

Reaching those at **Risk**

Eastern European Outreach's vision is to reach children at risk.
Eight hundred needy youngsters are sponsored in the Ukraine.

Story and photos by Tom Price

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Ed Canyes, an air traffic controller from CC Fort Lauderdale, spent the day with Ira and Inna, two Ukrainian sisters, after meeting them at the Sunday service at Calvary Chapel Kiev. Several years ago Ed felt compelled to support the younger sister through EEO. Now they were meeting in person for the first time. Ed shared the Gospel with them. "I've never led anyone to the Lord before," he honestly told the women, "but I feel God leading me to share how Jesus Christ has radically changed my life. He can do the same for you." Instead of stumbling through the Scriptures, every Bible verse fell neatly into place. Both sisters listened intently. They were eager to pray with Ed and accept Christ as their personal Savior.

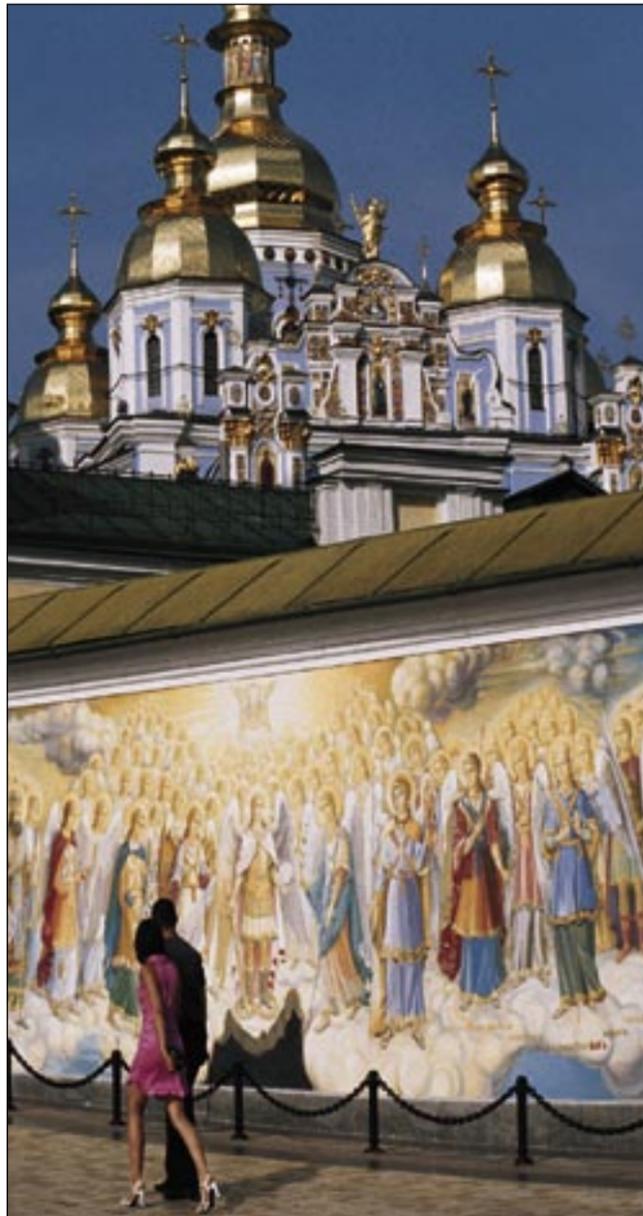
Ira and Inna's father had died soon after the Chernobyl nuclear plant sent a cloud of radioactive dust through the surrounding area in 1986. He had worked as a lumberjack in the nearby forest, unaware

Minister to the widows and orphans, the poor and the abandoned.

James 1:27

of the deadly poison seeping into his body. Nine years ago their mother was killed in an automobile accident. Rather than sending Inna to an orphanage, Ira, the elder of the two, ended her education and took a job as a cook. The support Ed and others from America provided offered the girls a chance to survive.

Ed looked at the cakes the women had baked in anticipation of his arrival. Inna had set out the good china that had been passed down through generations and kept Ed's teacup filled. He knew that no expense had been spared for his coming. In eastern tradition, shoes were left outside the door and slippers were provided for guests. Inside, rugs with Slavic designs adorned the walls of their



Murals adorn buildings in front of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the capital city of Kiev.

cramped residence, and pictures of family times before Chernobyl showed two smiling young girls with their parents.

Several years before, Ed and his wife, Charlene, had heard a presentation from Jeff Thompson, the director of EEO. A missions pastor at CC Murrieta, Jeff spoke of the need for American sponsors for the children of Chernobyl. Pictures of children from the region were displayed on a table. Inna caught Ed and his wife's attention. They understood that their \$23 monthly support definitely reached the children.

"I would never have guessed that someday I would be in the Ukraine, face to face, with the girl in that picture as she accepted Christ as her Savior," concluded Ed.

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 1 John 3:17

Scott Hintze, from Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale, was also in Kiev that night. He was visiting with an 11-year-old Ukrainian



Ed Canyes, CC Ft Lauderdale, enjoys being the guest of honor in the home of the child that he sponsors, Inna Kostretskaya, (middle). Her sister, Ira, (left), sacrificed her schooling to work fulltime as a cook when their parents died in order to care for her younger sister.



Grant Harris, CC Ft Lauderdale, has journeyed to the Ukraine for several years to visit a child that he and his wife, Suzanne, sponsor. While there, they taught a group of young girls attending the EEO camp.



Ed Canyes, CC Ft Lauderdale, with Sasha Andryshina, EEO camp director outside Kiev.

girl, Tanya Kabinets, and her family. She is one of two children he sponsors through EEO. Scott is a pilot for Delta Airlines and helped pioneer a Calvary Chapel in Moscow

soon after the Iron Curtain fell. After returning to America, he began sponsoring children and has been able to visit them on his trips to Russia.

“Her Bible is just worn out,” Scott said of Tanya. “It is so exciting to see; it just blesses my heart.”

Tanya had given her life to Christ after meeting George Markey at CC Kiev several years before. Immediately, she began an intensive Bible study and spiritual walk. Her family life is burdened. Her mother, a former schoolteacher, is paralyzed from a stroke, while both her father and brother are infected

with tuberculosis. Her older brother died of the disease. Their particular strain of TB is drug resistant, and Scott is concerned that Tanya will contract it because it is air-borne and highly contagious.

“Without the EEO support, they wouldn’t have anything,” said Scott. “No one is able to work in the family.” Through EEO, Scott has purchased stronger medicines that arrest TB. Otherwise victims experience a slow, lingering death.

“God loves Tanya so much,” said Scott, “that He brought me into her life. Not that I am anything, but God knew that I would share the love of Christ with her family. This little girl traveled to Calvary Chapel by herself and committed her life to the Lord.”



Ukrainian children at the EEO camp enjoy acting out Christian songs.



Scott Hintze, CC Ft Lauderdale, visited the family of the child he sponsors. He and Tanya enjoyed picking and eating raspberries.

When Scott arrived at the family’s dilapidated residence, Tanya ran to greet him, while her mother limped slowly to the door, her arm hanging uselessly at one side. She tried to show her excitement, but because of the paralysis, only one side of her face could exhibit a smile.

Tea and cookies, a delicacy for the important guest, were served outside to escape the oppressive indoor temperatures. After a stroll in the family garden, where Scott and Tanya picked raspberries, Scott got another chance to share Christ.

“Jesus also came that we could live life more abundantly,” added Tanya. Scott was thankful for Tanya’s boldness but wanted to be sure the family understood that the abundance the Bible spoke of might not be tangible.

As the evening progressed, unrelenting mosquitoes eventually chased everyone back inside. “Praise God that you are in my life,” Tanya told Scott as he prepared to leave.

Scott was in the Ukraine at a retreat EEO holds throughout the summer for disadvantaged children, especially those impacted by the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl. Children experience the love of Jesus, most for the first time, and learn about God through Bible stories and teachings. EEO pays for the children’s travel and expenses, with a different group coming every two weeks. CC Kiev staffs the volunteer force as different churches from America send teams.

Not only were the children taught about God’s love, but they were able to share with children from area camps not affiliated with EEO. Scott accompanied the group that visited another camp to sing songs and perform skits. They were cautious in how they presented their program since they were uncertain of the response from the other campers. But the reaction to the Gospel was astounding.

“No one wanted to leave,” said Scott. A threatening rain cloud approached from the southwest, and lightning preceded claps of thunder. When a light rain began to fall, several teenagers huddled in a gazebo, and Scott answered their questions about Jesus.

Vitalia Brukhanskaya, from CC Kiev, translated for him when he ran into problems with the extent of his knowledge of Russian.



Scott Hintze relaxes with one of the EEO children.



Janice Evans, Calvary Worship Center in Colorado Springs, with Sergei, a 13-year-old Ukrainian boy, one of several that she sponsors and guides spiritually.

“You could see the love of God on everyone’s faces—they were all smiling,” said Scott.

“When can you come back and tell us more?” the teenagers asked. “It was amazing to see how God put such an immediate hunger in their heart,” said Scott.

“The teenagers sensed that these Christians cared enough about them to spend time with them,” said Vitalia, the translator. “So

many people in the Ukraine have never heard about God. That is such an important message to send back to America.”

***A man’s heart plans his way,
But the LORD directs his steps.***

Proverbs 16:9

“I felt death was stamped on my forehead,” recalled missionary Janice Evans.

Previously Janice had traveled to the former Soviet Union on short mission trips. Trained as a physical therapist, she had felt called by God to give up her job in America. She moved to the Ukraine to serve as a missionary for Calvary Chapel Kiev and EEO. Her home church, Calvary Worship Center in Colorado Springs, supported her.

Before departing, Janice’s world collapsed, at least in her mind. The diagnosis was mul-

tiple sclerosis. How could God allow this to happen just as she was about to serve Him on the mission field? After feeling sorry for herself for awhile, Janice experienced a total surrender to God’s sovereign plan in her life.

The words of the apostle Paul in Galatians 2:20 relate to her new outlook as she serves Him in Eastern Europe. ***I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.*** Janice’s initial feeling of being condemned with MS coupled with her fear of radiation contamination in the Ukraine was lifted from her, and a newfound sense of living life to the fullest and serving Him remained in their place.

Janice immersed herself in learning the language and no longer felt constrained by her own agenda. Close friendships were made. Soon she could communicate in Russian and teach Bible studies.

There were many children at CC Kiev in need of mentoring. Her heart was broken as she saw their plight. Today, teenagers look to her as a surrogate mom. She shapes their lives, both spiritually and practically. Janice



Jeff Thompson, director of EEO, is the center of attention with his video camera as he captures images at a boys prison in Priluki, Ukraine.

sponsors four children through EEO and ministers to girls at the university.

Many of these teenagers even call me Mom!” Janice said with a smile. ☺

In addition to the Ukraine, EEO sponsors 400 children in Kosovo, with over 250 on the waiting list.

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Call to participate in a summer Bible camp or sponsor a child.



Valya Mikolaychuk (left) tells children from another camp about Jesus. After attending a Calvary Chapel and several EEO camps the young Ukrainian woman is able to share her testimony and the Gospel with others.