



LAST BELL
MINISTRIES

IMPACT REPORT
2019



DEAR FRIENDS OF LAST BELL MINISTRIES,

I usually agree when I hear the common saying, “it takes a village.” 2019 marks the thirteenth year since Last Bell Ministries incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and for the last nine of those years, I’ve witnessed the proof of that expression. Watching a loving community grow around the orphanage graduates of Zhytomyr brings me such joy that I cannot aptly describe it.

I felt uneasy when I became the leader of this organization five years ago. I was already an unlikely board member, and as Interim Executive Director, I didn’t know enough about how non-profits function or endure. We were often crippled by underfunding. I was sure, however, that there must be a way for Last Bell to become a sustainable, world-class organization. In spite of my fears and shortcomings, I knew what God could do, and I trusted He would create a future that proved His goodness to me and everyone else. And He has!

Last Bell has become a stable organization. Our board of directors has pursued internal growth, which has led to organizational maturity. Three and a half years ago, we hired Megan Hershey as U.S. Operations Director. She developed a structure for day-to-day operations that hadn't existed before. In addition to her expert management, Megan strengthened relationships with donors, streamlined our finances, and continually made improvements. Her ability to coach people toward their best efforts has been inspiring to me, the board, and our entire staff.

For the sake of progress, it's time for me to step away from the Executive Director role. (I will remain on the Board

of Directors.) In December, the Last Bell Ministries board unanimously agreed to ask Megan to assume the position. We're pleased to report that she accepted. We have complete confidence in her, and further, we believe no one could better fill this role. Megan is more than just a leader, because she has the rare ability to partner with anyone as a co-laborer. With her guidance, Last Bell will flourish even more in the future. Please join me and the board in welcoming Megan Hershey as our Executive Director!

I treasure the years I was given to witness the Lord's blessing on Last Bell Ministries. Now the formerly-orphaned are becoming leaders in our community. The Ukrainian government is taking notice of our work. We see like-minded organizations, churches, and individuals discovering that together, we can stop the generational orphanage cycle in the Zhytomyr region. Praise God!

As you look over this ministry report, I hope you'll notice two things. First, that the people of Last Bell are experts in guiding youth from despair to hope. And second, that Last Bell is worthy of the enthusiastic support you have given.

I wish you the best, with sincere gratitude and bolshoi blessings!

Ellen Jackson



ELLEN'S LEGACY

June 2018: Ellen and little Eva watching Eva's mom dominate on an adventure course at summer camp. Nadia, a physically disabled orphanage graduate, participates in Stop the Cycle, our program for orphan parents. While staying at our crisis housing facility and receiving help with childcare, this January Nadia completed a Master's degree in the sciences. She's unstoppable!



BUILDING COMMUNITY



“The Center for Vocational Education (Trade School No. 15), in Zhytomyr, has been cooperating with Last Bell for many years. In any difficult situation, we and our teens can count on a reliable shoulder of support, a helping hand, and friendly advice from Last Bell's specialists. It's amazing that this organization always assists teens... with sincere humane motives, without requiring publicity, public thanksgiving, or profits. As a rule, in the life of a young [orphan], the final bell at school symbolizes both joy and sorrow, anxiety, and change. But the organization Last Bell brings only the joy of human communication, participation, positive life changes, and faith in a better future.”

- Valentina P., social worker responsible for orphans at the trade school

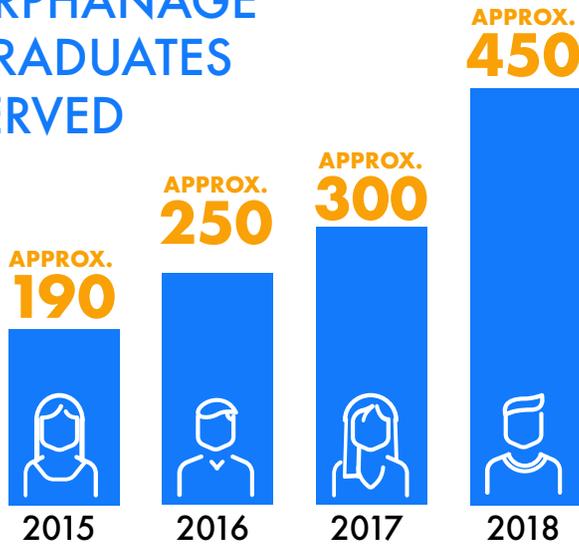
REVENUE GROWTH 10 YEARS



BUILDING COMMUNITY



ORPHANAGE GRADUATES SERVED



"I can give encouragement and advice... I feel God's care for me and want to pass it on to others."

- Anya Cherniy, Last Bell's primary childcare provider at Shelter Crisis Housing; she works closely with orphan moms

LAST BELL'S CORE VALUES

We believe in Healing Relationships, Holistic Care, & Dynamic Community



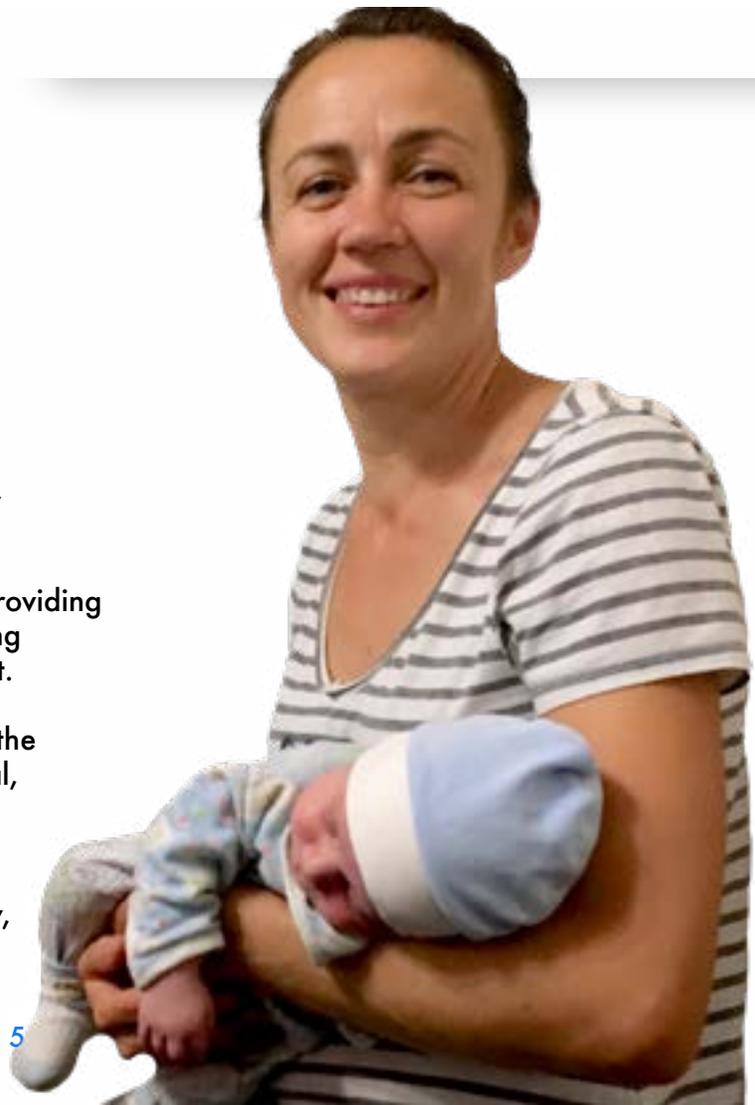
We believe in building safe, secure attachments; providing long-term, reparative mentoring relationships; loving boldly; and sharing the healing love of Jesus Christ.



We practice the good news of Jesus by caring for the whole person, including advocacy for their spiritual, emotional, physical, and relational needs.



We engage in transparent partnership with our supporters, with the larger orphan care community, and with churches in the U.S. and in Ukraine.



VLAD'S ORPHAN EXPERIENCE

Orphanhood usually begins in villages.

Vlad's mother killed her boyfriend, so he was born in prison and grew up in an orphanage. He'd run away to his mother's house, where she abused him, or wander the streets, digging through trash and begging until he was hungry enough to return.

Orphans often experience more trauma and neglect in state care.

At the orphanage, Vlad was beaten with a belt buckle, and one caregiver nearly suffocated him with a pillow. The children had little bathroom access in class. For Vlad, who had a bladder condition, this meant humiliating accidents. Underfed, Vlad and his friends stole food and got into trouble. He still has a scar where the cook struck him.

Most leave the orphanage without skills, support, or hope for the future.

Vlad moved in with his sister, whose husband beat him. He stole and sold a piece of her jewelry so he could travel to trade school, where he fell in with petty criminals. When they were caught, Vlad was locked away in the same prison where he'd been born.

Our Model: Holistic Care for Broken Youth

We meet orphanage graduates where they are.

In 2017, Vlad was released. When he learned his parents had died, he tried to cut his wrists. But he survived and entered a trade school for people with disabilities (he's almost blind in one eye). We were teaching Life Skills there, ready to learn about everything Vlad had endured.



We welcome them to our community and offer one-to-one mentorship.

At our Day Center, Vlad was surrounded by kindness and quickly made friends. He opened up to Sasha T., a former police officer, who knew Ukraine's brutal prison system. It was Vlad's dream to see mountains, and in 2018, he attended summer camp. That week, Vlad's old "friends" called, asking for help with another criminal scheme. But he saw a different path for his life.

We meet urgent needs, including medical advocacy.

Like many orphans, Vlad is afraid of doctors. In 2018, we took him to the dentist and provided cold and flu medications. We also arranged a surgical consultation about removing a cyst on his finger, paid for medication, and stayed through the operation.

We help with the two most overwhelming problems: housing and work.

When Vlad was expelled, he turned to Sasha, who put him in touch with a Christian friend who had





OUR MODEL WORKS

We **KNOW** the system and the available resources

We get to **KNOW** our youth

We show **LOVE** by putting our **KNOWLEDGE** into **ACTION**



a room to rent. Sasha also found him a high-paying construction job. Orphans often have trouble communicating with employers, and he eventually left. But at the time of writing, we were preparing Vlad for another interview.

We introduce orphanage graduates to Jesus' love and help them grow spiritually.

Vlad first attended church with Sasha. Later he joined Lena V.'s home Bible study group and began attending her church. He shared with the home group about his childhood, prison, and his overwhelming debt. They wept and laughed together. After Vlad became a follower of Jesus, the group leader began discipleship. We'll help Vlad stay connected to local Christians.

We help them break the orphan cycle, change the culture, and become leaders.

Vlad doesn't have children. But our Stop the Cycle program is ready to help his future family break the cycle of abandonment and neglect. Many of our youth become volunteers, and two have joined our staff. The ripple effects are reaching our whole city.



THE LAST BELL BOARD

We have a strong, multi-talented board. Our board members include baby boomers and a millennial; a photographer, a carpet-cleaning business owner, and a retired dentist; some with business and consulting expertise, others wisdom and long-term ideas; some who've traveled to Ukraine, one who's lived there, and others who've caught the vision from afar. All bring passion and enthusiasm to Last Bell's mission: restoring orphanage graduates to life and community.

UNIQUE DONORS PER YEAR

2015	129
2016	186
2017	167
2018	185



“As the newest addition to the board, I’m motivated by the targeted opportunity we identify: families in need of medical advocacy and emotional and physical support; and the opportunity to improve health and wellness for future orphanage graduates. Last Bell donors are actively involved in changing lives and families daily. It’s encouraging to be in a partnership with such godly and warm-hearted people, and I’m so thankful.”

- Last Bell board member Cari Mutz Alt



“God’s love is exponential. The value of love received is greater than the cost to give. As we give, His glory is continuously revealed from one degree to the next.

“We find this truth revealed in Zhytomyr. As I get to know Last Bell better, the degrees of glory, the quantity of good fruit are continuously being revealed. We’re working hard to define and measure the progress of each youth. It’s my passionate goal that we appeal to your Christian compassion and also prove the effectiveness of your investment in our work for the Kingdom.”

- Last Bell board member Joel Austin



“Our cooperation with Last Bell began in 2015. For many years we’ve maintained a friendly relationship, and we’re always glad [Last Bell] spends these special Saturdays with those in their care. The Lord has commanded us to take care of orphans. We believe this is very important, very complex, responsible work.... [Last Bell staff members] give strength, time, and heart to save at least some of the orphans. We are glad to continue working together.”

- Tanya S., Executive Director of the Zhytomyr nonprofit called Я мама, “I Am Mom”





PROGRAMS STOP THE CYCLE

Vika is part of our Stop the Cycle program for orphan moms. Her two kids, Vanya and Tanya, are among the oldest of Last Bell's second generation – the children of those we serve. Tanya is fourteen, only a few years

away from the age when her mom graduated from the orphanage. At seventeen Vika was on her own, with no one to support her, until Last Bell intervened. Her children are growing up in a loving, close community, with support for the future success of their family. (Vanya is on the right, and his Stop the Cycle friend Sasha is on the left.)



STOP THE CYCLE PROGRAM SUCCESS RATES

- 2** Graduated classes (2016 & 2018)
- 45** families participated
- 37** families in stable life situations



PROGRAMS

RESTORATION PROJECT

“I was concerned with what would happen [after the orphanage]... everything is prepared for you, [but] now you have to do everything by yourself... I was afraid to become an alcoholic or start smoking. Restoration Project helped me a lot. First, there's a good team at Last Bell, everyone is friendly, and everyone loves each other. Secondly, I was helped with finding a job, then I found a lot of friends... And I began to go to church. I would like to say thanks from the bottom of my heart to Last Bell.” - Sasha

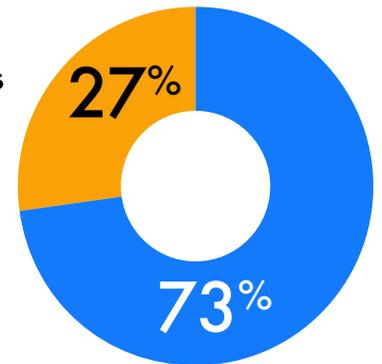


BUDGET, 2016-2019



SPENDING DISTRIBUTION

U.S. Operations & Promotions



Ministry

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

When orphanage graduate youth arrive in Zhytomyr, many don't know Last Bell exists. So we go find them: at Zhytomyr's trade schools, social dorms, colleges, and through word-of-mouth. They need to know there's hope for their future!



LOOKING AHEAD

FRIENDS,

Still fresh from a recent visit to Zhytomyr, I'm newly inspired. We spent a week sharing Last Bell with new friends, providing training for our Ukrainian staff, and celebrating youth who are thriving with Last Bell's influence.

We visited our Restoration Project crew, hard at work on renovations. We sat with new moms eager to learn how to be loving parents. At trade schools, we saw the joyful presence our staff offer to those who have left the orphanage and are navigating the lonely world. I'm here to tell you, firsthand, that the resources and generosity you pour into Last Bell are long-lasting and deeply rooted.

Recently, as I began preparing my heart for Easter, God gave me a strong image of a root cellar. A root cellar, usually underground, stores feisty root crops during harsh winters. These roots survive in a hostile environment, determined to generate new life – like so many of our youth. Early trauma, abandonment, and isolation have left scars. But through their own strength and the mercy of God, these same youth, we pray, will end the generational orphanage cycle in Zhytomyr.

Colossians 2 says, "Let your roots grow down into Him, and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness" (NLT). May this be so for our youth and for all of us.

Today, we are better positioned than ever to demonstrate the impact of our work with orphanage graduates. In 2019, we will spend our operational energy measuring transformational outcomes, creating systems in Ukraine to sustain our work, and building advisory teams to better utilize the assets of our community. At the ground level, we will be refining our current programs, deepening our housing offerings, preparing youth for meaningful vocations, expanding our MOPS program, and prayerfully considering the implications of the foster care movement in Ukraine. Thanks to your generosity, we have big visions for the future of of Last Bell.

This year and every year, our staff and board recommit to our mission to love and restore orphanage graduates towards life and community. Thank you for partnering with us!

Gratefully,

Megan Hershey





“My acquaintance with Last Bell started long before Last Bell itself was created! I met [former director] Liz Millikan in 2001 at camp, and after camp I received the Lord in my heart. In 2005... I began to live in an apartment for orphanage graduate girls... I came to meetings organized by Last Bell leaders. The time was always good and useful. We played together, ate together, and learned new information about the Lord.

“In 2009 I moved to Kyiv to study at the Medical University, and returned to Zhytomyr in 2015. Since mid-2016, I’ve been serving as a volunteer at the Shelter Crisis Housing facility. As a doctor, I advise the leaders and teenagers from Last Bell. But my main responsibility is as a night caregiver at the Shelter. I’m responsible for calm and discipline at night.

“Why do I want to serve here? Because this is a good opportunity to help other girls find the Lord! I put my strength and my heart into this ministry. It’s not easy, but it’s great. There’s no greater reward than seeing girls find the Lord in the midst of a difficult situation, and their life begins to change...”

- Anya H. (center), former orphan, medical doctor, volunteer, and part-time Last Bell staff member

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Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Corinthians 11



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