

Pass It On®...

A Most Unlikely Friendship.

How the war in Ukraine brought two families together from opposite sides.

Every Thursday afternoon, the food pantry at the local high school opens up to provide fresh food bags for families who can't stretch their budgets far enough to get their meals to last through the weekend. Nearly a hundred families rely on the extra food. Some are between jobs, some got hit hard with medical bills for a few months, and some are new to the neighborhood, placed there by refugee services.

On one breezy afternoon, two young mothers walked in together, each with a toddler in tow. There was nothing different about their dress, but their manner revealed a shyness that they struggled to overcome. When they spoke, it was clear why: Their accents were thick, even though they were trying hard to make their English sound American. They were uncertain of being understood. But the pantry is run by grandmothers who are never pressed for time when it comes to conversations. So they sat for a moment and told their story while the little ones were held in arms so very familiar with children.

The two lived in apartments in the basement of the Methodist Church. They had been in the United States for one month. Their husbands were well-educated but working labor jobs to pay for food and save for more typical apartments. And they were out of diapers.

Both had fled the war in Eastern Europe, one family from Ukraine and one from Russia. They ended up in the same church basement and discovered that they needed each other. They became fast friends. Their children played together. They shared meals and navigated their new world together.

There were no bombs or soldiers or rations in their new neighborhood, only a chance to start over. Friendships are sometimes hard to come by, yet matter so much to each of us. A good friend gives us strength, love, laughter and the courage to keep trying.

These two families — worn down by uncertainty and war, thrown together in a new country, a new

community with a new language — found so much in common. And isn't that what we all need? A friend who faces the same life challenges, even if the forces above them have different political views. We are, after all, just mothers and fathers, friends and neighbors.

Friendship...[PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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