

RUSSIAN LIFELINE NO. 275, THANKSGIVING & CHRISTMAS 2026

Dear Friends and Loved Ones,



Richard and Judy in front
of the Vyborg Christian Center

Praise the Lord! We have completed thirty-three years of service to the Lord, and now we are beginning our thirty-fourth year. We have changed only a little, but Russia has changed a lot! Following are a few highlights with more details available upon request.

The decade of the 1990s was tumultuous in Russia, but the country survived. The threat of "Y2K" in January 2000 brought few apparent changes to Russian society. However, a very significant change took place on January 1, 2000—that was when Vladimir Putin came to power as president.

During his first decade in power, Putin crushed the rebellious Chechnya people and absolutely stopped all news media from reporting anything unfavorable to him. In 2008 Russia invaded Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia. In 2014 Putin's forces invaded Crimea, Luhansk, and Donetsk in Ukraine. In February 2022 Russia began a major war against Ukraine in violation of at least ten international treaties. Putin then threatened nuclear war against any nation that comes to Ukraine's aid, which includes every nation that was formerly under Russian control until 1989.



Thanksgiving Sunday

The leaders of Russia deny Ukraine's right to exist. They insist it has always been part of Russia. The Orthodox Russian view of which territories belong to Russia includes about half the nations in Europe. The Russians consider the nations of Europe to be morally corrupt, and they see Vladimir Putin as the savior of morality.

Over the last two decades we have witnessed one new law after another being passed, each restricting missionary activity in Russia. Meanwhile, even though the border with Finland has been completely closed, Vyborg continues to be one of the major tourist attractions in northwestern Russia. Situated across from the 733-year-old castle to the east and the majestic statue of Tsar Peter the Great to the south, Vyborg Christian Center continues to operate as an evangelical humanitarian mission on a city square where 100,000 people pass by every year.

We have much for which to be thankful. In fact our Russian Christian friends have already celebrated Thanksgiving this year!

All for Jesus,

Richard & Judy Grout

HOPE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS
A DIVISION OF FEA MINISTRIES



Small church Christmas on the Finland border



Youth Meeting



Vladimir and Irina Nasedkin in front of Vyborg Castle



Youth Meeting During Power Outage



Men's Meeting

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