



# "The Vanguard"

## "Two Babies in a Manger"

In 1994, two Americans answered an invitation from the Russian Department of Education to teach morals and ethics (based on Biblical principles) in the public schools. They were invited to teach at prisons, businesses, the fire and police departments, and also a large orphanage.

It was nearing the holiday season for the orphans to hear, for the first time, the traditional Christmas story. The Americans told them about Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem and, finding no room in the inn, the couple went to a stable where Jesus was born and placed in the manger.

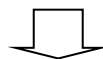
Throughout the story, the children sat in amazement as they listened. Some sat on the edges of their seats, trying to grasp every word.

As a follow-up activity to the story, each child was given three small pieces of cardboard to make a crude manger. Each child was also given a small paper square cut from yellow napkins which the children tore into strips and carefully laid them in the manger for straw. Small squares of flannel from a thrown away nightgown were used for the baby's blanket. From pieces of felt a doll-like baby was made.

As they made their way around the room to observe the children this is what one of the Americans noted, "All went well until I got to one table where little *Misha* sat. He looked to be about 6 years old and had finished his project."

"As I looked at the little boy's manger, I was startled to see, **not one but two babies in the manger**. Quickly, I called for the translator to ask the lad why there were two babies in the manger."

The observer goes on to note that *Misha* very accurately recalled the story that had been told until he came to the part where Mary put Jesus in the manger. Then *Misha*, it is noted, started to ad-lib. He made up his own ending to the story as he said, "And when Maria laid the baby in the manger, Jesus looked at me and asked me if I had a place to stay. I told him I have no mamma and I have no papa, so I don't have any place to stay."



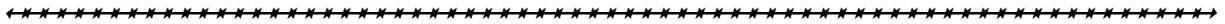
## “Two Babies in a Manger” (continued)

“Then Jesus told me I could stay with him. But I told him I couldn’t because I didn’t have a gift to give him like everybody else did. I wanted to stay with Jesus so much, so I thought about what I had that maybe I could use for a gift. Maybe if I kept him warm, that would be a good enough gift.”

“So I asked Jesus, ‘If I keep you warm, will that be a good enough gift?’ And Jesus told me, ‘If you keep me warm, that will be the best gift anybody ever gave me.’ So I got into the manger, and then Jesus looked at me and he told me I could stay with him – for always.”

As little *Misha* finished his story, his eyes brimmed full of tears that splashed down his little cheeks. Putting his hand over his face, his head dropped to the table and his shoulders shook as he sobbed and sobbed. The little orphan had found a home and someone who would never abandon or abuse him—someone who would stay with him – FOR ALWAYS!

*Sermoncentral.com (Contributed by Rob Short)*



## VGMA Veterans at General Conference 2022





# Save the Date!

## VGMA 2023 Retreat - April 25-27, 2023

### Branson, Missouri

We are excited to announce the VGMA 2023 Retreat to be held in Branson, Missouri at *The Lodge of the Ozarks* on April 25-27, 2023. Special Guest will be *Stan Cook* (formerly of the McGruder's). You will enjoy his melodic voice, his humor and inspirational exhortations.

A generous donation has been made that will allow us to attend the awe-inspiring performance of "*Queen Esther*" on Wednesday evening the 26th.

**More information to follow! RSVP Required!**



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**Check out the  
new Videos  
posted on the  
VGMA  
Website!**

[www.vgmaupci.com](http://www.vgmaupci.com)

**Many new  
“Tributes”  
have been  
added, includ-  
ing one focus-  
ing on the Life  
and Legacy of  
**Larry and  
Ruth Blake.****

## Newly Elected VGMA Vice-Chairman



**Alan and Valerie Demos** served in GREECE as pioneer missionaries for fifteen years from their appointment in 1974 until 1989.

Thereafter, they were in GERMANY from 1990 until official retirement in the spring of 2015.

The Demos' were on the field as Career missionaries for a total of 40 years, plus, one more as missionary helpers (pre-AIM) prior to full appointment.

They are currently living in Sarasota, FL, assisting their son Joel in planting a church in Lithia, FL.

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The VGMA welcomes **Rev. Ron Macey** as our new  
Global Missions Board Liaison!

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### Welcome to our Newest Members!

*Gary and Kristi Landaw*

*Tony and Shasta Miller*

*Louis and Martha Johnson*

*Bobby and Tanya Lewis*

*John and Susan Beek*



The VGMA extends their sincerest and heartfelt  
condolences to the Families of the following  
Members who have been recently promoted to their  
Heavenly Home:

**Barbara Edwards Hanson**

**John Paul Hughes**

**Esther Grimm**

