

# Introduction RuSSIA

In Russia one of the main beliefs of communism was that God did not exist. Most of the churches and cathedral were closed or destroyed, Christian holidays like Christmas and Easter were no longer celebrated, and people were not allowed to openly practice Christianity. Some people still believed in God in secret and told their children about Him, but many accepted the new beliefs of the government because to openly practice Christianity could result in being put in prison or worse! Since most of the people still wanted to celebrate a winter holiday, many of the Christmas traditions (giving of gifts, decorated tree, etc.) were continued and celebrated on New Years.

A little over 20 years ago, communism in Russia ended and a new government was formed, a more democratic form of government, and the name was changed to the Russian Federation. Some of the other nations that had been part of the Soviet Union regained their independence and many religious freedoms were restored. Churches reopened and

many missionary groups came to Russia and began teaching and sharing the truth about Jesus Christ.

The Wesleyan Church conducted some Christian youth camps in the summer of 1993 and the first full time Wesleyan missionaries moved to Russia in the fall of that year. Today we have three Wesleyan churches in Russia, two in the city of Vladimir and a third in the city of Ryazan.

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Russian Cuisine

Soap

Shchi

Borscht

Meat

Strogan-off

Chicken

Kiev

Bread

Pirozhki

Bliny

Vegetable

Beetroot

Turnip

National

Flower—chamomile

Animal—bear

Tree—birch

Red Square is bordered by four structures  
Kremlin—a large complex of buildings  
St. Basil's—orthodox basilica  
State Museum

Religion  
Russian Orthodox

29 Rubles =  
\$1US

Famous Russians  
Follow the arrow  
Kasparov—Chess  
Yul Brynner—actor  
Tolstoy—author  
Faberge—artist  
Horowitz—musician  
Stalin—dictator  
Sharapova—tennis  
Tchaikovsky—composer  
Mendeleev—scientist  
Pavlov—medicine

Russia is largest Country in the world There are 10 time zones in Russia  
Many Russians have a summer home called a Dacha  
Russian launched the first space flight—Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin  
Russians use the Cyrillic alphabet



Russian traditional clothes

# Children's Story

## Gelya's Story

Although I am an American, my wife Gelya is Russian. She was born during the time of the Soviet Union. As a young child she was never told that there wasn't a God, but God was simply never mentioned. Yet she always believed that there had to be some greater power, someone who created everything, but she just didn't know who or how. It wasn't until she was 14 years old that she heard the name Jesus for the very first time. By this time communism had ended and some mission groups had come to her city of Vladimir.

Gelya's aunt was working as an interpreter for a group of American Christians who had come to Russia to share their faith in Jesus. This group was putting on a series of services and one of the services was in Gelya's home town. Gelya's aunt (who had already become a Christian) invited Gelya and the rest of Gelya's family to attend the service.

At the service, some people sang beautiful songs and then a man preached about Jesus. But there was one other part of the service that greatly changed Gelya's life. A Russian teenage boy, about the same age as Gelya, came to the microphone and shared how Jesus had come into his life and changed him. It was because of his testimony that Gelya decided to become a Christian.

She had never been a bad girl, though like every child she had occasionally disobeyed her parents, but she knew that something was missing. The world around her seemed mean and cruel and life didn't appear to have any meaning. But when she asked Jesus into her life, He did change her. Life now had meaning. While she used to be fearful and anxious about the future, God gave her assurance. The world around her had not changed, but God had changed her, God had saved her, and God gave her life a purpose. Now Gelya and I serve together as missionaries and have opportunities to share the news about Jesus with other kids who, just like Gelya, have never heard the name Jesus.

### **What Should I do?**

1. Invite other kids to church and to the kids programs. (If Gelya's aunt had not invited Gelya to the service, she would have never heard about Jesus).
2. Tell other what Jesus has done for you. (If that Russian teenager had not shared his testimony, had not shared how Jesus had come into his life and changed him, then Gelya might not have become a Christian).
3. Pray for those who are not believers. (When the group of Americans came to Russia to hold these services, they had a lot of people back home praying for them and for the people who they would share with. Prayer is a very powerful tool that we have as Christians and it makes a big difference.)

# Memory Activity

## **Matthew 5:16**

**Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.**

Decode the verse.

Print a copy of the worksheet in the resource section on page 126 for decoding the verse. Make one for each child. As each child decodes the verse have them stand and say it.

Another way to do this would be to copy the worksheet onto a blackboard, whiteboard or large piece of paper. Then work together to decode the verse. Each child could do one letter. Have children try to guess the verse after each letter is added.



# Bible Lesson

## Let Your Light Shine

*You will need a lighted candle, or better yet, one of those candles that relights itself after it is blown out. You can buy these at grocery stores or where birthday party items are sold.*

(Light the candle) What do we use candles for? (to give light) When might we use candles? (when the electricity is off, at a birthday party)

The Bible tells us in Matthew 5 that we should let our light shine so that those around us will see our good works and praise our heavenly Father. What does that mean? It means that we should let other people see Jesus in us. How do we do that? (By being obedient to God, our parents, our teachers, etc. By being kind and helpful. By praying. By telling people about Jesus.) If people see those good things in our lives, they will see us “shining for Jesus” just like this candle. What would happen if we turned the lights off in the room right now? Let’s try that. (lights off) It’s not too dark, is it? Because the candle is bright, we can still see. That’s what happens if our light is shining for Jesus. There is a lot of bad stuff in the world, but people will see Jesus in us, and know how to find their way to Him because we can show them.

Sometimes, we still do bad things, don’t we? And then we’re not a very good light for Jesus, are we? (blow the light out) But we can say we’re sorry and Jesus will forgive us. Then, our light will shine again. (relight the candle – or the trick candle should relight itself.)

Finish the lesson by singing "This Little Light of Mine."

1. "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!"
2. "Hide it under a bushel? No, I'm gonna let it shine."
3. "Won't let Satan (blow) it out, I'm gonna let it shine."

Scripture: Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Dear Lord, thank you for sending Jesus to be the Light of the World. May we lift him up and let his light shine through us. Amen.

## Russian Game - The River

Best with a larger group (20 to 50 kids)

Setup: Have the kids (except 1 or 2) form two lines with the equal amount of people. Have each person take the hand of the person across from them and create a long arch or tunnel.

Start of the Game: The extra person (or persons) will be the runner. The runner starts heading down the tunnel under the arch (running but not out of control). Somewhere in the tunnel, the runner should grab the hand of someone forming the tunnel. That person continues with the runner until they reach the end of the tunnel and then form an arch like everyone else (become part of the tunnel). The person who had their partner snatched away then steps back and runs to the **front of the tunnel becoming the next "runner"**.

As the game proceeds, slowly add more and more runners until half of the kids are runners (forming a human river) and the other half are the arch. Note: Since runners rarely choose someone from the first pair of people, when it is time to add an additional runner, choose that first pair to become the additional runners.

There is no goal to the game other than having fun and expending energy.

Variations: Depending on the setting, you may add the following restriction: The runner can only choose someone they do not know (and once they have formed part of the tunnel, they can introduce themselves to each other).

If the adult supervisor knows the names of all the children, (to make it a challenge) when a runner approaches the front of the tunnel, the adult states the name of the person the runner should choose. This might create a little chaos, especially if the runner passes the person they are supposed to collect. In that case they should continue to the end and run back around to the front until they find the correct person.

Game Time

# Time for Prayer

- Pray for the Whitneys as they return to Russia with their young daughters. It is a lot different when you have to balance the various ministries with raising children. Pray also for health of the children, especially during the long cold winters.
- Pray for the youth that they minister to. Most of these kids know very little about Jesus and the Bible. Pray that God will give them wisdom to be able to clearly teach the Word of God.
- Pray for the entire mission team and for the Russian leaders as they plan to start new churches and possibly begin ministering in new town and cities.

# C t i v i t y

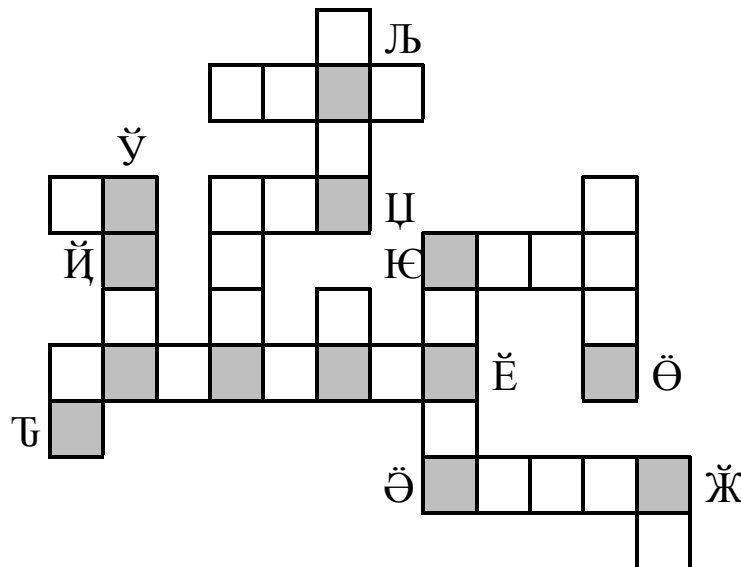
## Russia by the Numbers— Simpler Puzzles

Connect the question with the answer in the right column.

What year was the Bolshevik Revolution
How tall is the Elbrus Mountain
What is the population of Moscow
How many rubles equal one US dollar
What is width of Russia
How many time zones are in Russia
What year did communisms fall
How long is the Volga River
How long is Russia's border
How tall is the Moscow Tower
How many letters are in the Russian alphabet
How long is the railroad that runs from Kiev to Vladivostok
How many countries have borders with Russia

10,500,500
18
9920
1989
10
997
18510
33
1917
57,792
11085
29
3690

Now put the above numbers into the puzzle spaces below to find the keys to unlock the message under the puzzle. The shaded areas give you the numbers to find the letters. The symbols show you where to put the letters to unlock the message below.



- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1 | L  |
| 2 | IA |
| 3 | O  |
| 4 | R  |
| 5 | U  |
| 6 | S  |
| 7 | D  |
| 8 | V  |
| 9 | G  |
| 0 | E  |

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Љ Ў Ц

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Ю Ў Ғ Ё Ы

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Ө Ә Ў Ў Ж

Answer key in Resource section page 127



# Activity *Russian Word Search*

## Activity

Т	Д	Е	Т	С	Л	О	Р	Д	Я	В	З	С	Н	М
Е	Й	Е	Д	Э	Я	И	Л	Б	И	Б	Щ	С	Ш	О
Е	В	О	Т	Ш	И	Ш	Р	Е	Б	К	Я	Ю	Б	Х
И	О	П	Щ	С	Е	Ю	О	Ш	Я	И	Р	Ч	Ф	П
Н	С	П	У	Ф	К	Г	О	С	П	О	Д	Ь	С	А
Е	К	С	П	Ы	Э	И	К	А	Ж	Щ	Ю	К	И	С
С	Я	Ф	Г	А	Г	Ж	Й	Д	К	В	Б	О	Р	Х
Е	Д	Ч	О	Н	Ь	П	Е	Л	Г	Ж	Ж	Н	Х	А
Р	Х	Ь	Щ	П	А	С	Г	Е	А	К	Б	Е	Н	О
К	М	Ф	Я	Д	Т	Т	Ш	А	Я	Г	Ю	Б	Э	Б
С	Д	Б	Ъ	В	Я	Т	Б	О	Г	Ь	Е	Е	Ц	Р
О	Ч	И	О	У	Ж	Д	В	Ю	Ц	А	Й	Р	Ж	Ъ
В	Ь	К	М	Ч	У	О	Я	Й	Э	Ж	Ю	Э	Ь	А
З	Ж	М	М	Х	Р	И	С	Т	И	А	Н	И	Н	З
А	Б	Б	Г	Д	Е	А	Ч	Г	Е	Ц	Ф	Л	Ю	Ц

**Instructions:** words may be found vertically, horizontally or diagonally, forward or backwards

### Word List:

1. ИИСУС (Jesus)
2. РОЖДЕСТВО (Christmas)
3. РЕБЕНОК (Child)
4. БОГ (God)
5. ГОСПОДЬ (Lord)
6. БИБЛИЯ (Bible)
7. ХРИСТИАНИН (Christian)
8. ДЕТСКИЙ ЛАГЕРЬ (Children's camp)
9. ВОСКРЕСЕНИЕ (Resurrection)
10. ПАСХА (Easter)