

## Ida Kristina And Her Friends



This is me with friends, photographed in Hesed in Chernigov during the celebration of Purim in 2003. My husband Iosif and I lived 48 and a half years together. In the early 1990s we decided to move to Israel. It was always our dream to go there, but in the 1970s when the majority of Jews were leaving, my mother was ill and the issue of emigration was out of the question. We failed to leave since my husband fell severely ill. He died in 1995. His death didn't come as a surprise to me since he had been suffering for a long time before he died, but it was a terrible loss nonetheless. I didn't even have money to bury my husband. The Jewish community that was established in Chernigov helped me. I have been a member of the community since then. I attend every meeting or event and read Jewish newspapers. I don't go to the synagogue since I don't consider myself a believer, although I think there must be a God and I'm grateful to Him for my basically happy and interesting life. One thing I cannot forgive God is that He took away children's lives: the life of my son and others. They were innocent souls. I attend the 'Warm House' in Hesed where I have meals with other old Jews like myself. However, I'm not a passive consumer - I try to give people what I can. On Jewish holidays our group from Hesed sing songs and I rehearse with my friends playing the piano. We celebrate holidays and birthdays together and get together at hard times, when somebody loses their relatives. We support each other. In 1997 I visited my sister Riva and my niece Ada in Israel. I liked the country very much. I visited the country when it celebrated its 50th anniversary. Anyway, I don't have any friends there and I don't want to be a burden to my sister. I have the friends of my life here, at Hesed and our community - it's not about assistance, this is my life now!