



SLAVIC GOSPEL ASSOCIATION

Good News Report

SHARING THE GOSPEL ♦ EQUIPPING THE CHURCH ♦ HELPING THE FORGOTTEN



Your support leads to orphans in bleak institutions **CRYING OUT FOR JOY!**

INSIDE: YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS AT WORK

- ♦ Orphans celebrate:
“Hooray! The Christians
came!”
- ♦ A young boy hears the
Gospel of Christ and
breaks down weeping.
- ♦ *Orphans Reborn*
continues to reach
orphans in many ways . . .

*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)*

Orphans Cry Out: “Hooray, the Christians Came!”

SGA supporters give hurting children Christ’s hope through Orphans Reborn.

SPECIAL REPORT FROM: Krasnoyarsk, Russia

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary (Galatians 6:9).

For the members of SGA-sponsored **Orphans Reborn** teams across Russia and her neighboring countries, ministry to broken, forgotten children is a devoted calling. Sometimes it is hard to discern the impact in each young heart, but as team member Natalia Zhukova wrote to tell us, the children’s joy speaks volumes:

Each time we visit, I am concerned about what the reaction of the children will be to our lessons. But when they run to me with shouts, “Hooray! The Christians came!” it gives us all such joy in our hearts!



Natalia with boys from the orphanage.



Krasnoyarsk, Russia

Vadim Barsukov added **the story of a young man named Alexei**, with whom they had been working for years. Alexei had been a part of the *Orphans Reborn* lessons at the orphanage as a young child, but graduated six years ago:

This past September, we were surprised when Alexei came into the room. We hadn’t seen him for a long time. After he greeted us, he asked if we had restarted our regular meetings! He said he wanted to begin attending again, and his search for God is still ongoing . . . Then later, he came to our first meeting bringing his younger brother Victor along, who now attends our meetings and Sunday worship services. Alexei is a joyful, clever, and hopeful young man, and we pray that one day he will invest all his efforts in seeking the Lord. Right now, about 20 young people are attending our meetings. Please pray with us that the Lord will draw each one to Himself!

Orphans Reborn teams in the Krasnoyarsk region visit **several ministry venues that include social centers for children from dysfunctional homes as well as orphanages.** The ages of the



children range from elementary age to teenagers, and even young adults. It is much the same in every former Soviet country where the ministry takes place, and the needs of the children are the same—**young, broken lives who desperately need to know that they have a Savior who loves them.** Thank you for all that you do to help reach them with the love of Christ and the life-changing Gospel! ♦



Below: Victor, Vadim, and Alexei; Above and Right: Children across the Krasnoyarsk Region of Russia participate in SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* programs.



Experiencing a Christian Home

Your Support Helps Orphan Children See Christ's Love in Action

Pavel B

Orphans Reborn in Belarus

We have the opportunity to spend more time with orphan children at our home near Grodno, **taking them to be with us during their vacation time and on weekends.**

Their eagerness is palpable—they run out of the orphanage wanting to get to our home as soon as possible and we sometimes have to slow them down! Experiencing a loving, home atmosphere where

“Experiencing a loving, home atmosphere where Christ is exalted has a positive impact on the children.”

Christ is exalted has a positive impact on the children. At the orphanage, they tend to react to each other in anger, but here at our home we see an absolute change.

While they are with us, **we try to involve them as much as we can in the routine of life**, taking them with us shopping, going to gas up the car, or going along as we do walking tours and engage in ministry. We remember to teach them the Bible and take them to our church, youth meetings, Sunday school, and try to live out spiritual truths before them.



Pavel and children from the orphanage.



Pavel and Serafim at the camp.

Last month, we took care of some of the children in a special camp for those who have physical challenges and mobility issues. They are taken to this camp for lengthy periods of time, and while they are there they study and receive medical care. We have known a young boy named Serafim and have ministered to him for a long time. The move to the camp was very difficult for him, and his brothers do not visit him. We take him food and spend time with him. We also took part in a national conference for medical workers in Belarus. **Some of our orphan graduates are now students at medical**

“Some of our orphan graduates are now students at medical schools and came to faith in Christ through our ministry.”

schools and came to faith in Christ through our ministry. They are good examples for other orphan children as they get a good education and desire to serve others.

One of our main priorities is to stay in touch with orphan graduates, to not only see how their lives develop, but also to give them godly counsel. They tell us of their mistakes, and we try to help them. We continue to look ahead in ministry with thankful hearts and ask you to join in our prayers. We are thankful for all of you who are involved in our outreach to these children! ♦

Comfort for Broken-Hearted Children in Russia's Far East

In one of the earth's most frozen regions, you help bring Christ's warmth.

Elena Rusinova
Amur Region, Russia



Elena and Afanasiy

whose parents died. While he has a half-sister, the authorities will not allow her to take him because her apartment is too small. **Afanasiy listened carefully as we talked about God, who loves and helps the suffering.** During our conversation, he spoke up and said that he wanted to know how God

Back in November, a quarantine that had been in effect for the local orphanage was lifted and we were able to resume our lessons. After our first lesson, I had the chance to get acquainted with a 13-year-old boy named Afanasiy

“Afanasiy wept as we told him about the love of Jesus.”

could help him. Afanasiy wept as we told him about the love of Jesus. Then I prayed for him, especially that he would turn to the Lord and be saved.

We also talked to **two sisters named Arina and Vika.** They had prayed with me at our last meeting before the quarantine a month earlier. They told me that they had kept on reading the Bible and praying. Vika and Arina both completed all the tasks assigned

at the last lesson. Their parents live in another village, and their mother was supposed to take them back home at the end of the month. We hope that we will be able to visit them and keep our contact up.

The theme of our lesson focused on how “sin leads to trouble.” **We conducted a Bible lesson about sin and its consequences.** We illustrated the lessons in three ways, then did crafts and talked to the children. We give thanks for all of you who collaborate with us in this ministry. Please pray for the children, that the Word of God will work in their hearts! ♦



Elena with sisters Arina and Vika.



Sensible Stewardship

The Four Steps to Biblical Estate Planning

Garland Gould, Director of Donor Engagement

Biblical estate planning is a way to serve the Lord as a steward of what He has given you. It isn't a mystery, but rather a joyous prospect of increasing one's eternal impact for the kingdom.

Step One- Setting Priorities

I have met couples and individuals that undertook their estate plan at the prompting of a



biblically-based financial study. While they were diligent and well-intentioned, they later made a startling realization—they never had stopped to pray about their decisions and seek godly counsel. They were simply in the “process”—it was

mechanical only. This is a spiritual exercise first, not mechanical. Our Five Biblical Principles of Estate Planning brochure outlines the principles that we lean on to direct us in this decision making process. The first principle is foundational to all decisions; two are “directional signals” that guide our distribution decisions; the next one helps protect relationships and the last reminds us of our duty as stewards. These principles, along with earnest prayer, are critical to establishing a plan that will help you hear “well done, good and faithful servant.”

Step Two- Understand the Rules, Tools, and Vehicles Available

While estate planning decisions are chock full of dangers and pitfalls, there are fantastic opportunities to plan. Our goal is not that you know



them all, but a basic understanding of these rules, tools and vehicles is very helpful in laying down your best, God-given plan. We will spend the time with you so that you are familiar with the rules, tools, and vehicles and are comfortable with your options for planning.

Step Three- Gathering the Necessary Data

The most sophisticated estate plan orchestrated by the most intellectual and clever planner will fail if the information is not complete, or it is incorrect. We have an “inventory form” that will help you consider your “People”, your “Property”, your “Plans” and your “Planners.” Without this critical information, you cannot make your best plan. We will help ensure that this step is thorough and accurate.

Step Four- Seek Competent Counsel

We would like to be a part of your planning team, but we are not seeking to replace anyone. As we mentioned above, part of your inventory is your professional planners; we want to help them as they help you. We will never sell you anything, and no money will change hands. And we don't want to manage your money. If you do not have these professionals in place to help you, we will help you seek and find competent counsel.

You can contact SGA for assistance at plannedgiving@sga.org or by calling 1-800-242-5350 (1-800-BIBLE-50). ♦

CIS IN THE NEWS

GOOD NEWS: Russians Win Right-to-Worship Case

In a landmark ruling that could have impact on evangelical churches, Russia's Constitutional Court decided that worship services for a group of Seventh Day Adventists can take place **in private homes**. A woman named Olga Glamozdinova from the Rostov region went to court last October to challenge a fine levied against her for allowing her home to be used by the church for services. In her court filing, Ms. Glamozdinova said the authorities had "violated her right to freedom of conscience

and religious confession," as well as her right to freely own and dispose of her property.

It remains to be seen what impact this court ruling will have long-term. **The decision that residential buildings can be used for worship services may set a precedent for Christians in Russia**, where evangelical churches have had a difficult time getting official permission to build new churches. **Please remember this matter in prayer in the days ahead.** ♦

HOW YOU CAN HELP ORPHANS, CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND OTHER HURTING SOULS

God's Word tells us . . . *Behold, children are a gift of the Lord* (Psalm 127:3). In Matthew 19, Jesus Himself made it crystal clear about how important it was for children to be able to come to Him . . . *for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these*.

That's why the evangelical churches SGA serves across Russia and her neighboring countries place such a **high priority on children's ministries including orphan ministry, summer camps, and Sunday schools**. Your gifts are helping to reach boys and girls with the life-changing Gospel, and they help accomplish so much more—Compassion Ministry, supporting missionary pastors, providing sound Bible training, Bibles and sound Christian books, and other materials. And most important of all are your ongoing, faithful prayers. Thank you for all that you do! Please pray about how you can help today. ♦



Canadian Connection

For most who read this article, February is one of those cold months in the dead of winter. It can be a dark month where we only dream of warm summer days as a distant memory.

BUT, can you remember when you were a child? We would get bundled up, lace up the skates or grab a toboggan and charge into the winter for fun with friends and siblings. The plummeting temperatures didn't even bother us until we felt the snow melting on our face or down the back of our neck. Oh to be a kid again!

For thousands of children all across the former Soviet Union this is the only highlight from a regimented lifestyle of an institution known as an orphanage. SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* teams visit year-round offering a ray of hope in the name of Jesus, showing love by meeting practical needs of clothing, special gifts and friendship. Going out into the cold winter for some fun in the snow brings smiles and laughter. Some of the teams have built skating rinks, purchased ice skates and even taught children the game of hockey.



Orphans' hockey

Each week, visits are made to these large facilities and many hear the Gospel through teaching programs. In some communities, children are being relegated to homes where families take them in and receive a small government subsidy. This can be both good and bad, depending on the values and practices of each home situation. In these cases, it becomes more difficult to reach children on a consistent basis. We need wisdom in these locations of how best to reach out. God has always opened doors as we seek Him for insight and our workers are most creative.

Christmas is over for another year and thousands of children have heard the Good News of Jesus Christ. Invitations have been extended to attend summer camp and now we pray for a positive response. Many are gearing up for a great summer of evangelism and spiritual growth. Pray along with us and begin thinking about how you can assist a child? For only \$50.00 you can send a child to camp for an entire week. This could be the best week of a child's life and you could make this possible.

Thank you for reading and praying over these articles in the Good News Report. Times are changing but the Gospel message of salvation remains constant. That little baby Jesus, born in a stable and laid in a manger would live a short life on earth but give His life so we might gain eternal life. Oh the love that was expressed for all mankind! May we be generous and give others the opportunity to respond to His love gift.

Bill Ball
Executive Director, SGA/Canada

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