

# BIG FAMILY

Ministry to Children

August 2005

*“Worship that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the father is this: to visit and help and care for the widows and orphans in their affliction and need....” James 1:27 (AMP)*



***These are some of our Big Family friends at Fellowship Christian Church in Springfield, OH. These and other children in FCC's Vacation Bible School program collected funds to be donated for improving living conditions for orphans in Russia. Thank you for caring for the orphan children of Russia!***

## ***Celebrating life in the year ahead***

What happens on your birthday if you are an orphan in Russia? We asked this question on one of our early trips to Russia. Orphanage leadership told us that monthly celebrations were held in the orphanage, and the children with birthdays during that month are recognized.

When we visited Russia in May, we asked children at the same orphanage about the monthly celebrations, and they told us that the parties were not being held any more.

When we learned that there were no celebrations for the children's' birthdays, we decided that same day that Big Family needs to celebrate the children and their lives during the upcoming school year.

So thanks to you and Big Family, beginning in September, "life celebrations" will be held each month at Kommunar, Luga, and St. Petersburg Orphanage No. 14.

At these celebrations, children with birthdays in that month will receive a gift from Big Family, and all the children at the orphanage will enjoy cake and tea.

Our Big Family volunteers will use these life celebrations as an opportunity to teach "life lessons" from the Bible. Dianne has developed a series of life lessons that can be taught to the children using simple illustrations that the children would be able to understand.

When Dianne started doing research for the object lessons, we thought that finding appropriate material would be easy since there are so many educational materials available in the U.S.

However, Dianne quickly found that most of the materials are written for children who have families and who live with at least one parent.

A second challenge was coming up with object lessons built around materials that are available in Russia. An example: one of the lessons asks children to make a small sculpture from a pipe cleaner. When we sent the lesson to Eva for translation, she wrote back and asked, "What's a pipe cleaner?" Then we learned that, if pipe cleaners could be found in Russia, they would be very expensive. So a large package of pipe cleaners is now on its way to Russia, and the children will be able to make their sculptures!

Thank you for helping us celebrate life among the orphan children of Russia!



***Meet our Big Family Ministry team in Kommunar: Irina (Ira) Mokichevoy, team leader; Taisia Balabanova; Ivan Panuskin; and Uriy Mohovilkov. They will be celebrating lives of orphan children in the year ahead.***

## ***Free the orphans of Russia!***

Just as the cry went out across America 150 years ago to “free the slaves”...it is now time for the message to ring out around the world: “free the orphan children of Russia!”

Hundreds of thousands of children in Russia are “slaves” in an orphanage system that will assure 5 out of 6 orphans face a future in prison, addicted to drugs or alcohol, with AIDS, as prostitutes, or committing suicide.

What can be done? The answer is not to build and furnish better and more comfortable orphanages. The answer is to provide family and homes for Russian orphans.

When we first began our mission to Russian orphans, our immediate attention went to the living conditions in the orphanages. Big Family will continue to work with orphanages to improve living conditions and to provide opportunities for orphan children to celebrate and enjoy their lives; however, in the year ahead, we will begin to focus on helping orphans find families and homes.

Eva and Misha are developing programs to encourage Russian churches and their members to get involved with visiting orphanages, inviting orphans to spend weekends at their flats, and to consider the possibility of becoming a foster parent or adopting an orphan.

Please join with us in praying that God will open doors for this important message to be trumpeted around the world: “free the orphan children of Russia” from this vicious cycle!

## ***Thanks to Slavic Pentecostal Church!***

We (Ken and Dianne) recently had a delightful visit with our brothers and sisters at the Slavic Pentecostal Church in West Springfield, MA. This is now the home church of Sergey and Nadya Morozov and family, who helped us start ministering to Russian orphans four years ago.

Through a Russian translator, we presented Big Family Ministry at both morning worship services, and we now have more than 25 Family Friends at this church!

Worshiping at this church is an interesting experience for us because it’s almost like we are in Russia without having to cross the Atlantic. All songs and sermons and messages are in Russian.

## ***Christmas project 2005...***

Those of you who were Family Friends in 2004 know that we collected Christmas gift packages for Christmas parties held at each of the orphanages.

Our experience from last year showed us that this is not the best way to organize and give Christmas gifts to the children. Shipping the gifts costs more than the gifts, some Family Friends collected and sent more items than others, and there are always new children at the orphanages throughout the year, so it was difficult to assure that every child was receiving an appropriate gift.

This year, we invite Family Friends to contribute towards a Christmas gift fund. Our suggested gift amount is \$25. Some of our Family Friends will not be able to afford \$25, so if you can give more than \$25, please consider doing so.

Our coordinator in Russia will then work with our volunteers to provide each Big Family child with much needed clothing. The gifts will be presented at a Big Family Christmas celebration at each of the three orphanages.

## ***Shower fund for Luga...***

We would like to thank those who have been contributing to the fund to install showers for the children at Luga! The fund is growing...growing slowly... but growing!

Please keep this project in mind as you plan your giving. It would be a wonderful blessing to the children at Luga if this project could be completed during the upcoming school year.

## ***Prayer requests...***

- Opportunities for Eva and Misha to present orphan ministry to church groups in Russia;
- Pray for all of the children who will soon be starting a new year of school;
- A house for our foster family in Kommunar, which would enable them to expand their family;
- Homes and families for the orphans of Russia;
- Olga, 17-year-old graduate who elected to end her pregnancy with an abortion;
- For MIR, an organization that provides assistance to missions like ours in Russia and who will help us become “official” in Russia.

## ***Contact information:***

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