

## St. Petersburg families' Festival of Happy Families in the city of Tikhvin, Russia

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Nine families from St. Petersburg worked together to hold a impromptu festival of happy families in the city of Tikhvin (in the Leningrad region) on July 6. Nikolay and Natalya Chuistov, Alexey and Lyudmila Nekrasov, Nikolay Sokurov, Vitaly Adamenko and his oldest daughter, Alena (a second-generation member), Lyudmila Moskvina, Tatyana Mikhailova, Elena Mikhailova, Igor Goryansky, and Natalya Kuzbit reached their goal of blessing a hundred and twenty couples.

We held the festival as part of the celebration of Tikhvin's City Day with the consent of the city administration. A month before this (June 10–11), the Family Federation had held a conference in Tikhvin, thanks to which we met with representatives of the administration and submitted an application to hold the festival on City Day.

It was not easy to get permission -- they accepted it only three days before the event. The authorities also reacted negatively to the collection of personal data (name, phone number, email), so the festival participants had to write information in notebooks and then put all this information together.

Natasha and I have been encouraging the maximum number of St. Petersburg brothers and sisters to take part in the heavenly tribal messiah mission. Therefore, we invited everyone and promised to divide the results so that the brothers and sisters could start their own tribe, pray for their couples, take part in the creation of an exemplary settlement in Tikhvin. The result was some very well-coordinated teamwork. Natasha and I were a representative couple, and the other brothers and sisters invited couples, explained about the Family Federation and the festival and collected data.

### Support from others

Immense help came from the New Life Church of Evangelical Christians. The pastor, Viktor Mikhailovich Markelov, provided us with a huge tent (ten by six meters), helped with the installation and

provided us with benches and chairs.

To diversify the program, we prepared a test about the five languages of love and distributed the test to couples so that they could get to know each other better.

We also offered couples a free photo session. We chose the most beautiful place for the tent near the lake, opposite the old monastery and invited a great photographer, our brother Alexey Nekrasov. We prepared props, including a heart carved with angels on wood from a tree. We handed out colorful booklets to couples that included information about the festival of happy families and about the Family Federation and its founders.

### **Support from the spiritual world**

As usual, a spiritual foundation is essential. Unfortunately, some participants decided to help in the festival only at the last minute. Several others had other engagements on that day. Therefore, it was not possible to get everyone together in advance to coordinate our activities.

An interesting observation regarding the work of the spiritual world: Couples willingly participated in the three ceremonies. Some wept. One couple said that recently they had been thinking they would like to renew their marriage vows, re-do their marriage ceremony. And after the 120th couple (when we had completed the goal), a couple came who refused to drink the holy juice and did not want to confirm some points of the vow. It felt as if the good spiritual world had fulfilled its obligations and then left. We decided to finish our day at that point, especially since it was already quite late, and we had been working for nine hours.

A festival is also a way to get acquainted with VIPs. One of the participants (Lyuda Moskvina) met the director of the children's health and educational camp. He became interested in master classes for children. We will call him.

