



Relevant Life Solutions - Empowering people through connecting and sharing resources. Real people. Real connections. Real resources.

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MIRACLES ABOUND!

How can I begin to re-cap all the ways God has worked through RLS – through YOU – in 2022? MIRACLES ABOUNDED! This year found RLS focusing largely on relief and support efforts for the Eastern European countries, Ukraine and Romania. From the onset of Ukraine's invasion, God has enabled RLS, through your incredible generosity, to minister in ways we could never have dreamed

possible. Our hearts and pockets opened not only to Ukrainian refugees, but also to our sponsored Romanian school that played a huge part in providing refuge to fleeing Ukrainians! In this newsletter issue we tell just a *small* sample of the amazing stories of how God used your contributions to alleviate need and suffering this year. Those needs are even greater now with winter's colder temps

arriving. We hope you'll consider making a monthly contribution commitment to Relevant Life Solutions as we continue aiding the precious, war-torn people of Ukraine. Thank you for being God's "hands and feet!"

Juliet Van Heerden
RLS President

MATTHEW'S COMPASSION



When seven-year-old Matthew heard about the war in Ukraine, he told his mom he wanted to do something to help. Matthew's idea was to build Lego hearts with the blue and yellow colors of the Ukrainian flag and sell them to raise funds for Ukraine.

Matthew's mother helped him by supplying materials and the cost of postage, as well as some social media advertising.

Matthew's campaign raised more than \$300, which he donated to Relevant Life Solutions for our work with Ukrainian refugees. But that's not the end of the story.

Someone on social media saw Matthew's Lego creations and his desire to help Relevant Life Solutions make a positive impact. That individual reached out to us and offered a donation of \$20,000 from their organization!

These funds have helped us at RLS be able to say, "Yes!" to so many requests and needs for help, from food, fuel and medicine for vulnerable Ukrainians in the Chernihiv region, to salaries, dental care and supplies for teachers in our mission school in Romania.

One child's heart, moved with compassion, has significantly and positively impacted the lives of hundreds of people. Everyone can do something. No gift is too small. God always honors compassion.

Thank you, little Matthew. You are an inspiration!



TWO SINGLE MOMS ESCAPE WITH CHILDREN

Lana and Sasha are Ukrainian women who lived in Kyiv with their children when the war began. At first, they couldn't believe what was happening. "It felt like a bad dream," Lana said. But as the days passed, they realized their lives were in danger and they needed to leave.



Lana escaped to Romania with her seven-year-old daughter Venus, and Buffy, the child's pet rat. The trip was exhausting and scary at times. But the Lord was with them and provided for their needs through Relevant Life Solutions. We were able to connect them with the director of the school we support in Romania and she offered accommodations for as long as they would need.

Sasha and her five-year-old son, Artem took a different route, but also ended up in Vaideu, Romania. They traveled through Moldova and were assisted by volunteers from ADRA, a disaster relief organization that has worked to help Ukrainian refugees at the borders of Romania, Poland and Moldova since the war began.



In May, Relevant Life Solutions flew both women with their children from Romania to Mexico, where they waited until their Humanitarian Parole applications processed. Finally, on June 6, the two families arrived in Florida! We welcomed them warmly and continue to support them in many ways as they establish themselves in America. Although they are grateful to be here, they continue to worry about their loved ones in Ukraine and wonder what will happen to them as the war continues into wintertime.



VOVA'S STORY

"It took seven months, but I finally made it!"

When Ukraine was attacked by Russia on February 24, 2022, seventeen-year-old Vova panicked. He knew he needed to leave Ukraine before his eighteenth birthday, or he could end up with a gun in his hands and no chance of ever joining his older brother, Logan in America.

Ever since Logan's adoption in 2016, he dreamed of his siblings also being able to come to America one day. God provided several miracles

that made it possible for Vova to escape Ukraine as an unaccompanied minor orphan. He stayed in many different places as he waited for his next opportunity.

Pastor Rick and his wife, American missionaries in Romania, took Vova into their home and treated him as one of their own grandchildren. As October came closer, they contacted another missionary family in Costa Rica and asked if Vova could stay with them until his paperwork processed for the Uniting for Ukraine program, which would allow Vova to come to America as a refugee when he turned eighteen. The family agreed and housed Vova until his birthday.

When Vova finally arrived in America, he was exhausted, but hopeful. Being with his brother is a dream come true. "I am so grateful for everything you have done to help me," he said via Google Translate.

Vova's story was made possible because of many prayers and financial contributions from supporters of Relevant Life Solutions. These funds helped provide for his travel expenses, documents, and necessities. Thank you very much for showing Christ's love in practical ways.





ROMANIAN SCHOOL RESCUES REFUGEES

Ever since my mother built a church in Vaideu, Romania nearly 30 years ago, I have longed to visit the site, which has expanded to become the only Christian school and safe house in the area. In April, André and I had the privilege of traveling to Romania and spending time with Vali Bordea, the visionary and founder of the project. Relevant Life Solutions has supported this ministry for many years, and now Vali and her family have helped with our efforts to house and protect Ukrainian refugees in Romania.

While there, we were able to assess some needs and speak with Vali about a plan for ongoing support of the school and

staff. After we returned home, we were able to send funds for teacher salaries to close the school year. Thanks to a generous donation, we were also able to pay back wages for the bus driver and maintenance personnel, as well as help one of the teachers with some dental needs.

We are looking for monthly sponsors for individual children's tuition. Please let us know if you would like to provide ongoing support for this little mission school in the middle of remote Romania, where the love of Jesus is spread through several villages one child at a time.

SMALL BUSES HELP HUNDREDS

For weeks after Russian military forces destroyed infrastructure in Chernihiv, Ukraine, Relevant Life Solutions supported a small team of volunteers led by Ruslan, a young Christian. Ruslan and his friends only had a couple of cars and bicycles, but were committed to taking food and medicine door to door to Ukrainians who were unable to evacuate the area, many of whom were elderly, ill, or had small children.

Relevant Life Solutions sent funds for necessities and fuel over several weeks as Ruslan's team grew. When they requested a big vehicle to evacuate refugees and take larger loads of supplies to those left behind, we began to pray for a small bus. Ruslan found a very good one for \$10,000. We put the word out on social media and very quickly raised the funds! What a blessing it was to be able to send the money to meet this need.



That bus has transported hundreds of refugees and thousands of pounds of food, along with medicine and blankets. We feel privileged to be able to partner with this team of young volunteers who bravely do the compassionate work of Jesus every day.

When the call came for a second vehicle, we were able to partner with another nonprofit, Sixteen 24 Ministries, to share

the cost and immediately send funds for a second van to do this important work.

God has opened so many doors and blessed us abundantly as we have supported the work of relieving suffering in Ukraine and helping refugees. As president of Relevant Life Solutions, I want to sincerely thank each person who has donated funds to this cause. We could not have done it and cannot continue to do it without YOU! Thank you.



CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS FUNDRAISE FOR RLS

Coming Soon!



Chloé Asks Questions
Author: Juliet Van Heerden

I am excited about two new Relevant Life Solutions resources! They are both picture books for children. One is finished and one is in progress. *Chloé Asks Questions* was released in June. It is the sweet story of a mother's unconditional love. This book is designed to be a gentle conversation-starter for interracial families of all kinds—foster, adoptive, biological, and blended.

The second book, *Princess Venus Far From Home* is currently being illustrated. This is the true story of two Ukrainian refugees who escape the war and cross the border into Romania. The book is to help raise awareness and funds for the war in Ukraine.



Princess Venus Far From Home
Illustration by: Sherrie Eichelberger



ANNUAL FINANCIALS

Thank you so much for your financial support of RLS. In the first ten months of 2022, you contributed \$85,965! \$68,049 of these donations were used to directly support Ukrainian refugees and Ukrainians still surviving inside the country. Some of the needs included trauma counseling, funeral expenses, travel expenses, dental fees, food, medicine, clothing, blankets, phones,

documents, and ongoing support for basic necessities. Funds were also used to support the school and work in Vaideu, Romania and to provide emergency roof repairs for an elderly victim of Hurricane Ian, as well as others in the USA who needed help during difficult times this year. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you for making all of this ministry possible through your kind donations.



JULIET SPEAKING

I've been invited to share hope with several audiences lately. In September, I shared the keynote, "Three Lessons

My 2023 calendar is open. If your church or organization is looking for a speaker, please consider my name. I especially love sharing my heart with young adults, women, and recovery-minded groups.

Juliet Van Heerden
RLS President

Learned the Hard Way" at the *Women for Christ* annual luncheon in Jacksonville, Florida. I was also invited to speak and sell books at the Orange Park United Methodist's *Deborah Circle* meeting later that month. In October, we had a Relevant Life Solutions table at the *Light Conference*, hosted by one of our partners, Sixteen 24 Ministries.



Hope isn't an emotion, it's a way of thinking.

- Brené Brown

