



SERVING CHURCHES — REACHING RUSSIA

October 2014

Miracles of the Heart in St. Petersburg

Rescuing Children through Orphans Reborn

Irina Orlova

SGA-Sponsored *Orphans Reborn*
Coordinator

By His grace, we are currently visiting six institutions. These include a juvenile detention center, a special needs school, a youth penal colony, and two children's homes. We also recently returned to an institution where teen girls who have committed crimes are sent. For a time, they stopped holding girls there, so we stopped visiting. Now, there are girls there again and we have been given permission to visit them.

The seeds were sown during our previous visits several years prior. The Bible lessons took place outside. At the end of the lesson, all five of the girls cried and prayed the prayer of salvation. The caregiver saw and heard everything. She was also on the verge of coming to the Lord. But when we came back the next time, they told us that the girls were gone. The caregiver and her husband had been in a terrible car accident. The

administration asked us to pray for them. They survived, but we had to cease our ministry there. But we believed the stage had been set for our return!

Today, the girls are back and take the Bible lessons very seriously, listen very carefully, and take part in conversation. A woman caregiver is present during the lessons, and she even participates in the discussions and asks a lot of questions. We believe that the Word of God will take root in their hearts!

A Broader Impact Beyond the Children

The special needs school deals with children with behavioral problems.



Russia's unwanted "problem" children . . .
greatly loved by our righteous Lord.

Between 15 and 16 kids attend Bible lessons, while others are on school duties. They listen attentively and participate in discussion. After one of the lessons, a boy named Vlad came up to us concerned about superstitions that he carried. As we talked, three more kids came up. We tried to answer all their questions. They left happy and grateful, and I think they grasped truths that were very important to them. Sometimes after the lessons, even the caregivers come in asking questions, sitting and talking with us for a long time. One caregiver even walks with us to the exit, continuing to talk with us. It seems that he has a very serious attitude towards God and faith, and he asks us about things he still doesn't understand—and about which he is deeply thinking. Please pray for him!

Grasping the Real Meaning of Easter

The Easter lesson at this home was a particular blessing! We decided to test the children to find out what they knew and understood. When we told them what we were going to do, they all became very serious and quiet. We use a lot of illustrative pictures in our Bible lessons. We asked them to show us the Bible

pictures and, with our help, to talk about them.

We couldn't have foreseen what was going to happen. It was such a blessing and miracle! Everyone participated, and we could see that many of them took it close to heart. They not only knew the material, but they understood and received it into their hearts. Several of them had tears in their eyes when they spoke about the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane, then on the cross, and when they talked about the thieves. They tried so hard to tell us in their own words how Peter felt when he denied Jesus, when the thief repented, and many other things.

We nearly forgot where we were—it was like Sunday school! Jesus is risen! And many of the kids sincerely believe! Their plight is difficult, but we believe that the Lord will work through His Word sown in their hearts. We praise God for everything that is happening! We are very thankful to the Lord for all of His miracles! And we are very thankful to you for your help and your prayers! May the Lord bless you and reward you a hundredfold for all of your kindnesses!



SGA-provided children's Bibles have been used by God to open many a young heart!



Teaching the Centrality of the Gospel

Pavel is a faithful SGA-sponsored missionary pastor in Belarus, who is also engaged in significant ministry to orphan children. The labor is sometimes difficult, and the risen Lord's outreach to the men on the road to Emmaus comes to mind . . . *Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45)*. As Pavel relates, the opportunities are many . . .

We understand the necessity of preaching the Gospel to the children and explaining it to them carefully. I often detect during my conversations with orphan children and youth that they don't always understand. Vitalik is 16. He has heard the Gospel many times, but he still has trouble grasping it. But he has started to think about the Gospel more seriously in the past year. God is at work!

Loving Outreach—In and Out of the Orphanage

We were allowed to have a wonderful event for the senior orphan children. We organized a small camp on the orphanage grounds. We had a bonfire



A campfire chat and the warmth of God's love bring smiles to the faces of heartbroken youths.

and roasted meat on the fire. And above all, it was a time to talk about important, eternal things. We spoke about many subjects. One young boy named Nikita asked about baptism, and that gave me the chance to explain in biblical detail what baptism means.

We continue to be in touch with the orphans even after they have graduated from the children's home. They visit us at our home, where we can spend time together and teach them spiritual truth along with practical skills. We teach girls how to prepare food and they play with our small daughters. The boys learn how to use fastener driving machines and other tools. One day I was fixing a shelf on our wall and the boys helped me. The desire of our heart is to keep serving the Lord through Orphans Reborn. We ask you to pray for us, and our ministry.*

Pavel's prayer request is urgent. He tells us that the attitude of orphanage officials is hardening and persecution is increasing. Christian families are forbidden to take orphan children to Sunday worship services. Please intercede in prayer for Pavel, his family, and for ongoing open doors to reach these neediest of children.

**Editor's Note: Orphan children are required to leave the orphanage at age 18, and very often go into the world with very little knowledge about how to survive in the outside world. The churches help make a tremendous difference through Orphans Reborn.*

SGA-sponsored *Orphans Reborn* ministry is reaching more than 100 orphanages and children's homes across Russia and her neighboring countries. We are currently reaching more than 8,000 children, with more than 5,100 boys and girls regularly attending Bible classes and fellowships. Eighty-four churches are involved. Nearly 160 orphans who have reached adulthood and have "graduated" from the children's homes still attend Bible classes. And most wonderfully, 59 adult orphans who were saved through the ministry as children now serve as part of the *Orphans Reborn* teams!

Thank You to SGA Partners!



Can paper be a blessing?

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I purchased a bundle of paper last month. Why? The orphan children like to draw art on paper, but they haven't had any supply of paper for such art. We also brought gifts of toothpaste, fresh fruit, and baked goods. The children were so happy and thankful to get these gifts, and said so many times. We held Bible lessons and sang songs with them. I am very thankful to you for your support for our ministry to these children. You help fill their life with joy. May the Lord richly bless you!

—Vasily (*Orphans Reborn*, Belarus)



Sharing the Gospel with puppets . . .

In the Grodno region, we reach both orphan children and families who have mentally and physically challenged children. Puppet theatre is one effective way we use to share the Gospel with these children.

Our performance was devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ's work of redemption. Our country had just celebrated "Victory Day," and we used that to talk about Jesus' victory over sin and death. Prominently reflected in the performance was the Lord's resurrection. We spoke with the children about the importance of the resurrection and how it can impact our eternal destiny. The audience was made up of both children and their caregivers. Afterward, they all acknowledged that their hearts were very touched through the performance. We are so thankful to the Lord for this ministry and our travels with the Gospel puppet show!

—Pavel (*Orphans Reborn*, Belarus)



Overcoming fear of the dark!

Among the children at the Yemelianovo orphanage, there are those who are developmentally challenged. But I have learned that despite their difficulties, these children can accept truth with their hearts as well as their minds. Nastya is afraid of the dark and awakens at night in great fear. Not long ago, she again woke up in the dark and was afraid, but this time, she started to pray to Jesus for comfort and that He would give her sleep. And as she prayed, she fell asleep! When she awakened the next morning, she testified to everyone that Jesus had answered her prayer! In our last lesson, we had a very friendly and warm fellowship, and talked of how Jesus could change people's lives using Zaccheus (Luke 19) as an example, and I could see in the eyes of the children the desire to live life as Jesus lived it!

—Tatyana Kisileva
(*Orphans Reborn* in Krasnoyarsk)

Platon Chartschlaa:

A Special Tribute to a Faithful SGA Bible Scholar

By SGA Senior Missionary Andrew Semenchuk



Platon Chartschlaa

As part of SGA's observance of 80 years in Gospel ministry, we take this opportunity to honor Platon Chartschlaa—a true . . . *bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ* (James 1:1).

Platon's labors were vital in building SGA's Russian-language literature ministry through the years.

Platon was born in Soviet Abkhazia near the Black Sea. He was an outstanding Moscow University student of history, philosophy, and literature. While Platon's family was religious, he became an atheist due to Soviet training. But that changed during World War II, when Platon became a prisoner of war in Denmark and was won to Christ through the ministry of a Danish pastor.

Platon eventually met SGA founder Peter Deyneka in Europe. Peter was deeply impressed by Platon's desire to study and serve the Lord. Platon and his family moved to Argentina, where he attended the Baptist Seminary in Buenos Aires. When I went to direct the Russian Bible

Institute that Peter founded there, I asked Platon to teach a number of classes, and he joined SGA in 1956—eventually immigrating to the U.S.

The importance of Platon's work cannot be overstated. He prepared Russian Gospel radio broadcasts aired over 10 shortwave radio stations into the former Soviet Union. He wrote a multi-volume Apologetics series, translated the Scofield Notes for the Russian Bible, and translated the Bible Knowledge Commentary into Russian—all printed by SGA. He translated and printed booklets to 10 of the Moody Science films that we produced in Russian to show at several Olympics.

When Platon returned to visit Abkhazia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, he was greeted as a national hero, in recognition of his radio work and vast Christian literature production. Besides speaking at the university a number of times, he was also interviewed on national television. Today, Platon is in his 90s and lives in Florida—officially “retired”, but his writing and translation ministry continues to this day.

CIS in the News

Ukraine Crisis and Future Implications

Since the Ukraine crisis broke out late last year, the Ukrainian people have endured much tragedy and uncertainty over their future as a nation—both short and long term. In addition to being a political crisis between Ukraine and Russia, the often-violent conflict between the Ukrainian government and pro-Russian militants has caused Cold War-like tensions between Russia, the United States, and the European Union.

Earlier this year, Russia's Interfax reported that a senior Russian diplomat charged NATO with having “hostile intent” in their buildup on Russia's borders—brought on by concern over whether Russia would move into more of Ukraine beyond Crimea.

The crisis has had other serious impacts, with reports of difficulties evacuating orphans and other refugees from the conflict zones and threats against some evangelical churches.

SGA is thankful to God for the many who have responded generously to our Crisis Evangelism Fund, which was established to help evangelical churches respond to the needs of their people—both humanitarian and spiritual. As always, their primary concern is sharing the Gospel and Christ's love, no matter what personal costs or dangers they might endure. Please pray for ongoing wisdom for the churches—and for SGA—as events evolve over time. You can learn more about the Crisis Evangelism Fund by visiting our website at www.sga.org/crisisevangelism.



How You Can Help

The stories in this month's *InSight* have thrilled our hearts. It is wonderful to see how Bible-preaching churches across the CIS are reaching out with the love of Christ to needy orphan children. With the help of our faithful partners, they are sharing the glorious Gospel truth and teaching of God . . . *You have been the helper of the orphan* (Psalm 10:14). Your generous support helps support not only the *Orphans Reborn* teams, but also missionary pastors, Bible training, youth and children's workers, Compassion Ministry, and so much more. You and our other faithful partners are a great encouragement. Please prayerfully consider what you can do to help through SGA, as the needs remain vast. And please remember us in your prayers!

Canadian Connection

by Allan Vincent

Orphans Reborn and ministry to children are changing. In some parts of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), orphanages are being closed and orphans have been moved to foster homes. But in other regions, the financial incentives offered to take in an orphan are insufficient to erase memories of broken promises and political instability.

Wherever there are children though, SGA-sponsored missionary pastors and churches are committed to reaching them—and especially orphans—with the Gospel. Andrew Shaligin is one such pastor serving in central Siberia. In addition

to regular visits to orphanages, special programs are prepared for Christmas and Easter. Last Christmas, a heavy snowfall made most roads impassable. As an alternative, a Christmas program was quickly organized at a local club.

In that community, all of the children who had been living in an orphanage were now with foster families. The **district social service agencies thoughtfully provided the church with a list of those children whom the Lord had allowed to be placed in the homes of unbelievers (who were open to the Gospel).**



They held another Christmas celebration in their House of Prayer for children in their community. There were no empty seats in the auditorium. Many of the children came with their parents. Some children who had attended previous events brought friends. They watched the program, received a gift and a special prayer.

Pastor Andrew shared the testimony of a four-year-old boy who came with his mother . . .

*During one part of the program, actors seemed to minimize the meaning of Christmas and tried to steal it away. When this happened, it particularly moved the childlike heart of this boy. **This dear little one cried about the stolen Christmas.** When this happened, a sister sitting near him asked his mom why the boy was crying. She explained to the boy that this was a play, and helped him to see that Christmas was returned and is with us now. This is how God touched the heart of this 4-year-old boy.*

This is only one of the hearts that are being touched by your faithful prayers and financial partnerships. Fruitful missionary pastors like Andrew thank God for you, and are worthy of your support.



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

Slavic Gospel Association
— Canada
55 Fleming Drive, Suite 26
Cambridge, ON N1T 2A9
www.sgacanada.ca
E-mail: info@sgacanada.ca
Phone: 519-621-3553
Fax: 519-621-7571

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

Loves Park, USA
Noble Park, Australia
Eastbourne, England
North Shore, New Zealand

Canadian Board of Directors

Dr. Stephen Code, Chairman
Ivan Barber, Vice Chairman
Carol Dean Jeffries, Treasurer
Dr. Allan W. Vincent, Director
John C. Goetze
Walter Gnida
Arnold Heron
Michael Nichols
Rod Wilkinson
Dr. Robert W. Provost

SGA is a member of:



Evangelical Council for
Financial Accountability