



Program for Humanitarian Aid is "Being Family"

Fall 2015 Trip Report

Another great trip is in the books. As usual, God prepared the way for us and gave us a productive trip. We started in Zaporizhia visiting Domik, our day center, and visiting with the orphanages and their directors. During our discussions with directors, we were able to evaluate their reactions to the ministry as well as lay the foundation for future mission trips. Each child at the orphanages in Zap was given a small gift sack that contained treats as well as some of the necessities in life.

One of the most encouraging things we have seen in Zap is the deepening of relationships with orphanage staff. From the directors, to the teachers, to the



maintenance personnel, we have made lots of new friends. These deepening relationships are providing greater levels of trust and new opportunities to change the lives of the children under their care. Looking at the work in Zaporizhia, it is hard to believe that Domik has only been open a year. It is hard to believe that our Family House has only been open since last summer. It is hard to believe that many of the children we love we only met 18 months ago.

Our next stop was Poltava. With the success we've been blessed with in Zaporizhia, PHA feels that we are being led to grow this ministry into new towns. Poltava is an area where we have gotten to know orphans through Eastern European Missions Summer camps. It is also an area that has a thriving church plant led by an energetic young preacher named Feda. We meet with two orphanage directors and reconnected with kids we've met over the last two summers. We are very excited about this area and ask for prayers about this possible expansion.



Our trip ended in Kharkov. Some of you may know, our ministry partner Tanya got married! She and her husband Vanya will live in Kharkov as he finishes school. We were honored to celebrate the wedding with them as well as visit three orphanages there. In Kharkov we have been able to connect with a congregation and are excited to see what opportunities will arrive to serve here as well.

As we end another exciting year with PHA we've see great success. We also see an ocean of need still in front of us. God is succeeding every day in changing lives in Ukraine, but there are still thousands of children not being served by groups like PHA. Thank you for helping make this work not only possible, but helping us grow as well.

To God be the Glory!!!

-Chris and Christy



A Prayer Request from the Field: from Andrey Belokonnaya



Maxim was born in April 1998. We got acquainted with him while he was in the 9th grade at the orphanage. That was the last year of studying in the orphanage for Maxim.

The thing we saw at the beginning of our acquaintance was the super disobedience of this teen. Practically all Maxim's teachers and guardians while talking about him were saying that he has a bad heredity and he is hopeless most likely. We found out that Maxim sometimes gets into the psychiatric clinic as several times he was cutting his wrists trying to kill himself.

We were able to get acquainted closely with Maxim or, so to say, to look at his behavior more attentively during the Children's Bible camp in the beginning of the summer 2015. The impressions were awful. Maxim was not listening to the guardians of the orphanage, he was almost deaf to our requests. His nicotine addiction was 100% seen, and he was not

hiding his wishes to drink alcohol and use drugs.

At the end of the summer, Maxim and I visited the trade school to work on the future step for his studies. During this short period of time, Maxim was able to fray my nerves again. The documents were accepted by the trade school, and when this question was solved, I said not aloud, but in my heart, "Glory to you, Lord! I will never see this Maxim again!"

The fall came, and a new school year started in the orphanages. Kids began visiting Domik again. We, as well as the kids, were happy that we could spend time together again. From time to time, graduates came to visit us as well.

And I received a message from Maxim: "May I come to visit you at Domik?"

Everything I was thinking about at this moment was "Why? Lord, why do I need this person? You know him, and You know how hard is it for us to cope with him!"

But I was not able to say no. God answered my questions, reminding me what I've been talking about with the directors of the orphanages. One of the key phrases I say to all the directors of all the orphanages is that "we need to get acquainted with the kids more closely now, while they're in the orphanage, so that when they graduate, they will know they're not alone in this world, and they have somebody to ask for the help. Let us give kids hope right now, when they are still in the orphanage." My God told me then, "I know your attitude towards this guy, and you know Mine." What could I have written to Maxim as the answer except for "Come!"?

From the beginning of Maxim's visits, there was nothing except for breaking the rules. He was breathing out the smoke and throwing away the cigarette right before entering Domik. Several times he was going out with some of the kids to smoke. The guardians that were coming with the kids were just shrugging shoulders. Every time Maxim was coming to Domik, I was talking to him and was asking not to come if he doesn't want to change. I might have thrown him away from Domik and forbid him to come, but there was no place for my feelings. I was praying and hoping that God would change this young man. There was one time when Maxim realized that he was on the verge of ending communication with us that he became quieter. Later, he told me on the phone that he was sorry for his behavior, and after that, he started apologizing when he entered Domik to visit.

I was not keeping myself away from him. I even started to rejoice a bit when he was coming. We were shaking hands and hugging as with everybody else visiting Domik. I've understood that God was answering my prayers by teaching me to love Maxim the way he was. Many kids and adults were taught to behave in Domik through Maxim as by looking at him, they could see what they should not do!

Once, Maxim came to me and quietly asked me to help him. I agreed. He took an old crumpled photo out of his pocket. There was man and woman standing outside the house and a little fair-haired boy in front of them. On the photo, the place behind the people was circled with a pen. "Do you see the inverted cross behind my parents?" Maxim asked me.

I told him what I saw. On the corner of the house where his parents were standing was plaster square edging. Between these edges were horizontal cavities and, in front of the corner, most likely, was a spade with a wooden handle. What seemed like a cross on the photo was a crossing of the spade handle and wall cavities.

"So, that is it... I always thought that everything is like that because of the inverted cross there..." said Maxim.

At that moment I started to realize that this guy, more than likely, for a long time had been searching for at least some explanation for all the hardship in his life, even mystical explanation. I asked Maxim if he was the little boy standing with his parents on the photo. He said it was his brother. The answer for my next question gave me a clearer understanding of why Maxim is the kind of the person we know him as.

"When did you see your parents for the last time?" I asked. "Never..." answered Maxim.

That evening I told my wife Marina that nobody ever loved Maxim. That's why this child grew into the kind of teenager he became. Since then, my frustration towards Maxim has been totally "broken". Every time we pray in Domik with kids and Maxim, I ask God that He lead away any evil from us and especially from Maxim. The children and Maxim say "Amen!"

And you know what? Once in Domik Maxim came to me and said "You see, I do not go out of Domik to smoke anymore!" And later, coming to Domik, he was telling me that he's trying not to smoke long before visiting us. And that was the truth. There was no cigarette smell. He was also saying that he would like to quit smoking and drinking alcohol.

Maxim is not a silly guy. He will turn 18 soon, and it is so sad he's standing on the verge of the abyss right now. He was led to this point by many events in his life, and for some reason, I'm sure that many of these events were bad.

Our dear Christian family in PHA and all participating in PHA ministry, you should know that in showing Christian love towards orphans we, first of all, are making good memories in their lives. The possibility of these children moving not to the edge of the abyss, but to the heaven, multiplies with our ability to start showing them as much love as we can and doing this as early as possible.

I ask for your prayers over Maxim and his life.

-Andrey

Story of a Child: by Tanya Belokonnaya

During the summer of 2015, we met several orphans through camps. When you meet an orphan at the summer camp, there is a feeling that you'll never meet them again, especially when the camp is not in the city you live in.

That's not because you don't want to see them anymore, that's because you probably won't have the ability to do that. Even if you have time and money for a long trip to the other city, you can't do that as often you wish because of the distance. Moreover, you can never be sure that the same group of kids will go to the same camp next summer, so the possibility of meeting them again approaches zero.

We, as an organization, were blessed with a great opportunity to see the children from our summer camp. Their smiles and hugs touched our hearts. We were also introduced to the boards of the orphanages at which they live. Finding out the dark backgrounds of the cheerful youth we work with causes a lump in the throat. Most of them were found in creepy places, hungry and dirty;

"What shall these kids accept as a normal part of their young lives"

some were even hiding under the beds before the time came for their so-called parents to be deprived of their parental rights.



Among all the stories, I was mostly concerned about Sasha's. She's in the 7th form now. She is a nice and pleasant girl, tall and very skinny. What we found out was that her mother was always drunk and had lots of men in her home. The board of the orphanage had a fear that if they did not take her out of there, she would be raped. More than that, every Monday when she got back to the orphanage she was fainting – nobody fed and took care of the girl on weekends. Can you imagine how that young growing body felt? Not to mention the "home" she was to live in. What should these kids be forced to accept as a normal part of their young lives?

Fortunately, Sasha was taken to the home-type orphanage, and her biological mother was deprived of her parental rights. She started a new life at home and a new school. I hope and pray for many more good things to come into her life and change it for the better, fading away all bad experiences and memories.

-Tatiana Belokonnaya

School for the Deaf Hearing Program



For those of you that have followed the Ukraine School for the Deaf (SD)-Hearing Program since its inception in 2003, thank you for your wonderful support. This has enabled us to test, fit, and present without charge well over 600 hearing aids to the deaf students (ages 4 to 17) in seven schools for the deaf throughout Ukraine.

With the war in eastern Ukraine and the occupation of Crimea we have lost three of these schools and have little chance that we will ever be able to return to those locations. Time will tell.

Our just completed trip (November 2015) to the mid-section of Ukraine has given us new opportunities to help deaf children in three new locations.

As of today, there exist a need for over 150 hearing aids in these three schools for the deaf, and we have pledged 60 instruments to be ready for students for our April 1, 2016 trip. We will arrive as a team to evaluate, test, make ear molds, fit, and adjust these instruments for the moderate and profoundly deaf students at these locations.

If a child cannot hear, they cannot talk, and without those two major essentials, a deaf student has little chance for a job, a profession, or a chance for "normal" life. This is why we prioritize the list of those getting hearing aids in the following order: (A) Those that are 14 to 17 years old who will be out on the street within months. Every day that a student can hear and talk increases that student's chance for actual survival. (B) Those students between the ages of 10 and 14 years old. (C) Those students between the ages of 4 and 9 years of age who have many months before they are out of the school for deaf. They have the best chance of all.



Hearing Program Team in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine



The success of this program depends on people just like you who will donate the needed \$250 for each hearing aid. Your photograph will be taken and given to your student when they are wearing the new aid. Then a photo of the student will be taken which will be returned to you their sponsor. You both have photos that are held with honor by both of you.

Please sponsor a deaf child and give them a lifesaving chance.

Please make your \$250 check to PHA with the notation of "Hearing Aids" at the bottom left.

-John Sims, PHA Founder

Family Time: by Andrey Belokonnaya

During the lessons in Domik we've already talked about the human physical sphere, the topic of new lessons is "the social sphere." To intrigue my class, at least a bit, I had to come to the conclusion with them through the questions and answers that sexual relationships between people are a part of the social sphere as well.

Now these teens are at that age when the topic of sexual relations is very interesting for them, and students like mine are always ready to joke and giggle about this topic. "As we came to the conclusion that sex between people is a part of the social relations, tell me, where does the knowledge of how to do this and eagerness for it comes from?" – I asked.

I've heard several options of the answers, but paid attention to the one of them especially. "People were watching the animals and decided to repeat their actions!" I'm even happy that there was such conclusion. This gave me the opportunity to remind that we were created by God after His image and likeness, as it is written in the Bible, and we dominate the animal world. If our behavior, and sexual relations especially, are oriented with the animals, we stoop to the animals' level, and we live as animals on the level of instincts. I say that animal instincts help animals to continue their generation, that giving birth and bringing up offspring is the main instinct of male and female animals alike. I then asked, "Why do WE need this?"

Looking in the kids' eyes and at their reaction, you see that they do not like to be animals. Somewhere deep inside, in the mind, heart, and soul, they understand that they're the highest creation of the Lord. And now almost everybody answers "That's love!" I was waiting for when the kids would start talking about love.

Now in our language, we have only one word for "love," and maybe, that's why it's hard for us to explain our feelings connected with this emotion. I, as a believer, read the Bible and discuss what I know from the New Testament, which was written in Greek first. There are several words in Greek denoting "love".

I write several words on the board: "philio", "storge", "eros" and "agape". Without special explanations, kids understand what is "eros". They say that sexual relations are bound with eros.

"What about my grandma, how shall I love her?" asked Tanya, the 2nd year trade school student. I answered her question. "Greeks called love between relatives and close people as "storge". So you would have said to your grandma, "We have storge."

I didn't hear any options for "philio" love from the kids. I've told them that "philio" is friends' love. This love is known and appreciated by God. Jesus Christ calls his disciples as friends saying that a true friend is ready to die for his friend. I hugged



"I was ensured that PHA and our family's ministry changes the lives of these kids."

and kissed Maxim on the cheek, he was standing next to me and then I asked the kids if “my action looks like eros, or do we have storge with Maxim? What do you think?”

“No, no, no, no, no, no!” all the kids were answering. I told them that I have a strong wish that all the kids would have a real friend and know “philio,” the love of real friendship.

So then the time came to talk about “agape”. The children found out that “agape” love is often recalled in the New Testament. Agape is a hard love, the one God loves with, hard as in it is unconditional. If you love with this kind of love, everything you do is aimed at the good of the one receiving this love. You have to struggle through your will and wants and interests and humble yourself. God died on the cross showing us His agape love. God asks and teaches us agape in all the spheres of our life.



Several days after the lesson in Domik, when I came to the orphanage to take three 9th formers home for the holidays, I was assured that PHA and our family’s ministry changes the lives of these kids. All of the kids were greeting and hugging me while meeting. Yegor came close, hugged me and said, “Andrey, we have ‘philio’ with you!”

You should know how my heart rejoices at this moment! This teen found the way to tell about his love aloud. I’ve never heard a confession of love from Yegor before.

May these kids have “philio” with us, probably they won’t be able to show “storge” towards us, but I believe that there is a little spark burning up that will be able to flame “agape” love in their hearts.

-Andrey Belokonnaya

From the Domik Kitchen: by Marina Belokonnaya



Syrniki (fried pancakes): Our family's favorite meal!

Makes 4 portions:

- farmer cheese - 500 g
- eggs - 2
- vanilla sugar - 1 teaspoon
- sugar - 100 g
- semolina - 2 spoons

Mix all the ingredients. Tough dough should be divided into equal balls. Pour semolina on the table and roll the ball in it, making flat form 1cm high. Fry in the frying pan both sides with oil. Put the pancakes on the plate pouring powder sugar on them. Serve with jam or jelly. Enjoy your meal!

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FIGHT LIKE



Who will you spend your Christmas and New Year with?
Will it be your family?

Family is a blessing that orphans in Ukraine don't have.

The love, care, support and someone sharing Jesus are all missing from their lives.
The safety, security and peaceful feeling of family are almost unimaginable to them.

You see, the children served by PHA are in a battle,
a battle against suicide, homicide, prostitution, and prison.

They are in a fight for their very lives.

They need family to protect them. To offer them safety. To give them support.
To give them strength to battle the tragic futures they face.

To give them hope.

Please pray for them. Please be their family.
Offer them the love, care, support and protection like they are YOUR family!

This holiday season please consider joining the PHA family through an easy end of year, tax-deductible donation.

Fight for our kids. Be a warrior for them. Be family!

We are always looking for new opportunities to share PHA’s ministry.

We are looking to share this work with:

- Church Groups
- Sunday School and Bible Study Classes
- Ladies or Men’s Groups
- Organizations Large or Small
- Any Other Group of People
- Individuals

Our supporters and prayer warriors are our PHA Family, and we are constantly looking for ways to grow! If you know of someone or a group who would like to hear more about our work, please let us know.



**Program for Humanitarian Aid is
“Being Family”**

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PROGRAM FOR HUMANITARIAN AID (PHA)

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I WANT TO JOIN THE PHA FAMILY:

_____ **Prayerfully**

_____ **Financially through a one-time donation**
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_____ **I would like to be contacted with more information about PHA**

_____ **Financially through monthly recurring donations**
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_____ **I know someone who would like to hear about this ministry**

Donations can also be made through the PHA website: www.programforhumanitarianaid.org