



# ACTS OF ADVOCACY



## Greetings this beautiful spring from St. Petersburg!

Today the temperature is 50°F and the rain is falling, so everyone here is becoming a little anxious for spring. But, if you look closely, you can see tiny buds developing on the trees, so we know the warmth will be here soon!

We've just returned from spending three weeks in Estonia while we were waiting on our work visas to be approved. Estonia is a small country just west of Russia, and less than 3 hours driving from St. Petersburg – not including the border crossing! We were blessed by many in Estonia who went out of their way to assist us, and by our friends, Mike and Olga Cantrell, who opened their flat to us in Johvi during those three weeks. But, we are glad to be home back in Russia, in time for summer teams and activities to begin!

### Healing Prayer Ministry – St. Petersburg

Some steps have been taken towards seeing the call we've felt to help develop an inter-denominational healing prayer ministry in St. Petersburg.

First, we've found a location near the center of the city where we expect to begin regular prayer meetings by the end of May. The location is owned by a Russian Orthodox sister, who is also interested in participating in the meetings.

In praying about this ministry, we have felt very strongly that we should be careful about pressuring individuals into participating, or about making assumptions regarding who may or may not be called to join us. It has been very interesting to watch the Lord move in the hearts of the few individuals thus far who have come to us to say that they feel the Lord is leading them to begin to pray with us on a regular basis.

Finally, a group of Methodist pastors, including the district superintendent of the Methodist church in St. Petersburg, has expressed interest in holding a 3-4 day prayer retreat with Miki in upcoming weeks. We hope to spend these days in intensive, intimate communion with the Lord, as we seek to hear His voice and to receive His healing in our own lives and relationships, both through personal reflection on our own and through intercessory prayer and the laying of our hands for one another.

We feel that this call of our coming together in prayer in this city is one of vital importance in the furtherance of the kingdom, particularly in these days. We ask for your continued thoughts and prayers as we are in the early steps, that we may be open to the Lord's heart constantly. Pray that we may praise Him in those areas where we are able to hear and honor Him, and that we may know to step back in the areas where we may be missing His voice for whatever reasons.



The Chastains visiting Tallinn, Estonia.

### Update from Liza Ilyina

Many of you had the opportunity to know our dear sister, Liza, when she was visiting with us in the U.S. this past fall. This month we asked her to share a bit about some of the things she is doing.

*Hello dear friends. First of all, thank you for supporting me and for your prayers for our children. These children need to experience loving, caring friends and to know that there is a hope for them in a loving God. I can feel that the Lord is leading me to work with children at this time and it has been wonderful working with them!*

*I'm visiting children with cancer in a city hospital, where I used to work. The kids there are so adorable. They all have parents, but they also need some attention. They are only allowed to leave the hospital if they are feeling better. Some of them have a little hope to get better. But, they still like it when I come and still they love to smile, because they are children.*

*Also, I love visiting children in the Tsimbalina orphan intake hospital. These children are going through so much in their childhood and they need someone to keep them smiling and to show them that there are still people who love them and that they need to be in this world. I found a couple of other volunteers for this hospital through one of my friends, and they are also going sometimes with me to the hospital.*

Liza is also working with a former transition home for orphan graduates, which has been converted into a single mother's home. They recently contacted Liza with a request for a stroller and for children's clothing. We wanted to share this request particularly with those who are planning a trip over this summer. Please let us know if you'd like to assist with this request, and we will provide specific ages/sizes.

### Summer Plans

There are a few potential projects in discussion for this coming summer, for which we ask prayers.

### **Summer kitchen for Volkhov meditation / retreat facility**

Plans are in place for the construction of a summer kitchen for a christian facility in Volkhov, about 2 hours drive east of St. Petersburg. This facility is engaged in many outreach programs, including hosting teams to work with local orphanages, holding retreats for christian university students from St. Petersburg and facilitating a summer camp for homeless children in the Volkhov region. Tuscaloosa FUMC in Tuscaloosa, AL has raised the funds for the construction of this kitchen. However, due to the tornado disaster that recently hit Tuscaloosa, they are uncertain about whether they will be able to make the trip over this summer to participate in the construction. We ask for your continued prayers for healing among our brothers and sisters in Tuscaloosa, AL as they begin to rebuild their homes and lives. We also ask for your prayers for the Volkhov facility and region, as we all seek the Lord's will in how to best see to fruition this much needed project.

### **Playground for Yunost orphan summer camp**

Our sister, Karen Jones, along with a team from Aiken FUMC in Aiken, SC led by Deedee Vaughters, is making plans to build a playground at the Yunost orphan summer camp, located just north of St. Petersburg. These ladies worked at this camp last summer, which currently has only a few pieces of playground equipment – all of which are made of rusty, and often broken, metal. Again, these plans are still in-process, so we ask that you remember all of us as we continue to pray through the details of God's plan for the Yunost facility.

### **New orphanage connection prayer request**

A few days before we left for Estonia in April, Charlie had a meeting with a director of an orphanage located about 4 hours outside of St. Petersburg. The director reported to Charlie that this facility was in desperate need of new roof venting – possibly before the next winter snowfall begins. We've not yet had an opportunity to visit this facility, but are beginning discussions with potential supporters and seeking the Lord's direction in our new relationship.

### **Personal Thank You**

Many of you know that shortly after our arrival into Estonia, we received word that Miki's grandfather had suffered a stroke. After the brief illness that followed, he went home to be with our Lord on April 19th. We're so thankful that Miki was able to get to Georgia in time to be with her family during those difficult, but precious days, and also upon her safe return to us in Estonia. Thank you for keeping our family in your thoughts and prayers in this time.

We've heard of some of the very difficult trials that have come upon so many of you. Please let us know how you are doing. Know that we are praying that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will fill your spirits and homes in these days in Christ Jesus. We love you all, dearly. Blessings to you in Christ -

**Charlie, Miki, Isabel and Jasper**

### **Funding Update**

Time and again, we find ourselves feeling privileged for the blessing of your financial support to do this work in Russia.

The first 3 months of this year brought large unexpected expenses and a falling dollar. These expenses seem to be part of "doing business" in Russia now - from visa processing to vehicle registration to changes in tax law. Further, the drop in the value of the dollar has resulted in an almost 10% increase in our living expenses.

Once again, in order for us to sustain our term in Russia, we come to you to ask for your consideration toward our financial support, either in the way of one-time gifts or in monthly commitments.

As a busy summer approaches, we invite you (or your sunday school class, your church, etc.) to consider partnering with us through The Mission Society by pledging \$25, \$50, \$100 or more a month.

Many of you have already increased your giving. Now we ask you to help spread the word and tell others about our work here in Russia.

If you feel the Lord is leading you to begin to financially support the work we're doing in Russia, please see the options below.

**Thank you so much for all you are doing!**

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: [www.actsofadvocacy.org](http://www.actsofadvocacy.org)

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.