

The Harbor monthly update

Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat. ~Mother Teresa

Through my eyes

I arrived in St. Petersburg a month ago and it was the picture of its famous nickname; Northern Venice. At first, it was tough trying to get back to walking all the time and constantly going somewhere or doing something. It reminds me how little I walk when I am in the states. It is one of my favorite things to do when I am here in Russia.

Last year, I taught English and computer classes at the vocational training center (VTC) whereas this year I am teaching a culinary class. It is a lot of fun especially when I have a group from orphanage #18. I do not want to be bias, but I sure do enjoy that group. Alesha, from this orphanage, loves to cook and knows quite a bit. He is leaving the orphanage this June and will be coming to The Harbor for the next two years. He wants to pursue cooking as a career and was accepted into trade school #50 to become a chef. I am hoping that between his school and The Harbor residential program, he will acquire all necessary theory and practical knowledge to become professional in the area of cooking. We have three other guys who will be coming to our family at the end of August: Grisha, Misha and another Alesha. I am super thrilled about this especially because the orphanage director Elena has not been super supportive of our program. It is yet more evidence that God can bring favor to His ministry. We have had kids coming to our VTC for almost two years now and after a personal visit to her, she said yes. Praise the Lord! The director has also recently asked me to help them with one of their girls who is a graduate, but still resides at the orphanage due to housing issues. Now I am trying to help them through a friend of mine who is an attorney. ***Please pray that Lena's housing situation will be resolved. Pray that boys will be prepared for the new journey in their life.***

I visited my former orphanage and they were thrilled to see me after fifteen years since I have graduated. As usual they asked me to help them with clothes especially socks and underwear. ***It is amazing that in the midst of millions of dollars that are invested, kids still do not have the essential stuff.*** A beautiful building that has children without socks and underwear does not do any good to anyone. I went to the store and purchased 150 pairs of socks so that every child would receive two pairs for the summer. Can you imagine having two pairs of socks for the summer? It is mind boggling to me that the government is still blinded. If you want to help some of these children with additional supplies of socks and underwear let me know please. I will be visiting them this summer at a camp. This orphanage is graduating 10 orphans and three may be coming to our ministry at the end of August. Sergei and Alesha have been attending our VTC for the past year studying English and possibly one named Oleg. Tatiana and I talked to three of them this week. ***Pray that God would bring them to us and they would see this opportunity as a blessing to become productive, educated and Christian citizens in Russia.***



Danya, Kira, Vladik and Alex

The Harbor

“When we believe God, we begin to see what he wants us to see. We face pain and setbacks, which are requirements if we are to mature as Godly people. Challenges and struggles develop essential qualities of moral strength and insight that we need to succeed in the tasks God has put before us.”- Harvey Hook. The school year is almost over and it has been quite challenging year for our Harbor family. In the midst of struggles, the Lord has been working in the lives of our residents and graduates. This year we began with twenty residents and by May there are only fourteen. It is sad, but God is still at work. On the bright side, our ministry will be celebrating nine years! It is hard to believe God opened the doors of this mission almost a decade ago.

Updates on some of our residents

Pasha, who is one of our current residents, came to us with several addictions. Although he has been delivered from some, our staff has spent tremendous amount of time trying to help him to deal with his long-term addiction. It has been a challenge for them to connect with him, because they have never gone through what Pasha has. One blessing is Hope church. Hope church has several former addicts and Pasha is being mentored by a man named Sasha. It has been really good for Pasha because he is actually dealing with his addiction and getting better day by day. God is truly at work and Pasha loves going to Hope church and spending time with Sasha. ***Pray for continuous freedom from his addiction and that he would give his life to God. Pray that God would give wisdom to Sasha as he disciples Pasha.***

Sergei a current resident we met through VTC. While he was in the orphanage he was kept under strict rules, but as soon as he graduated he felt freedom and struggles against any kind of structure or rule. He has challenged the authority of practically every mentor at The Harbor. Thanks to Father Dmitri, an Orthodox priest who has taken Sergei under his wing, we are beginning to see a change. Praise the Lord! Sergei has never lived in a Godly loving community and even the concept of community is a foreign topic to him. We are trying to explain to him that God designed humanity to live in a community in order to help and love each other. ***Pray that God would give patience and wisdom to our mentors as they disciple Sergei and other residents so that they would be transformed by the Holy Spirit.***

One of our boys' residents, **Danya** unfortunately ran away from us about week and a half ago. He was adopted when he was five along with his sister. He never really bonded with his Russian parents. When Danya was ten, he ran away from his parents and lived on the streets for five years. He was rescued by the police and sent to a shelter. He ran away from every shelter where he was placed. About two months ago the government called Luba, our Russian Director, and begged our ministry to take Danya in. It was the Harbor or a juvenile detention. I was at a juvenile place for four months and I can tell you it is not a good place, so we took Danya in. He is a very hard working young man and seems joyful after all that he has faced. For an unknown reason he ran away and we do not know where he is. We reported to the police that he is missing. My heart breaks for Danya, because he needs a family so much and a disciple that would dedicate his/her life so that his life would be restored by the power of the Holy Spirit. I have been praying for two weeks now that God would bring Danya back to our family and we could minister to him. ***Please pray that God would bring him and until then keep him safe on the streets. As I am writing this note I want to cry because I know what it is like to live on the streets alone.***



Carol & Anya



Harbor family fellowshiping



Sisters: Masha & Nastya

Now we are preparing for the summer. Our VTC, Youth Club and dormitory #35 mission will be paused for the summer being because children will be in the summer camps. Our residential program will sustain as usual with lots of interesting activities. ***Pray that God would show us favor with orphanage authorities as we continue to select a new group of residents.*** This summer we want to find at least 16 new residents. Praise the Lord because we almost have a full group of boys that has been selected. Now we need to focus on the girls' group. ***Pray for productive and fruitful visits to different summer camps and a special time with the kids. Pray for our mission teams that will be coming in June and July.***

Harvey Hook writes, ***"If God does not become our first priority in life, it really does not matter how many people we help, how much money we give away, or how often we go to church. Jesus is the key to all that follows."*** This is the ultimate thing truth we want to teach our residents and graduates. God should be the first priority in their lives.

As you can see, a lot of things are happening and I pray you can see God's hand in everything that we do. We pray God transforms lives one at a time. Thank you for your prayers and we need them now more than ever. Thank you for your financial partnership so that we can continue to reach the lives of orphans.

Check out The Harbor website or Facebook for new photos.

Facebook name: Alex Krutov

Thank you so much for your faithfulness, commitment and passion.

Special thank you to Meadowbrook Christian Fellowship church and especially Leslie, Ali and Carol for their faithful service this May.

Blessings and love,
The Harbor & Alex

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