Republic. This region was officially joined to the Soviet Union sometime after World War II. Local religions and beliefs include Shamanism and Buddhism. The Tuvians have their own culture and language, but Russian is commonly used.

Alexander is Russian, but he was born in the Tuva region and has lived there most of his life. In his youth he excelled in karate. At one point when karate was forbidden in the Soviet Union, he was given the choice of being arrested for his participation in martial arts, or to work in the Soviet police. He accepted the police offer and spent seven years in this field, at the end becoming a captain. Through his career, Alexander continued to grow and eventually earned a black belt and second dan (high level of mastery). In the mid 1990s, Alexander came to Christ through his relatives. He rapidly

grew in his faith, and in time he became a pastor in his local church.

Today, in addition to his church and evangelistic ministry, Alexander continues in karate and serves as president of the Tuvian Federation of Karate. He coaches and uses this as an opportunity to share the Gospel. After every training session, he does a 5-7 minute mini sermon. Thus far, some 30 people have come to his church after being introduced to the things of the Lord through Alexander's lessons. There are many others who have become believers while studying karate under Alexander's tutelage. SGA partners have supported his ministry for about 15 years, and Alexander sends his love from a thankful heart. *For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God* (2 Corinthians 9:12).

Editor's Note: In the CIS, there are often differences in the spelling of common names. "Aleksandr" and "Alexander" are both correct spellings depending on the region.



Alexander's proficient ability in martial arts have raised his ministry profile very high in his region.



Orphans Reborn

By Lana Yusov
SGA Children's Ministries
Coordinator

The SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* (OR) outreach is bearing wonderful, eternal fruit in thousands of young boys and girls across the CIS. Below are a few glimpses of the ministry your prayers and faithful giving make possible.

While on a recent visit to Russia's Volgodonsk region, I met a young man whose name is Dastan. He is a wonderful example—living fruit of how OR is being used by the Lord to change boys and girls for eternity. Through OR, Dastan found the Lord. He graduated with a good GPA from school, and then from the university. Today, Dastan is working in one of the local orphanages as a caregiver. He witnesses to orphans and because of his loving testimony and

example, these orphans were introduced to believers from the local church and learned even more about the Lord. Dastan's personal dream is to adopt eight orphans and he is already working on the adoption of one boy. We will have more to share about Dastan later, but please pray for him and the ministry that God has granted him!

Thanks to the help of SGA sponsors, many orphans in Russia are receiving assistance after graduating from the orphanages at age 18. Andrei is one such graduate from an orphanage. He has entered college and was able to get a job. But he had a whole month to live before his first paycheck. Thanks to the local OR team, Andrei received everything he needs to live until he receives his first salary. This is a good testimony to him about how the Lord

can provide for all who trust in Him.

In Yerevan, Armenia, a special family is teaming together for OR ministry. Andranik and Armine, along with their children Ani and Tereza, are laboring to reach orphan children for Christ, helped by a few more volunteers from the church. They wanted us to convey a personal message to all the sponsors who support their ministry to orphans:

We are thankful to everyone who supports our ministry. We carry out our ministry for the Lord, and every gift we receive for this ministry we receive as from the Lord. Please pray for us, for the orphans, and for more volunteers to join with us in this needed ministry to reach orphan children for Christ!



A Sister Named Larissa

An Orphans Reborn Team Profile

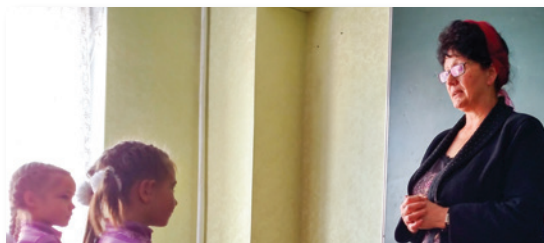
As in most Central Asian nations, Kazakhstan has undergone significant changes in the 25 years since the Soviet Union broke apart. The population was once closely divided between ethnic Kazakhs and Russians, but in recent years many Russians have returned to their home country leaving the Kazakhs as the firm majority. Evangelical churches also once had a significant amount of freedom to minister, but this Muslim-dominated country has sharply curtailed the freedoms of the churches.

It is in this backdrop that a faithful woman named Larissa labors as part of the SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* ministry in Kazakhstan. She has been working with children since 1992 and SGA began sponsoring her team in 2002. She has faithfully poured out her life to reach these lonely, forgotten children for Christ. She has given them her love, tears, and diligently taught them the Word of God. She has known the heartbreak of ministering to children for years only to seemingly lose them to this world. Yet she has also joyfully

watched children with broken hearts repent and gain great victory in Jesus. SGA's Eric Mock went with her one day to visit one of the orphanages, and was moved by the children's love for this faithful sister in Christ . . .

As we walked into the orphanage, Larissa was mobbed by children, who called her "Mom." She indeed poured out the love of a mother with plenty of kisses, embraces, and smiles for these love-starved children. And she was able to turn absolutely every conversation within just a few words to the Lord Jesus. She loves these children with the love of Christ. Even Larissa's own son said that when he was young, he was jealous of the kids calling her Mom. Now grown, he is thankful for the ministry and role that his mother has. I told her how thankful we all were for her years of faithful ministry. She turned to me and smiled, saying, "Eric, we are just slaves of Jesus."

Please pray for Larissa and the orphan children hearing the Gospel regularly through *Orphans Reborn*. Many of the children after coming to know Christ and reaching adulthood choose to become part of OR to reach other orphans for the Lord as they were reached. May the Lord continue to work through them for His glory!



To hundreds of lonely, forgotten orphan children, Larissa is "Mom."

CIS in the News

According to Russia's Sputnik news service, the Rating Group conducted a poll last fall in Ukraine showing that the share of Ukrainian citizens nostalgic for the Soviet past is higher in the country's south, pro-Russian east and center at 40 percent. The poll showed just 18 percent of those living in the western regions regret the dissolution of the once-mighty USSR.

In tandem, the poll also showed that the majority of supporters of Ukraine's integration with the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

were not sentimental about the Soviet era, while the overwhelming majority of those who advocate rapprochement with the Eurasian Customs Union being organized by Russia were nostalgic about Soviet times. The survey polled 2,000 people between September 16 and September 22. These conflicting feelings are not unique to Ukraine, but can be encountered in other regions of the CIS as well. Our prayer as always is that Bible-preaching churches will be free to worship and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. Please intercede continually in prayer for the doors to remain open for ministry.

How You Can Help

The plight of orphan children across Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Central Asia is truly heartbreaking. While some of these lonely, forgotten, and troubled boys and girls are true orphans, the majority are "social orphans" who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect by alcoholic parents. Then when they turn 18, they are forced to leave the orphanage and face life on the streets with little support. That's what makes SGA's Orphans Reborn ministry so vitally important. Reaching these little ones for Christ can change their lives and give them a hopeful future.

The prayers and support of SGA partners accomplish so much more in serving Bible-preaching churches in the CIS—providing Russian-language Bibles and Christian literature, Bible training, children's ministries, compassion ministry, and help for missionary pastors in the field proclaiming the Gospel. Please pray about how you can help today!



**Subscribe to
SGA's New
Electronic
Publications!**

**Just go to our
website
www.sga.org**

Innercircle Perspective

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the Gospel from the first day until now (Philippians 1:3-5).

Warmest New Year's greetings in Christ! Once again, I want to express my deepest appreciation for all your sacrificial and generous support throughout the wonderful Christmas season. By God's grace, through your faithfulness, we are entering the new year with great expectations to see our Heavenly Father bless all SGA ministries in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, in the Central Asian nations, in the Caucasus countries, and in Israel.

On January 6 and 7, your support and prayers helped more than 300 churches in 11 countries hold *Immanuel's Child* Christmas outreaches to unchurched children and their families. As soon as we have the actual reports, we will advise exactly how many were reached, how many received Christ, how many have begun attending Sunday school, and how many of their parents have begun attending church. Every year, this is SGA's most fruitful evangelistic ministry. Your support makes it all possible, and our Lord answers your prayers to bring all the blessings.

As I write these words, I am preparing to depart for Far East Russia, where as I write the temperature is -1 degree Fahrenheit. We are holding a major

pastors conference in Khabarovsk to launch the exciting new *Reach Russia Now* initiative that you and our other partners are making possible. Pastors will come from all nine oblasts (states) of Far East Russia.



Dr. Robert W. Provost
SGA President

Goals will be developed for training evangelists and church planters, for developing the aviation arm to take the Gospel to isolated villages, for sending missionary pastors to unreached communities, for developing *Orphans Reborn* ministries in 334 orphanages, and for establishing an SGA Regional Ministry Center

in Khabarovsk. Across Russia the authorities are closing the door . . . we don't have much time to take the Gospel to the 6.3 million souls of Far East Russia!

In the meantime, please remember all of SGA in your prayers, and please encourage your church family to also become prayer partners with SGA. When you have special needs for prayer, please let us know. Every workday morning, our staff gathers to pray for all our partners and all our ministries. SGA founder Peter Deyneka often said, *Much prayer, much power, little prayer, little power, no prayer, no power.*



InSight is published to report religious news about Russia, the rest of the CIS and the ministries of:

Slavic Gospel Association
6151 Commonwealth Drive
Loves Park, IL 61111
www.sga.org
E-mail: insight@sga.org
Phone: 815-282-8900
Fax: 815-282-8901

To start, cancel, or change the mailing address on your subscription to *InSight*, please send your name, your old address, and your new address to the address listed above. Please allow six to eight weeks for the fulfillment of your request.

International Offices

Noble Park, Australia
Cambridge, Canada
Eastbourne, England
North Shore, New Zealand

U.S. Board of Directors

Warner Tillman, Chairman
Harry Leopold, Vice Chairman
John Wauterlek, Treasurer
Brian Kult, Secretary
Dr. Robert W. Provost, President
Dr. Allan W. Vincent
Dr. Bill Atkinson
Dr. Rick Goertzen
Kelly Abbott
Evon Hedley, Director Emeritus

SGA is a charter member of:



Evangelical Council for
Financial Accountability