

Creating a Village of Hope

by Len Keever, Pastor, First Baptist, Dunn

God often works in neighborhoods to form and shape us; this was certainly true in my life. Being a Christian was a part of our community identity. As a child my faith was nurtured and encouraged by the examples of faith my neighbors demonstrated.

At the Village of Hope in Bucha, Ukraine, CBFNC is working with others to help create a Christian community in which children may be shaped and formed by God through a common witness. Imagine growing up in a place where Christianity is not the norm or where faith is spoken of in hushed tones behind closed doors. Imagine not having had parents, grandparents, and an extended family who share your faith in Jesus Christ.

What we are attempting to create at the Village of Hope is a neighborhood where children may

grow up with the advantages of a fostering Christian community. The Village of Hope is not an orphanage where children live in dormitories. It is a neighborhood where they grow up in a home. They don't have house parents to watch over them, they have a mother and a father, sisters and brothers who are committed to helping them grow up in a safe and faith-shaping environment. They aren't wards of the state; the children are family members loved and adored, celebrated and blessed. Their neighbors aren't atheists or agnostics; they are also Christian parents who are caring for and sharing in providing a place where the witness of faithful living may become a part of their story just as it has become a part of our own faith stories.

Soon, we hope to have as many as 40 children living in the Village

of Hope. Progress is slow, but steady. By God's speed we are right on schedule helping to create what God has called us to do. We are not just helping a child; we are participating with God in creating a Village of Hope.

Perhaps one day Maria or Sasha, Vlad or Lena will look back on their younger years and remember their neighborhood with fondness. When this happens they too will be grateful for all that God has done to help them to grow in Christ. Then they too will want to be good neighbors to someone else. I'm glad to be a part of this vision. Do you share it too?

Foster Families of Village of Hope

- A total of three families with 16 children (7 biological and 9 foster) now reside at VoH.
- Four more foster children are coming - the process takes much longer than we would want.
- Pray for all the families at the Village of Hope.
- Specifically pray for the Dershanovskiy family who is grieving the loss of Edward, one of their foster children, who had a brain tumor and died after unsuccessful surgery this past summer.
- Pray for the placing of more foster children.
- Learn more at www.cbfnc.org.

It's Raining ... Kids

by Jenny Folmar, Minister to Youth and College Students, Memorial Baptist Church, Buies Creek



clowns getting out of a small car in a circus trick.

By the end of the week, 140 kids attended the Vacation Bible School led by the 34-member mission team. The team included families, youth, and individuals from the church who ranged in age from the 4th grade to grandparents!

Katelyn DeVane, who worked with the story-telling team, said one little boy hugged her and asked her what was in her mouth. He had never seen someone with braces.

Amber enjoyed "swinging on the new swing with my friend Giovanni." The team built the swing-set from scratch. The new pine swing-set was a big hit with the children. "Kids jumped out the window to go swing during class,"

When the Memorial BC van pulled into Mount Zion Baptist Church in Independence, Belize one Tuesday afternoon in June, the windows were full of faces. The children piled out like

Claire said.

The mission in Independence that week was two-fold: in addition to VBS, our physical labor produced an expanded building with new Sunday School rooms for children, finished walls on the outside, restored doors, tiled bathrooms, and a new swing. For more detailed stories on this trip and to hear the experiences of the Memorial team members, you can visit the blog site: <http://memorialbaptistchurch.typepad.com/>.

Learn more about CBFNC & Belize at www.cbfnc.org.

