

WEEK 30 • JULY 29, 2023

## Russia: Masha's New School

John 15:15—“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”

Masha [MASH-uh] was discouraged and felt she had no friends in school. Her mother asked Masha if she'd like to attend Zaoksky [za-OHK-skee] Christian School, an Adventist elementary school near their home. Masha wanted a new start in life, so she agreed.

Masha shyly walked into her new classroom. The school was pleasant, and the students were friendly. But Masha still felt lonely. At lunch, one of her new classmates sat with Masha and asked to be her friend. Then another girl told her that Jesus loves her and wants to be her best friend. Masha was surprised that the girls were so kind. Masha found a quiet place where she poured out her heart to God. From that moment on, Masha's life changed. She realized that Jesus really is her Savior and her Friend. Soon Masha found herself actively taking part in classwork, knowing that the other children would help her and be her friends.

Children come to Zaoksky Christian School for many reasons. Ivan says that he likes the happy teachers. Many other students say that they like that their classmates and teachers tell them that Jesus loves them. In fact, many students at Zaoksky have learned to love Jesus as their Savior, just as Masha did.

The school started with just a few students who met in rooms on the campus of Zaoksky University. Now it has 200 students and its own building. The school doesn't have to advertise for students because many people learn about the school from their friends and neighbors.

But Zaoksky Christian School's popularity has created a new challenge: space. The school can't accept more children until it is enlarged. Many people in the area want to enroll their children so they can have a Christian education. We can help build a bigger school for these children and those who want to come but can't right now.

Our tithes belong to God, so we return them to Him to support our pastors, missionaries, and other workers for God around the world. Our “Promise” offerings are also God's possession and should ideally be distributed to support the church's work locally and around the world. That includes schools, hospitals, clinics, and many other institutions that help lead people to Jesus. Let's covenant with God to regularly give a specific proportion or percentage of our earnings so that we can have a part in God's work around the world.

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