

BIG FAMILY

Mission to Children

January 2007

"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)

**Thank God
for
the team
from
Kommunar
Word of
Faith
Church!**



When the Russian government decided to close down the Kommunar orphanage, where Big Family Mission began its ministry to Russian orphans, we prayed much for the opportunity to continue ministering to the children who were being relocated. Some were sent to the Gatchina internat-orphanage, and some were sent to the Ukki internat-orphanage.

The Gatchina facility is the largest internat school in the St. Petersburg area. When our Russian coordinator (Eva Ptuha) contacted the orphanage director about establishing a relationship with Gatchina, the reception was on the borderline of being hostile.

After a meeting with Eva, the leadership of Gatchina agreed to meet with us (Dianne and Ken) when we traveled to Russia. Needless to say, we prayed a lot before the visit and did not know what to expect.

As we entered the Gatchina facility, two of the younger boys who we knew from the Kommunar orphanage saw us and immediately rushed over to give us hugs and warm greetings. They tagged along with us then as we searched for the assistant director at Gatchina. Our meeting with the assistant director, and then the director, at

Gatchina was warm and friendly. The assistant director laid down the rules of what we could do and could not do in our work with the children, but he was very open to those from Big Family and the Word of Faith Church in Kommunar visiting with the children.

And guess who waited for us outside the room where we were meeting for almost one hour? The two boys who had greeted us when we arrived at Gatchina. In a completely unexpected way, these two boys had demonstrated to the leadership at Gatchina how valuable it is for the children to have regular visits from those who keep coming back and coming back!

Also during our November visit, we met with those from the Kommunar Word of Faith Church who are interested in continuing Big Family's mission to the orphans at Gatchina. We were delighted and blessed by the Word of Faith team's commitment to continue ministering to the children who have moved to their new location. Pictured above are those who attended our meeting in Pastor Andrei's home: back row, Masha and Tania; middle row, Sveta and Pastor Andrei, Ken and Dianne, Dima, Taya, and Ulia; front row, Luba, Ania, and Sasha.



Ukki chicken pox didn't stop us!

Our visits to Russia are always full of surprises... and the chicken pox epidemic at Ukki ranks high on our list of surprises during our November visit. Shortly after we arrived in Russia, we learned that the orphanage at Ukki (where many of the children from Kommunar had been relocated) was having a bout with chicken pox, and the entire facility might be quarantined. We prayed much, and the facility remained open for our visit.

Like the children at Gatchina, our young friends who knew us from our visits at Kommunar were delighted to see us. We had a wonderful time, recognizing several recent birthdays among the children, playing games, and of course serving and enjoying cake, tea, and soda.

In the photo above, a few of the children posed with stuffed animals that had been donated to Big Family by a lady who lives in Ireland. We didn't think the older children would be interested in stuffed animals, but obviously we were wrong!

Blessings for the Kommunar children

Now that we have visited the Gatchina and the Ukki orphanages, we can see several blessings that have come from the closing and relocation of the children to these new facilities:

- the academic standards are higher at the new facilities;
- living conditions are better at the new facilities;
- the new facilities are stricter in their control of the children;
- we have many new children to minister to at Gatchina and Ukki;
- the Ukki orphanage is much closer to the hometown of our Russian coordinator than was Kommunar, thus making it much more convenient for Eva and Misha to visit with the Ukki children.

We thank you for your prayers for the children who were relocated from Kommunar. The adjustment to life in the new facilities has been difficult for them, but we are happy to report that Big Family Mission can continue to bless the children with regular visits.

We'll include more information about our November trip in our next newsletter.

Help needed for hosting program

Big Family Mission is working with New Horizons for Children to conduct a hosting program in the Pennsylvania area this summer. Russian orphans, ages 5 years to 15, will come to America and live with host families for about five weeks, beginning in late June.

We need lots of help! Here's what you can do:

- Consider hosting a child;
- Ask your home church to consider helping a family host a child as a mission project;
- Help us spread the word about the hosting program to other families who might be interested;
- Help us publicize the hosting program in churches throughout Pennsylvania and neighboring states;
- Consider giving a financial donation to help a family who would like to host;
- And most important of all: pray fervently for the children and families who will participate in the 2007 summer program.

The main purpose of the hosting program is to give the orphans a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the USA, and live with a real family. It is not unusual for children who participate in such hosting programs to be adopted by a family that they meet while they are visiting. However, even if the children are not adopted, they form friendships that encourage them and continue to bless them after they return to Russia. For more information about the New Horizons hosting program, visit their website: www.newhorizonsforchildren.org.

Contact information:

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Big Family Mission is an inter-denominational mission outreach involving churches and Christians from many different denominations.