

Russia 2019 – Day 6

Richard Taylor

I am not out of my comfort zone in Russia - but I can reach out and touch the edge. Conversations go on that I have no idea what is being discussed. I can't even eavesdrop . Street signs - I am lost before the hotel door closes behind me. Menus in restaurants - forget it. I opened a menu and saw a picture of what looked so delicious I did not have to think about. When I asked for it, the waitress said was just a picture - they did not actually make it. You have probably heard enough about that. I told you our schedule would be different and it took us to where I could feel the edge of the comfort zone. We went to an orphanage for children with significant disabilities. The name of the place is so long I never did figure it out so I will just call it the orphanage. We were not allowed to take pictures. We went there because of Light of Hope which I have mentioned before. Some explanation is needed. Light of Hope is a church but it is also a religious organization which is not a church (Russian law is followed). The not church part was invited to help at the orphanage which they do once or twice per month. The grounds and buildings appear neat and well kept. The facility seemed to be far out in the countryside. The staff was pleasant and welcoming. We viewed children at several different levels of need. Some were bedfast who never walk and must be moved. Others exhibited behaviors that needed close monitoring. Some could walk and others could not. So we saw a wide spectrum of needs. We were not allowed to take pictures so I can show nothing. They with their caregivers put on a sort of production for us. I say sort of because the level of ability was very low. We could not do a lesson but Debbie had another great activity. She put a small treasure chest in a box filled with soft beads which they had to find. The point would have been that joy might be hidden. Then they put stickers on a paper. Most of them gave them to us. My souvenirs will be in my office. Seeing children like this is always hard. This is when we would like divine explanations but they are not offered. But it is great to see these children cared for and valued. When you bump your comfort zone in situations like these, remember that all human beings, even the limited and malformed are of infinite value to their Maker. You can appreciate that Light of Hope cares about their needs and understands their value. We left the orphanage and returned to New Corners and a home cooked meal of soup and chicken patties - delicious. Beach balls and jump ropes had the children busily active and happy. Leo gave a lesson on joy. I have no idea what he said because he did not need translation. The joy beads came out again. The rest of the day was routine including the "one at a time" serving in the restaurant. It is now 11:00 and time think about tomorrow. Another special visit awaits us. You will have to wait to hear what it is.



Image from John Roach