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Micaiah Ministries



Family Time by Melissa Sylvis

I recently traveled to Russia with Micaiah Ministries knowing this trip's only agenda was to spend what Todd likes to call "family time" at Restoration house with the staff and residents.

When we arrived the young men and women that live there were so excited to see Kent and Todd. It was a sweet homecoming, everyone exchanging warm greetings and hugs.

The atmosphere there is warm. That's the only way to describe it. I immediately felt completely at home. The residents and the staff work together to keep Restoration House clean, everyone fed, and most importantly everyone included in what is going on. There is no gap between those giving and receiving care, they are a family.

That of course allows for what we all experienced growing up. There are real problems to be solved,



Olia, Dasha, Nastia, Masha and Missy just finished decorating the tree in Restoration House's "Little Sister"

real conflict between people who love each other. But just like any family, they work through those things. They sit down and talk them out. I found that the level of open communication between everyone made it easy to see when someone was struggling with something and needed help.

It was so clear to me how deep the wounds of their past still cut them, but even now as I weep when I think of some of their stories, I also feel great hope because against all odds, they are coming back to life because of the love and support that they are receiving at Restoration House.

Every day there were group devotions. We didn't just read a few verses. Those girls wanted discussion. When we talked about forgiveness, they were open and honest with me about the things that have happened in the past that they still struggle to let go of.

Every day Todd would turn on a variety of Christmas music. The trees, lights, and homemade decorations completed the feel that there was about to be a celebration. In Russia their New Year's Celebration is much like our Christmas here in the States. They exchange gifts and Father Frost makes an appearance. (At Restoration House Santa comes to visit.) I have to tell



Modeling their new robes



Youth ages 13-24 attending Micaiah Ministries Restoration House Christmas party

"A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling." Psalm 68:5

INSIDE - PICTURES AND UPDATE FROM THE CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Russia Quest 2012
June 25 - July 6
\$2695 from NYC or DC

Youth Camp
Orphanages
Street Youth
Restoration House
City Tour

Information @ www.micaiah.org

you that the way those young men and women's eyes sparkled when they saw Santa makes me know that we couldn't have celebrated without him!

It was thrilling to get to see all the beautiful gifts provided by so many thoughtful and generous people. It is obvious that you have such a heart to touch the lives of everyone at Restoration House. For those who gave, I can tell you, you have done so much good with pajamas, slippers, robes, watches, sunglasses, shoes, sweatpants, and hoodies. The Spirit of God ministered through these simple treasures and completely changed hearts.

Everyone was so overwhelmed by the beautiful gifts they received. Most of them immediately left the room to change into some of the new clothes they had received. We all laughed and cheered together as they returned to model everything for us. It was the perfect night.

The celebration did not end there. The next morning Todd got up and turned on the Christmas music again and the air of excitement continued. We agreed that it felt a little like being caught up in the movie where the same day was repeated over and over again. It was a VERY good thing and we were happy to continue to experience the joy of the holidays as long as we could.

The following week was full of fun

and preparation for Christmas, (January 7th) another special day but in a different way for Restoration House.

On Christmas the Restoration House family puts on a party for street youth, orphans and other young men and women who are in need. It's one thing to receive a new start yourself, but you know someone is really grateful when they turn around and help others. The staff and the young people at Restoration House reach out every Christmas and touch the lives of others in need with love and the beautiful message of the hope of Jesus Christ that is changing their own lives.

The house was cleaned and furniture rearranged to allow for better traffic flow for the many, many guests they were expecting. Several of the young men drew and painted a backdrop for the play that they would all put on. Lines were learned, costumes chosen (from old clothing) and every day they practiced so that the message of their play would be clear and reach the hearts of their audience. They worked hard at putting everything together, but they did it with joy. There was no grumbling, no resistance to the extra work required. Everyone pitched in and did it gladly.

For the New Year's holiday the girls had allowed me to do their makeup and just add a few touches that made them feel "extra" pretty. They all glowed. They asked me to do the same for them for Christmas. But when the day came, I didn't quite understand why they did not dress up like they had for the



Showing off their new sunglasses, hoodies, sweatpants and shoes

New Year's party. I began to see, they were being compassionate toward the other young people who would be coming to the Christmas celebration. Those who were still experiencing a lot of the same struggles that had once marked their own lives.

I was never more pleased to see the obvious signs of growth in their hearts and their lives. It would be the easiest thing in the world to dress nice to show their friends how good their lives now were but that was not something that they wanted.

I watched the young people that live at Restoration House interact with the guests who came to the party. Even though they were all dressed in similar style clothing, there was something that the residents of Restoration House wore that made them so easy to distinguish from the others. There was peace in their eyes, peace that says, I am not the same as I was before, tragedy no longer defines my life. They were kind and friendly yet there was a slight separation between them because their lives are now taking very different paths.

As I watched the guests I could see a hunger in them. Not for physical food, there was so much of that at the celebration! No. During the play, or



New Year's Eve Dinner

ITINERARY

February 1 & 5
Faith Bible Chapel
Page, AZ
Pastor Manny Parks
928.645.3012

February 8
Richfield Assembly of God
Richfield, UT
Pastor Willard Coleman
435.896.6464

February 12, AM & PM
North Park Foursquare
Church
Roy, UT
Pastor Craig Wyjack
801.731.4295

February 12, AM
Ogden Christian
Fellowship
Don McPherson
Ogden, UT
801.394.5051

February 19
Family Worship Center
Clearfield, UT
Pastor Doug Brown
801.389.7970

February 26
Penryn Faith Center
Penryn, CA
Pastor Bob Owens
916.955.2722

February 28 & March 4
Church of the Redeemed
Vallejo, CA
Pastor Alvin Armstrong
707.373.6356

March 7 & 11
Iglesia la Roca
Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Pastor Manuel Torrez
909.944.7497

MARCH 13 – 29 RESTORATION HOUSE NIKOL'SKOYE, RUSSIA

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while a band played music, and even just when we were speaking to them, there was such need in their eyes for love and direction. I had the wild thought, "can't we keep them all?" I know that Kent and Todd would build forever to make room for every precious one of them. But not every young person is ready to receive the help that they really need. That thought may sadden you, and that was my immediate response.

But as I sat thinking, and talking to the Lord later that night, I realized that the seeds that we all planted that night will bring those young people back to Restoration House. They won't be able to forget the warmth, the compassion, the acceptance, and those memories, I believe, will lead them back home.

A home is waiting for them that will help them overcome the circumstances of the "hard" lives they now live and find a new life – the one that God has always intended for them. At Restoration House I know they will find the love of a family and of Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

I could be saddened that those young people left, but I am not. Instead I rejoice to know that they will be back, and that as much great work as Restoration House has already done, it is nothing compared to what they will do.

I don't have words enough to tell you all the wonderful experiences I had in Russia with everyone at Restoration House, but I can tell you that greater things are yet to come for this ministry, and for this family. It is an honor to have been a part of it, even in a small way. I look forward to continuing to work with them in the future and I look forward, with anticipation, to the expansion of God's work through them in Russia – what an amazing work it is!

Together, we ARE making a difference...
Together, we ARE reaching the world for Jesus!

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