



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION
Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN

As the Orphan Population Gets Bigger . . .
***Orphans Reborn* is Growing**
to Reach More Children!



**INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS
AND GIFTS AT WORK**

- ♦ Amazing fruit through your giving! Read the results . . .
- ♦ Camp and Bible study outreaches penetrate the lives of children!
- ♦ Much prayer *still* generates much power! Read the details.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit . . . (MATTHEW 28:19)

You Help Reach Orphans Like Vitya Through Work, Friendship, and the Bible!

Elena Y.

Orphans Reborn in Krasnoyarsk, Russia

It is always a pleasure to share the joyful, happy moments that we regularly experience in our joint ministry with you. And even when we write about sad situations from the lives of these orphan children, we always have hope in the Lord who is able to change their difficult lives.

Two years ago, we decided to start a new project that we call “On the Way to Success.” It is a special work project, which this year had 42 people involved—**27 of them were orphans**. The first time we held the camp, we did not expect that the young people would be involved personally in the work projects, but rather that they would just enjoy the camp and learn of potential jobs they could have in the future. But this time they ended up working along with us and made real quality work! **The Lord gave us 11 men who were not only professional workers, but also mentors and friends—even potential fathers for some children.** The children noticed that they were able to do a lot with their own hands, and you could see their growing passion for what they were doing.

One boy named **Vitya** had come to the orphanage only recently. He had been abandoned by his relatives and had run away from his foster family. He was really in need of some love, as we could see right away. From the first day, he showed himself to be a good worker, doing everything with great eagerness and always with a smile. He worked with one of our younger brothers named Alexei, and Vitya always stayed close to him. Alexei supported Vitya, counseling him, and was just simply there for him. **On the last night of the camp, something changed in Vitya’s face.** As we sang around the campfire, I noticed that Vitya wasn’t there. I went to look for him and finally found him sitting inside



Alexei and Vitya work together on a project at camp.

with a pen and piece of paper. **He had been weeping.** I just said that we had missed him, and he went back with me. The next day we went for a hike, and Vitya took the pen and paper along. During the Sunday service, we finally understood what he had been writing. Vitya had some problems with his speech, but his desire to express his gratitude was far stronger. He spoke so kindly and honestly with his paper in his hands, never forgetting anyone who had shown him kindness, including me. After a brief pause, Vitya looked at Alexei and said, **“Alexei, next to you I feel that I am needed. I would really like to stay with you!”**

Vitya only began to attend our Bible lessons when he experienced those five days of work and genuine friendship. I am sure that the children feel our love, and see the care of God in our attitude toward them. Thank you, beloved church! Together with you, we serve the orphans directly while you are doing an invisible, but very powerful part. I do not know your names or faces, but I know for sure we are one team with you, we are one family. May God bless you, and praise Him for this ministry! ♦

How You Helped Lead Children to Christ in Russia

Despite global conflict, the Holy Spirit is working via your gifts to reach children across wide regions!

Anatoly S.

SGA-Sponsored Missionary Pastor in Russia’s Lipetsk Region

In the past year, we prepared a Christian outreach for local children. The main purpose was to help them get acquainted with God and His plan of salvation. The basis for the event was the history of Joseph, the son of Jacob. As we explained the Bible’s account to the children, the central events of the story happened in Egypt, where Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery. The main theme was “To Remain Faithful.”

We taught the children how Joseph remained faithful to God despite the betrayal of his brothers, the misunderstanding of his parents, slavery, deceit, prison, and even after assuming a high position in the government of Egypt. Joseph was always faithful to God! God blessed us in a special way with this ministry to children. **There were 162 children from the ages of 7 to 13 who took part in the outreach.** They came from the **Lipetsk** region, as well as from the **Voronezh, Belgorod, and Tambov** regions. **Bible classes** were the basis and we pray, asking the Lord for the opportunity to have a similar outreach again this year!



Festival of Music and Word in Bryansk.

A large team from our church believers took part in the Festival of Music and Word held in **Bryansk** in late July of 2022. **People from all parts of Russia, and even abroad, come here.** When you see so many

people of God, you become filled with the thought that you are in another world!

Joyful faces, warm greetings—all these touch us, and we felt the tears running down our faces. **The Lord planned this event for us, gave us the time and strength to attend fellowship, and become strengthened by His Word, which was proclaimed with the power of the Holy Spirit.** The brothers boldly shared His Word, and we had a sense of renewal—full spiritual life in Christ, and life for God! Our young people were profoundly exhorted. The program included question and answer sessions. It took our breath away when we listened to the singing of the choirs. Orchestras played wonderfully. Musicians did their best to be prepared for this event. The children’s choir from Sunday schools sang in the morning. The choir consisted of many children! Sunday school children glorified the Lord with their singing, and we felt inspired and deeply touched, and rejoiced. We have a new generation, which will take our places should the Lord tarry in His coming!

We celebrated Harvest Day in the church of the Living Word in **Usman** in late August. The choir was the first to open the solemn worship service. I preached about the meaning of the Harvest Day—Scripture talks about the work of the farmer as an example of diligent work for each Christian, the life of whom is crowned with spiritual fruit for eternity. I also visited churches and preached in: **Dankov, Lipetsk, Leo-Tolstoy village, and Khlevnoye.**

Please pray for continued wisdom and health, for more helpers in the ministry here, for funds to carry out more ministry, and our family. I thank you for your support of my ministry. The Lord blesses us and takes care of our family, children, and grandchildren! Glory be to Him! ♦

MUCH PRAYER, MUCH POWER IN ACTION

Editor's Note: This is a new column we are introducing in the Good News Report—a condensed version of the daily emailed prayer guides we have been sending out since the COVID pandemic began and continuing through the war in Ukraine. Our founder Peter Deyneka's motto was *Much Prayer, Much Power*, and these are intended to demonstrate that motto in action, encouraging your hearts as well as ongoing intercession for our brothers and sisters and their faithful ministry.



Service in the nursing home.

Oleg is a faithful SGA-supported missionary pastor in Ukraine who has been rendering aid and sharing Christ's love with those displaced by the ongoing war. At times it is overwhelming for human emotions, but in the background, God is at work in hearts that are perhaps open now more than ever.

Oleg describes what ministry life is like for them in these trying days. *"The war continues in our country. Many people are left homeless and below the poverty line. In October, we decided to visit a home for the elderly in our area. The request was from two women who used to attend meetings, but the time came when they were left alone and had no choice but to accept living in a nursing home. We came to them, blessed them with food, and decided to sing Gospel songs, testifying about the Lord in their hall.*

While we were singing, one woman named Natalia joined us and joined us quite zealously in singing and talking. Later, we learned that she and her sick husband were refugees from the city of Bakhmut, and they and others were sheltered in this facility. Almost nothing remained of their house. For our part, we



Visiting with Natalia.

have already brought Natalia to us for service several times. Thank God that the Lord does not abandon His children and takes care of them."

We have been blessed, edified, encouraged, and yes, even convicted by the wonderful reports that have come in since the Ukraine war broke out in February. One constant theme running through them all is that our brothers and sisters are in the midst of it all just like their fellow citizens. The rockets and missiles rain down on them as well, yet their hearts are to share with those in need and to tell as many as they can about the love of Christ and His life-changing Gospel. These individuals and families in the churches are in great need themselves, but as little as they have, they eagerly want to share with others in the prayer that God

will draw many to Himself in saving faith. They remind us of the church described by the Apostle Paul . . . *Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord . . .* (2 Corinthians 8:1-3).

There are no wasted words in Scripture, and these things have been written and recorded for our instruction—setting the example that all of us as Christ-followers should live out daily. May the Lord enable us to do just that and more as opportunities present themselves. ♦

SGA's Shirley Davis Now With Christ



Shirley Davis

On the day after Christmas, SGA's Shirley Davis, who had served on our staff since 1995 as a clerk in our ministry division, went to be with the Lord after an illness and period of hospitalization. While we are saddened, we also rejoice that Shirley

is with Christ, whom she loved and served so faithfully.

Among Shirley's most important duties was serving as a liaison between SGA-supported missionary pastors in the former Soviet Union and their faithful sponsors here in the USA. She was ever faithful in her labors, compiling hundreds of reports from the missionary pastors and sending them to the sponsors as they came in, as well as communicating with sponsoring churches and Sunday school groups, and other means of facilitation. Over the years, Shirley had developed warm relationships with many SGA partners during their sponsorship of a pastor through our mission.

A self-taught pianist, Shirley would also periodically delight our staff during our weekly chapel services playing medleys of hymns that she had carefully arranged. Shirley's late husband John also served on SGA's staff, and her daughter Valerie Peterson is assistant to SGA president Michael Johnson.

Please remember Shirley's family in prayer, and join us in thanksgiving for her many years of faithful ministry for the glory of Christ. ♦

AMAZING FRUIT!

Your Support Helps Orphans in Far East Russia Hear of Christ's Love . . . and Turn to Him!

Lena R.

Orphans Reborn Team Leader (Amur Region)



L to R: Natasha, Diana, and Anya.

We are glad and thankful to the Lord and to you that our ministry continues. The month of November was marked by good weather and **new encounters at the orphanage**. We have been working with **three young girls—Natasha, Diana, and Anya**—in addition to the other children.

We gave Anya a copy of the Bible and a Bible study course on heaven, and she was very glad. She stayed after class to talk to us and pray, telling us that her mother called saying that Anya's elder sister would soon join her at the orphanage. Anya had to miss one meeting because she was **in the hospital** with asthma. She wanted very much to catch up, so she listened attentively to the Bible story, participated in a game, took an additional test, and stayed around longer than the others. Anya had a birthday, so we celebrated with her and gave her a special gift.

Natasha also eagerly comes to our meetings. She told us that older children mocked her when they learned that she was praying. We tried to encourage her and said that not all were laughing—some of those who laughed also took Bible lessons for individual learning! **Katya is a 17-year-old girl**

who recently shared her testimony of repentance and trusting in the Lord. She now comes to Sunday school lessons at the church and helps in children's ministry. **Diana came up after the second meeting and asked for individual Bible lessons.** She had listened attentively and wanted to learn more. At the end of our lessons, we extend an invitation for the children to receive Christ into their hearts.



Top: Diana; Above: Katya, Natasha, and Anya.

Semion and Sonya are two children whose father was Chinese and died in China. Their mother spent some time in a psychiatric hospital. With our prayers, the Lord restored their mother and allowed her to take her children back home. They are now in the shelter temporarily as their mother went back to the hospital temporarily to strengthen her treatment. In a week they will return home. Sonya is very active in the lessons. She likes to listen to God's Word.



Sonya and Semion.

Semion gave us an address so that we could come with gifts at Christmas.

Our ministry is very busy with the orphans. During one month of outreach, we held **four**

meetings on Sundays with 14-16 children in each meeting. At a different facility, the school administration decided to allow 10 to 20 developmentally delayed children to come to our lessons for better comprehension. They had a week-long break from school so we were able to hold three lessons with them this month. While playing, through various quizzes, stories with puppets, and summarizing the truths at the end of each lesson, we would move on to presenting the Gospel as the source of fellowship with our Creator. In the second lesson, **10-year-old Ivan asked, "If Jesus is in heaven, how does He help?"** This was a very good question and a great opportunity to tell how Jesus is indeed able to help us each day, especially through His people.

Altogether, nearly 50 children were able to visit our meetings. They rejoice every time we come and the younger give us hugs! We praise and thank the Lord for the opportunity to share the Gospel with both children and adults. Please keep praying for us! ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP

As we read the reports from SGA-supported *Orphans Reborn* teams, children's workers, missionary pastors, and their churches, we are so thankful to the Lord to be part of what He is doing

in so many lives! No matter what the ministry, the end goal is always the advance of the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ. **Your gifts help provide Bibles and Christian literature, missionary pastor support, food and other aid through Compassion Ministry, and so much more.** Please pray about how you can help today! ♦



Orphans Reborn volunteers teach Bible lessons during visits to orphanages.

Insight FROM MICHAEL

How Many Lives Has God Redeemed? How Many Are Still to Come?

Because much attention has been focused on Ukraine in the past year due to the war—and rightly so—it is easy for other vitally important ministries to be overlooked. In the midst of the current crisis, the other outreaches supported by SGA have continued on impacting many lives for the glory of Christ. This month's Good News Report is focused on *Orphans Reborn*, which has changed the lives of **tens of thousands of children** across the former Soviet Union since its inception.



But think with me for a moment about the other ministries you help sustain through SGA. Consider Bible training ministries—sponsorship of key evangelical seminaries and Bible institutes in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and other former Soviet nations that are preparing hundreds of faithful servants for lifetimes of faithful ministry. The war in Ukraine has resulted in **vastly increased support for Compassion Ministry**, and we are constantly seeing the fruit of that outreach in the reports sent to us by the missionary pastors you help support. And support of the missionary pastors in and of itself is another vital ministry—**taking the Gospel to regions that are yet unreached as well as strengthening and growing existing churches.** The provision of Bibles and doctrinally sound Christian literature continues on, and we know from the promise of God that His proclaimed Word will accomplish its purpose (Isaiah 55:11).

It is humbling to consider how the Lord has graciously used our mission to proclaim the Gospel for 89 years as of last month. SGA was founded by Peter Deyneka Sr. in Chicago in January 1934. **The year 2024 will mark 90 years of Gospel ministry to Slavic peoples in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and around the world. Only the Lord knows the actual number of men, women, and children reached with the Good News of Jesus Christ, and how many are in the company of the redeemed.** I, along with the entire SGA family, are so deeply thankful to you and all of our partners through the years who have been involved in this great work of God. May we continue to remain faithful at our posts until He comes again!

For our Savior,

Michael Johnson
President



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