



# ACTS OF ADVOCACY



Jasper Amon Chastain was born January 8, 2010

## Happy (Late) New Year from The Chastain Family!

*“I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants...One will say, 'I belong to the Lord'; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; still another will write on his hand, 'The Lord's' and will take the name Israel.”* Isaiah 44: 3-5

**Greetings this cold and snowy winter from St. Petersburg, Russia!** Like many of you, we have had unusually low temperatures and large snowfalls here during these past several weeks. One week recently reported the highest snowfall St. Petersburg has ever recorded, and Isabel's school was closed for some time due to low temperatures – around minus 10 degrees Fahrenheit. While these conditions have been difficult at times, they have also made the city gorgeous and the sledding totally awesome!!!

### Jasper Amon Chastain

On January 8, 2010, at 3:15 in the afternoon our 2nd child, Jasper Amon, came into the world a handsome, healthy little boy! Both Miki and Jasper are doing very well, Isabel is becoming a wonderful, very helpful big sister, and Charlie is learning a great deal about the process of reporting the birth of a U.S. Citizen overseas! In these past weeks, the four of us have spent precious time together recovering, learning, and taking care of each other as we've watched Jasper grow.

As you can imagine, the experience of giving birth in a Russian hospital is quite different than that of an American hospital (with the exception of labor and delivery, of course – that's the same anywhere). Several individuals have asked that Miki share a little about her experience of carrying and delivering a baby here in Russia, and about the 4 days she spent in the hospital with Jasper after delivery. So she has started the process of writing it all down. She is hoping to have this completed in the next couple of months, and will be happy to share it with anyone who is interested.

### A New Perspective (from Miki)

When children are turned over to the orphanage system here in Russia, they first spend time in “intake hospitals”, where they are observed and treated for any illnesses or infections before they are assigned to an orphanage. Recently, I had an opportunity to take a few supplies and spend a little time with the kids in Intake Hospital #15. This time however, I found that my perspective was a little different than it had been on previous visits.

Among the children in the hospital at this time were 3 infants, one of whom was about 6 weeks old – the same age as our son. While our friend, Anya Utyusheva, was holding this little girl, I found myself looking a little more closely at her face just in case I might recognize her from my time in the birthing hospital after giving birth to Jasper.

In the birthing hospital, visitors were quite restricted, and mothers were encouraged to get out of their rooms and walk around. It was not uncommon to see a mother crying as she walked through the hallway carrying her baby. I specifically thought about my roommate in the hospital, who had given birth to a little girl, and who struggled with pain and postpartum grief a great deal. Looking now at this little girl in the intake hospital I couldn't help but wonder – could I have possibly met this little girl's mother and watched her struggle with the possibility of giving up her child to the state?

During this time of postpartum recovery, I've been reminded that along with the joy of having a baby also can come fear, feelings of incompetence, and even doubt that you will ever feel like “yourself” again. I know that these are normal emotions for a new mother, and having a 3 year old daughter and an amazing husband to encourage me has helped on the difficult days. But I can't help but to think of a new, single mother – especially in a society where some misguided doctors actually have come to believe that such mothers should give their children over to the orphanage system, particularly if their child appears to have some sort of disability.

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**Please begin to pray that as the Lord desires, He will show us doors to begin ministry in the lives of the mothers of these children, particularly those who may be feeling alone and considering the orphanage system for their child.** Please pray against any shame or condemnation the enemy may be trying to use against these women, and that the healing grace of the Lord may be poured out into their lives. Pray that they will choose every day to bring up their children in His grace and that He may be glorified through them, both today and through the generations.

### Nurturing Relationships

During our time in the ministry, we have learned that while serving others often results in blessings of joy and rejoicing, it also brings times of deep discouragement and grief. We have seen that so often God uses our brothers and sisters to bring us encouragement and accountability to help us maintain our peace and joy in Christ, despite any circumstances. This month we have seen the Lord continue to open doors to develop new relationships and to nurture old ones!

Charlie recently was invited to meet with the Municipal Deputy of orphanages for our region. The meeting turned out to be a wonderful time of sharing, as all parties felt free to discuss new ideas and ways that we might work together, as well as to open up about roadblocks and other sources of discouragement we were feeling. We were also very encouraged by the willingness of all parties to learn from one another and to maintain open minds out of our love for the children we seek to serve. Charlie is scheduled to meet with the Deputy again later this month, and we ask for your prayers that this relationship may move forward according to the grace and will of God.

In the second week of March, Charlie will be traveling to the Moscow region with some folks from our partner organization, Love Russia, in order to spend some time with fellow workers in that area, and to see some of the work Love Russia has been doing there in the past several years. During this trip, Charlie will also have the opportunity to visit with our dear sister, Luba Timofeeva, who lives in Ryazan, and who has ministered in a prison there for teenage girls for several years. We first met Luba on our first trip here in 2001, but have not been able to see her for over 3 years. Again, we ask for your prayers that this will be a time of learning and for encouraging one another in the Lord.

### Van Purchase Update

In our previous newsletter, we shared a little about an opportunity for us to buy a van for \$11,000. In the past 2 months, several of you have generously given to the "van" fund, and as of the end of January raised \$9,100! Although we are still needing \$1,900 to make the \$11,000 purchase price, Love Russia has agreed to receive this amount once it comes in. The van is currently in Moscow, and Charlie is now planning to drive it back to St. Petersburg after his trip there in a couple of weeks!



Any donations for this purchase should be sent to the Mission Society as normal, only please note "Chastain vehicle" in the memo line to ensure appropriate application.

### Love and blessings - Charlie, Miki, Isa and Jasper



OUR WEBSITE HAS BEEN UPDATED! CHECK IT OUT!

Do you have a facebook or twitter account?

Connect with us at:

[www.facebook.com/mikichastain](http://www.facebook.com/mikichastain)

[www.facebook.com/charliechastain](http://www.facebook.com/charliechastain) and

charliechastain on 

facebook

### Ways to donate to this ministry:

#### To make a donation by check:

- send a check to the following address, noting "Chastain/Russia 322" in the memo:

The Mission Society  
6234 Crooked Creek Road  
Norcross, GA 30092



#### To make a donation by credit card or debit:

- go to our website: [www.actsofadvocacy.org](http://www.actsofadvocacy.org) and click on "Give" to go to the Mission Society "donations" page.

#### To make a monthly pledge:

Either contact us via email or phone (678-436-3016) so that we can send you the appropriate documentation, or go to our website: [www.actsofadvocacy.org](http://www.actsofadvocacy.org) and click on "Give" to go to the Mission Society "donations" page.

TO MAKE A SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION FOR THE VAN PURCHASE, PLEASE SPECIFY "CHASTAIN VEHICLE" ON YOUR CHECK NOTE OR ONLINE DONATION.