

Family Guide

July 2023
Russia



“Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,
and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.”

— Psalm 2:8, New American Standard Bible 1995



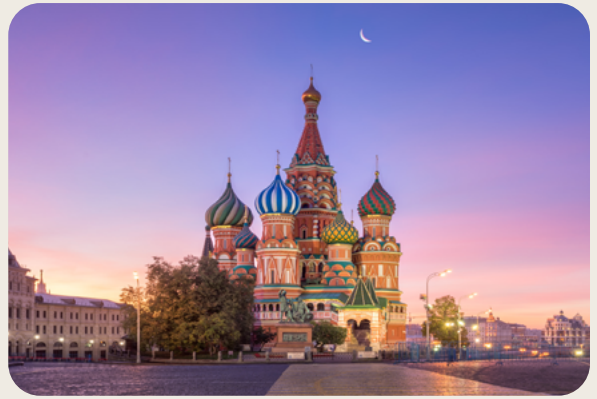
A One-Year Prayer Adventure!

Using this handy family guide, we will travel to a faraway country every month, learn about its people and culture and pray for them. We will focus on a different least-reached country in every guide. There are 12 family guides covering 12 countries in 2023—one for every month.

Why do we call these countries “least reached”? Many of the people in these countries have never heard about Jesus, or it’s difficult for them to hear about Him. Even though you won’t get on a plane to each country, when you pray, you join our adventure—our mission to make a difference in the lives of the people in each country.

The best part is you’ll always know what to pray for. This family guide gives you a prayer request for every day of the week. Moms, dads and kids everywhere will be praying for the same thing together too. Let’s get started by learning about this month’s country.

WELCOME TO Russia!



Russia used to be a part of a country called the Soviet Union. Long before you were born, back in 1991, the Soviet Union divided into 15 countries, with Russia being only one of them. You may be asking, why does this matter to us today? Good question.

Some of these countries don't get along with each other. In fact, Russia and Ukraine, countries that share a border, have been at war for over a year. No one likes war, and both countries are having a hard time. Russia is struggling because being at war is just very hard. Ukraine struggles because the fighting is happening in their country, and there is so much death and destruction. Join us in praying for a peaceful way to end the war soon. Pray, too, that God will open the hearts of people who don't yet know Jesus, so that they can put their trust in Him.



Fun Facts About Russia



Russia's most famous animal is the Siberian tiger, the largest cat in the world. It lives in the forests of eastern Russia. These endangered giants can grow to almost 10 feet long and weigh up to 661 pounds!



Russia is known all over the world for its ballet dancers. Have you ever seen or danced in a ballet, like *The Nutcracker*?



Russia is famous for its wooden dolls, called matryoshka dolls, which consist of many dolls that fit inside of each other. These dolls are inspired by daruma dolls from Japan (the country we prayed for in May).



Peter the Great attempted to modernize Russia and imposed a tax on beards in 1698. How many men in your family would have to pay a tax if they lived under Peter the Great's rule?



Russia and the United States are separated by just 2.5 miles of water. In fact, if you look in the middle of the Bering Strait, the stretch of water that separates the two countries, you'll find two islands: Little Diomedes and Big Diomedes. Little Diomedes belongs to the U.S., while Big Diomedes belongs to Russia.

Ready to pray for the people of Russia?

Last month we focused on two key points we saw in Psalm 136. Do you remember them?

1. Each of the 26 verses ended with **“His love continues forever.”**
2. The psalm also speaks about God’s power over all: **“God over all gods,” “Lord of all lords,”** and **“Only He can do great miracles.”** He is omnipotent, which means all-powerful!

Psalm 136 both begins and ends with **“Giving thanks,”** like bookends that hold books together on a shelf. God places great importance on giving thanks, whatever the circumstances. In fact, the Bible is full of verses where we are told to give thanks.

Being thankful is also a way to show kindness to the people you care about. As children, my brothers and I each received a small box of thank you notes from our grandmother for Christmas. In my family it was typical to send a handwritten thank you note to each family member that gave us a gift. Our thank you notes needed to be done by New Year’s Eve. Do you send thank you notes for gifts you receive?

God is the greatest gift giver of all. He created the planets, stars, flowers, animals and each of us. Because He loves us, He gave His Son, Jesus, to pay the price for our sins. He certainly deserves our thanks as Psalm 136 reminds us.

What are five things you can thank God for right now? Thanking God for specific things before you go to sleep is an excellent habit to build. Doing it as a family around the dinner table is another great practice.

Your 2023 Prayer Partner,

Lucinda

Please email me, or have a parent email me, if you have any questions or want to share what you are learning about prayer. I’d love to hear from you!
prayer@jesusfilm.org



01

Week 1: July 1–7, 2023

“For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son. God gave His Son so that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but have eternal life.”

– John 3:16, International Children’s Bible



Week 1 Prayers



■ Day 1

Russia is the largest country in the world. It’s so big that its borders reach into 11 time zones. You might need your dad or mom to explain a bit about that. Ask God to reveal Himself to people from each of the 180 people groups in Russia.

■ Day 2

Pray for wise and faithful leaders and counselors to make decisions that are good for Russia and its people.

■ Day 3

Pray that God provides money for Christian work to be done in Russia. That way, the workers can do their part in getting the gospel message to those who have never heard it.

■ Day 4

The Bible sometimes uses words about something we know to teach us about something we don’t know. Luke 10:2 talks about farmers (sometimes called laborers) who gather (harvest) ripe and ready-to-pick fruit and vegetables. It’s telling us more Christian workers, like farmers, are needed to go out and tell people about Jesus so they can be gathered into God’s family. God knows many would gladly say “Yes” and invite Jesus into their heart, if only someone would tell them about Him! Let’s pray for more Christian workers in Russia because Jesus wants us to.

■ Day 5

What do Christian leaders do? Well, they do a lot!

Here are some important things they do:

- They help new believers understand the importance of the Bible and obey it.
- They show new believers what it means to trust God with the help of His Holy Spirit.
- They teach new believers how to share the message of Jesus with others.
- And they train them to become leaders too!

Ask God to raise up new Christian leaders in Russia.

■ Day 6

Using Scripture is a great way to pray for yourself, your family and friends—not just for people far away. Pray this for the people in your life and for every Christian in Russia:

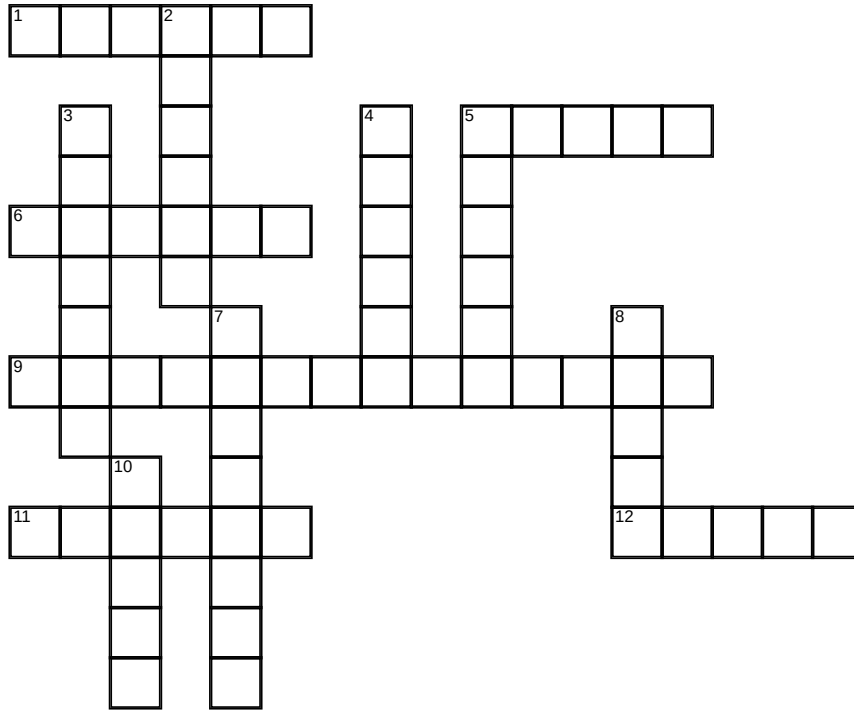
“You were raised from death with Christ. So aim at what is in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Think only about the things in heaven, not the things on earth.”

– Colossians 3:1–2, ICB

■ Day 7

Some people groups around Russia have very few Christians. Pray that Bibles, Bible studies and other tools will soon be created in the languages of these groups. That way, they too can know that the God of the Bible wants to be their friend.

Week 1 Activity: Crossword



Across

- 1 A popular video game invented in Russia
- 5 The national sport of Russia which is similar to ice hockey
- 6 _ Strait. Body of water separating Russia and the United States
- 9 Largest cat in the world that is popular in Russia
- 11 The capital of Russia
- 12 Matryoshka _. Russian toys that fit inside each other many times

Down

- 2 World's largest country
- 3 The biggest active medieval fortress in the world
- 4 Number of different time zones in Russia
- 5 A famous type of dance in Russia
- 7 The official Russian Church
- 8 Facial hair that Peter the Great taxed Russian men for having
- 10 Russia's fastest-growing religion

WORD LIST:

BALLET	DOLLS	MOSCOW	TETRIS	SIBERIAN_TIGER
BANDY	ELEVEN	ORTHODOX	BERING	
BEARD	ISLAM	RUSSIA	KREMLIN	

02

Week 2: July 8-14, 2023

"All the earth should worship the Lord. The whole world should fear Him."

— Psalm 33:8, ICB



Week 2 Prayers



■ Day 8

Let's praise God that new churches have been started in Russia! Pray He would inspire leaders and new believers to start even more churches. He knows exactly the right time for each one.

■ Day 9

Can God change the world in the blink of an eye? He sure can, if He chooses to. He sometimes chooses instead to use human beings (like you and me) to make changes in the world. For example, He used Moses to lead a huge number of people across a big desert to a new place to live. He used Paul to take the good news of Jesus to most of the known world. Guess what? He still uses people who are faithful and obedient to Him! Pray that the Christians of Russia will live boldly for Jesus and walk in His ways, so that they too can do amazing things in the name of Jesus their King.

■ Day 10

Sometimes it's helpful to hear about Jesus from someone who is just like you. Wouldn't it be nice if women and young girls in Russia could hear about Jesus from a woman or a young girl like them? Ask God for Christian women who can teach other women about who He is and how they can invite Him into their hearts. Pray that God would strengthen their faith in Him and help them become teachers of others.

■ Day 11

Pray that Russian people who do not yet know Jesus would recognize Him for who He is and see their need for Him.

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through Me.'"

— John 14:6, ICB

■ Day 12

People in healthy, growing churches sometimes decide to form two churches out of the one, sending the people in the new church to serve a different neighborhood. Let's ask God for healthy, growing churches full of people who want to reach even more people by dividing into two.

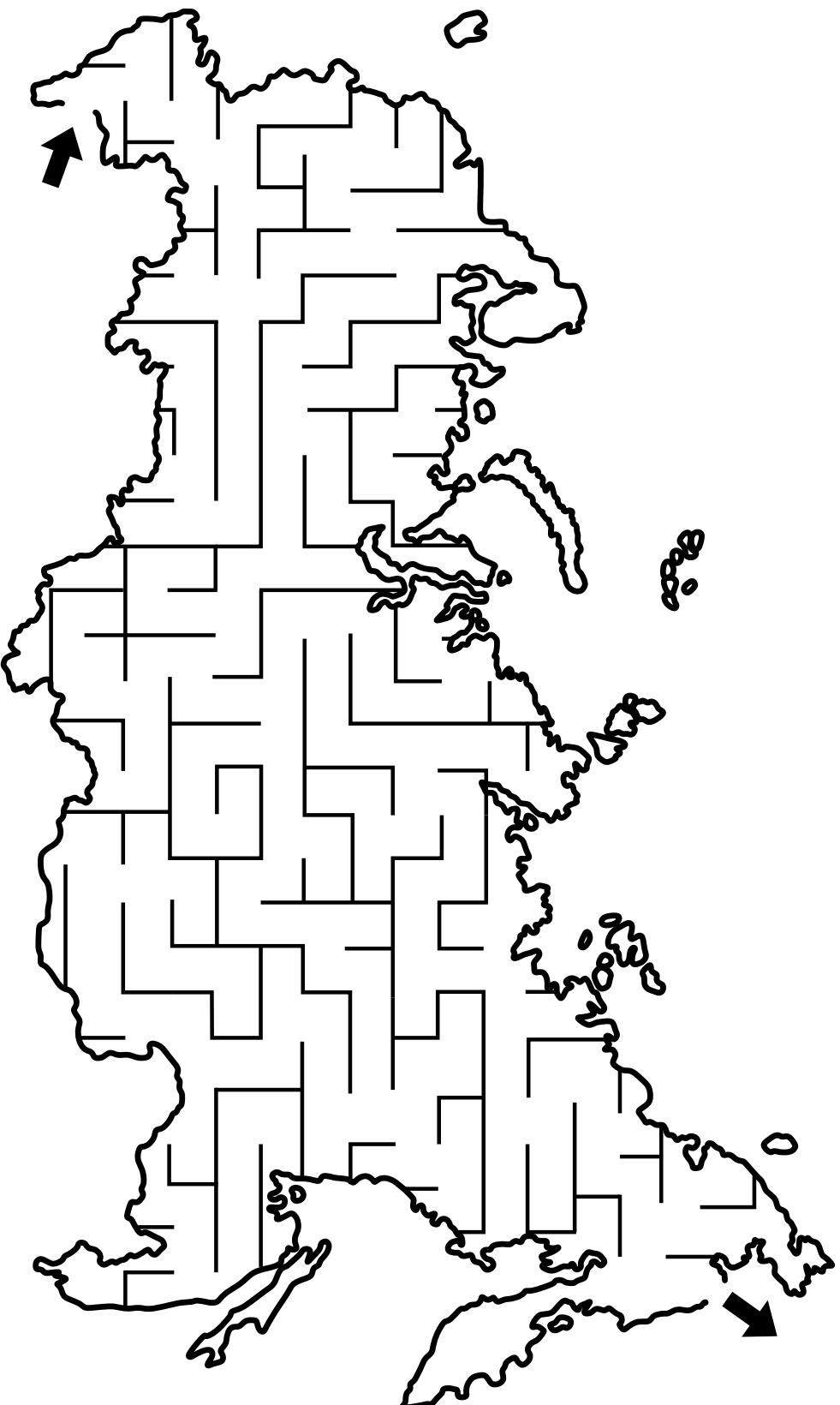
■ Day 13

Pray that peaceful ways can soon be found to end conflicts with other countries.

■ Day 14

God is far more creative than you or me or anyone we know. Let's ask Him to create the best tools for Russian Christian workers to talk about Jesus, so they can be ready to share Him with everyone.

Week 2 Activity: Russia Maze



“The Lord is not slow in doing what He promised—the way some people understand slowness. But God is being patient with you. He does not want anyone to be lost. He wants everyone to change his heart and life.”

— 2 Peter 3:9, ICB



Week 3 Prayers



■ Day 15

Sometimes we worry and are anxious about things. But if we belong to God, He is asking us to trust Him. He’s always at work, even if we don’t understand what’s happening. When it’s hard to trust, ask for His help. Let’s thank Him that He’s always right beside us, listening, comforting, collecting our tears.

■ Day 16

Pray that all believers in Russia and all the countries of the world would work together to tell the story of Jesus until everyone has heard it.

■ Day 17

Most people in Russia don’t yet know the God of the Bible or how much He loves them. They are living in spiritual darkness. Pray for Jesus to light the way for Russians to discover how much they are loved by God.

■ Day 18

Some jobs need a team of people. Starting a new church is hard work made up of lots of jobs that need lots of people to help. Let’s pray God brings together teams of people to start new churches in the country within reach of every person in Russia.

■ Day 19

The Bible teaches us that we have an enemy (the devil) who wants to keep Christians from trusting God. God wants us to stay close to Him and let Him fight for us. The Christians in Russia need to do this as well, so join me in praying God’s Word for them.

“Control yourselves and be careful! The devil is your enemy. And he goes around like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat. Refuse to give in to the devil. Stand strong in your faith. ...”

— 1 Peter 5:8–9, ICB

■ Day 20

Pray for the work of Christian workers in Russia to grow in all the ways it can—more workers, more partners, more prayer, more training and more tools—so that more people give their hearts to Jesus.

■ Day 21

Pray that God will put Christians near the country’s leaders to guide them to make wise decisions for their country.

Week 3 Activity: Word Search

I S U N O S G W K F W C T Q K
B T O F N U U E R J M T G F R
J C Y L S T D R M L D V V R E
V P L Q H D Z V B D O L L S M
E T J B F M M O S C O W L T L
K E V E K U R U S S I A U N I
K T O A X X F A U V F D Y I N
P R Y R B Z Q Y Q X I S L A M
P I A D T E V J V Y H G V B K
I S R C O H R B A L L E T E U
X L Q M U K O I A N S J E U N
E C X E B J U D N N V F C V T
H N U B A N D Y O G Y V W L D
E L E V E N E F B X I S L M P
O S I B E R I A N T I G E R S

WORD LIST:

BALLET
BANDY
BEARD
BERING

DOLLS
ELEVEN
ISLAM
KREMLIN

MOSCOW
ORTHODOX
RUSSIA
SIBERIAN TIGER

TETRIS

“Come to Me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads. I will give you rest.”

— Matthew 11:28, ICB



Week 4 Prayers



■ Day 22

Pray that Russian Christians would continue to share the gospel with those around them and help younger Christians grow in their faith.

■ Day 23

Praise God that Christians in Russia have been able to offer comfort to others during difficult times. May God continue to lead them in caring for family, friends and their communities.

■ Day 24

Did you know that Christian churches do not earn an income for the work they do? The Bible says Christians are to help support God’s work in the church and elsewhere by giving tithes and offerings. Christian workers may also depend upon Christian friends and churches for money to do their work. Pray that God will supply churches and Christian workers with what they need.

■ Day 25

God wants every Russian to understand what Jesus did for them. For this to happen, we need Christians to go tell them. Let’s pray for that.

“But before people can trust in the Lord for help, they must believe in Him. And before they can believe in the Lord, they must hear about Him. And for them to hear about the Lord, someone must tell them. And before someone can go and tell them, he must be sent. It is written, ‘How beautiful is the person who comes to bring good news.’”

— Romans 10:14–15, ICB

■ Day 26

Pray that God leads Christians to talk to not-yet believers in Russia who really want to know the truth. Pray for God to open their eyes to the truth that Jesus gave His life on the cross for them and invite Him into their hearts. May they grow into men and women who follow after God for all the days of their lives.

■ Day 27

Movies, TV, radio, newspapers, books and the internet are all media—ways that people pass along information to other people. All of these have been used to share the gospel in different places. Even if a country limits the use of media, our God has no limits. Pray that He will equip Christians in Russia to use media to bring the message of Jesus and His love into the light for not-yet believers to see and believe.

■ Day 28

People often gather in groups made up of people like themselves, and especially who speak the same language. Pray for God to lead Christians from every people group in Russia to plant churches so their people are comfortable joining in. Pray that they make friends and discover God’s awesome love.

Week 4 Activity: Trace John 14:6 in Russian

– Я есть путь, истина
и жизнь. Никто не
приходит к Отцу, как
только через Меня.

Иоанна 14:6 New Russian Translation

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through Me.’”

– John 14:6, ICB



Week 5 Prayers



■ Day 29

Have you ever done something you knew you shouldn't do because no one is watching? We wrongly think no one will know, so it doesn't matter. But it matters a lot to God. Here's why:

When you and I invited Jesus into our hearts, it's because we learned He died on the cross to forgive our sins. He did it because He loves us. Wow! The Bible tells us how to walk in His ways. The more we learn and obey, the less we will mess up. And when we do mess up, remember that Jesus is with us. And He has forgiven us. You can always count on that.

This is how it is with all of God's children. Pray that Russian Christians will walk in His ways, even when no one is watching.

■ Day 30

Ask God to provide food and necessary things for Christian workers and their families during hard times.

■ Day 31

Lord Jesus, we thank You for giving us a chance to pray for Russia each day this month. We believe You will continue Your work there until everyone has heard clearly about Jesus and been invited to follow Him. Someday we'll see how You answered our prayers. May heaven be filled with Russian people who started to follow Jesus in part due to our prayers this month. We give you all honor and praise.

Resources

- ▶ Joshua Project has a tremendous amount of information about every country. This link will take you to Russia.
<https://joshuaproject.net/countries/RS>
- ▶ Prayercast has great prayer videos.
<https://www.prayercast.com/russia.html>
- ▶ A great way to help someone learn more about Jesus is to share the *JESUS* film in their heart language. We have the film in over 2,000 languages on our website.
<https://www.jesusfilm.org/watch/jesus.html/english.html>
- ▶ We also have multiple other films and short films available.
<https://www.jesusfilm.org/watch.html>
- ▶ For more Jesus Film Project® prayer resources—including access to each month’s family prayer guide—visit the prayer page on the Jesus Film Project website.
jesusfilm.org/pray



The Jesus Film Project app is completely free and available on iOS and Android devices. Get the app now and start watching and sharing a huge library of Jesus-centered films.



This family guide is part of For the Least Reached: A Year of Prayer—a one-year prayer initiative created by Jesus Film Project. It's a great way for families to pray together for countries and people in the world who still don't know love, hope and forgiveness in Jesus. A new family guide is available every month.

Learn more at jesusfilm.org/pray.

