

# **BEN AND KRISTY WILLIAMS – L'VIV, UKRAINE**

2008 PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUESTS FOR FAC & BAC, & PRAYER TEAMS

## **Late Fall 08 Praises**

- October has been full of joy in ministry; we love being back in Lviv and serving in our local church. That is really where our passion to work w/ youth is the deepest.
- The JV Fall conference was amazing, practical teaching about loving the church as the bride of Christ. Our Ukrainian guests, esp. Syava, were blessed by it as well.
- We are so thankful to experience first hand the growth in our youth leaders, even since this summer. They launched a Sunday night Bible study for people who want to follow God deeper. Soon they are starting small groups for students from camp.
- The end of summer was full of travel. We enjoyed Croatia w/ JV missionary kids, and in Africa for vacation w/ Ben's dad & step-mom. It was much needed rest.

## **Late Fall 08 Prayer Requests**

- Kristy's brother, Michael, age 23, is in his 3<sup>rd</sup> month with the US National Guard in Afghanistan. He is in a very dangerous place as he fights w/ the Afghani police against the Taliban. Pray for his safety, and also for his wife, Margie. He is trusting the Lord.
- Josiah Venture is launching an 11-city US tour to celebrate what God has done in Eastern Europe over the past 15 years and to raise money for some big org needs. We are praying for 4,000 participants in these events.
- We are asking God for continued contact w/ the 75 students who were at our Lviv camp. There were also 4 other camps with 225 other Ukrainians. All of our Ukr. youth group teams are trying to follow up w/ campers and spur them on in their relationship w/ Jesus.
- Nov. 9 – Jan. 22 we will be in the States for our 1<sup>st</sup> furlough. We pray for great reconnection w/ our churches, supporters, and family. We pray for God to provide for increased financial needs for the coming years as well.

## **Late Summer 08 Praises**

- Small group leaders from our 5 Ukr. churches stepped up and led discussion groups. We saw the Holy Spirit empower them. We pray for continued obedience in this area.
- Over 100 North Americans joined us in English camp ministry this summer. They were exposed to cross-cultural relationships, lives changed by the Gospel, and missionary life.
- Over 50 Ukrainians boldly declared that they want to be disciples of Jesus Christ! Many angels rejoiced in heaven this summer over students repenting at English camp.
- We were blessed to have enough camp funds to end the summer financially positive. Thank you to all who continue to give to this ministry.
- We are already getting excited for our Josiah Venture Fall Conference. We have invited several Ukrainians to attend this leadership training with us, including Syava & Andriy.

## **Late Summer 08 Prayer Requests**

- Summer is not quite over yet. We have a Josiah Venture Kids' Camp, a summer break, and then we transition directly into fall ministries. Pray for time to fully debrief our summer and tie up all loose administrative ends.

- We are already beginning to pray for new Ukrainian partner churches that might be interested in evangelistic English camps for 2009. Pray for the right partners.
- It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the follow-up effort that must take place in caring for youth who attended camp. We deeply desire that they get connected to the local church and continue taking steps closer to Jesus Christ. Pray for great faith and energy to be strategic about fall youth ministry in our 5 churches.

## Prayer & Praise Archive

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### Summer 08 Prayer Requests

- We sense a lot of uncertainty, fear, and even disobedience in the Ukr small group leaders at camp. Pray for them to be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Pray for healthy partnership between JV missionaries, the national church teams, and the short term US teams. There are a lot of responsibilities and roles to share.
- We're expecting 92 American short term visitors and 3 college student interns for 2.5 months this summer. Pray that God grow their heart for reaching the lost with the Gospel.
- Pray that God will open the eyes of students, that they will see that life is nothing without a relationship w/ Jesus.
- The severe inflation in Ukraine and the weakening dollar has really put constraints on our camp budget. Pray for enough camp funds to pay for it all.

### Summer 08 Praises

- At the end of June and into July, we'll train and prepare almost 100 American short term participants to serve at Ukrainian English camps.
- Our advertising efforts were really blessed. Students have quickly responded to the invitation to come to English camp. We sense God choosing students HE wants there.
- Details continue to come together as we worked hard to secure facilities, arrange transportation, raise funds, and prepare church leaders for camp.
- We really are enjoying our interns and summer team this summer! It just seems less stressful and easier to care for them than last year.

### Spring 2008 Prayer Requests

- Our March & April calendar is a bit overwhelming, but exciting, none-the-less. Three American pastors will visit to check out our ministry before bringing their summer teams over in July. Then a team of Czechs will do a mission trip to help our L'viv church. Pray for energy, hearts to serve, good hospitality, and that people will experience Christ through our work.
- We have about 50 Ukrainian youth leaders & helpers joining us for our annual English Camp Conference in L'viv. We are hosting it, and deeply desire to give them the training they need to be successful in their youth groups before, during, and after camp.
- Pray for English Camp advertising, especially in schools. Kristy will advertise to the university that she is working with. May God stir in students' hearts so they are interested in our Christian camps, and meeting Jesus not only w/ their heads, but also w/ their hearts.
- Ben is writing the English camp talks for our 5 camps this summer. Our talks will be spiritually deeper than in previous years. The Ukrainian pastors are asking for a blend of evangelism and discipleship topics. May God give us the words to say.

### Praises From Winter '08

- The Lord of the Harvest has sent us workers! We have about 80 short term team members coming to help with our 5 camps this summer! And we have 2 new interns, as well as Josh, Brittney, & Steph returning for the summer.
  - Facility searches have been difficult, but right now 3 of our 4 are secured. Only 1 to go.
  - The Global Youth Initiative Conference in Israel impacted us on many levels; we were reminded of our calling to "movements of multiplication" as Jesus did – making disciples who can make disciples and change their world. We also formed deeper bonds w/ other members of Josiah Venture in attendance.
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### Winter 2008 Prayer Requests

- Pray for students to be moved by the Holy Spirit in their personal walks with Christ. We feel like we're facing a lot of excuses, keeping them from a rich life w/ Christ. Especially pray for a desire for evangelism (inviting new people) & time in the Word.
- We have an immediate prayer need for summer young-adult interns. The application process ends mid-February, and we still have no one 100% committed. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers.
- The facility search is on, but we keep coming up short. Pray for the right people connections to find facilities, and that there will be availability during our camp dates.

- We've started forming closer relationships w/ our L'viv youth group ministry team. As we build trust, pray that we can help them cast vision & be intentional for the Kingdom of God.

### Winter Praises

- Our visas were issued in November. We were able to obtain car insurance in January. And as of last week, we got high speed internet in our apartment! Almost 10 months of waiting, and our prayer was finally answered. We praise God for these victories!
- Christmas, though a bit lonely, came & went w/o homesickness. It was nice to enjoy the holidays in our new culture.
- Language is coming along nicely. It is nice to feel more & more at ease here.

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### Fall '07 Prayer Requests

- **IMMEDIATE NEED:** There's been a change in Ukrainian visa requirements. We need clarity from our embassy and theirs to insure we have proper documentation.
- We are about 1 mo. into an intense 9 mo. of Ukrainian language study. May God increase our understanding & ability to communicate in this difficult language.
- Planning for Summer 2008 is already underway! We were challenged by JV to double the # of camps & US/Ukr. churches working together in '08. Pray that we choose the right partnerships and have enough teams to serve next summer.
- We've started weekly meetings/Bible studies/fellowship times w/ key students here in Lviv. We need wisdom from the Spirit to set vision, select training & study materials, & love these students. Pray specifically for Syava, Svieta, Kristina, Eugene, Nadya, & Sasha.

### Fall '07 Praises

- We have *finally* entered a healthy routine after a long 4 mo. mostly away from Lviv. Language, office work, and lots of one-on-one time w/ students take up most of our time.
- Our Lviv youth group began again, and the students are more eager than ever to build relationships w/ us and involve us in their lives. Thank you, Lord, for friends!
- Our 1<sup>st</sup> Josiah Venture Fall Leadership Conference (Sept. 17-22) successfully brought together national youth workers and missionaries ministering in 11 different Eastern European countries. We studied topics like "Dealing w/ Legalism in the Church", Issues of Authority, & Removing Roadblocks to Your Ministry. Many European leaders in the church have **very** limited access to ministry training in their countries or in their languages, so this is a huge service that JV provides.

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### Aug./September '07 Prayer Requests

- Pray for students who made decisions this summer to follow Jesus Christ. May they pursue this new relationship with the Lord and grow in their knowledge and love for Him. Specific names include Pasha & Andriy, Ivanka, Anja, Tanya, Benya, & Sasha, and Vlad, Harry, Marina, Sergiy, Katya, Jana, Lilya, Yulia, and Tolik.
- Pray for Christian Ukrainian leaders who will come along side the campers who are now connected to their church after camp. Pray for perseverance to maintain relationships throughout the year. Pray for their ability from God to disciple their peers.
- Pray for other JV Ukraine staff, who will return to our 3 camp cities to continue with follow up ministries. We pray for a great turnout, and that more students experience life w/ Jesus.
- We have 2 family visits approaching! Ben's dad & step-mom will be with us in Aug., and Kristy's parents in late Sept. Pray for a great experience as they enter our Ukrainian world!

### Summer '07 Praises

- We saw about 50 students either make first time commitments to become Christians or recommit their lives to Christ. There was much rejoicing in heaven and on earth over their repentance. It was a spiritually rich summer for us all.
- Time w/ our summer interns, FAC church youth group from NJ, and the Conway, AR team was very enjoyable. It was a pleasure to serve with each of them. Well done, good and faithful servants. We will miss you all A LOT!
- We survived the trauma of the break-in. Our apartment has a new, high-safety door, and our Ukrainian friends Edgar & Syava were wonderful house-sitters for us this summer.

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### Summer '07 Prayer Requests

- Leading an intern team means overseeing spiritual development, camp logistics, English teaching, laundry/food/housing, fun, traveling all over the country, etc. for our team. This is for 80 days straight, while we also juggle our own life, marriage, attitudes, & relationship with God. Passion, patience, and balance are 3 words that come to mind.
- Pray for relationship building. It often takes time to build trust w/ E. European students. Plus, the language barrier often slows things down. Pray against awkwardness and inability to connect with campers. It is so much easier to be passionate about missions when you connect well w/ students.
- Pray for local church leadership. Honestly, our JV team here does not always see eye-to-eye with the national leadership styles and camp plans. Without unity between our 2 teams, it will make it hard to show the love of

Christ in a genuine way. Pray that God remove barriers and make both sides flexible to do God's work the way He wants it.

- Ben is speaking at all of the camps for the evening program. Each night he gives a "talk" (basically a mini sermon w/ a passage from the Bible and a lot of great personal examples) and then dismisses us to our small group discussions. May God speak through Ben and may God open the campers' eyes to hear about Him.
  - If you like to pray for people by name, pray for Boris, Lena, Pastor Sergiy, Tolik, Katja, Seriohia, Vanya, Yura, Dale, Yulia, Masha, Jana, Vlad, Sasha, Zhenya, and other Ukrainian youth who desire boldness to lead their youth groups and tell their friends about Jesus. Pray that they are willing to go outside of their comfort zones and reach out to their peers.
  - We are so excited – we just received 300 Gideon New Testaments in Ukrainian! We are handing them out at camp (and maybe to the authorities who always pull us over, too!) and we believe that God will clearly speak to people through the Bible.
  - May we not lose sight of the reason we are here. So many students will have the chance to clearly choose between a life following God or life in this world, trying to get by "being a good person". May their ears & hearts be opened to God's word & their need for a Savior.
  - We just found out 2 of 3 camps are tent camps for 9 nights a piece. This is a serious stretch for many of us. Pray for positive attitude and joy in whatever the circumstance. And pray against rain.
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#### **May '07 Prayer Requests**

- Summer is quickly approaching! Pray as we prepare our daily schedule from 5/29-8/16 while we'll have our 4 college interns living/working w/ us. May God bless this summer and may MANY youth choose to passionately follow Jesus Christ through this ministry.
- Pray for our Ukr. partner churches in Zdolbuniv, Lutsk, and Cherkassy as they advertise for English camps and prepare to reach out and spiritually lead our camps. Also, we have teams from Fellowship Alliance in NJ and Fellowship Baptist in Conway, AR joining us.
- Our US teams are busy raising \$ to come and serve with us. Pray for God to provide.
- The Internet search has been really rough. Companies can provide service, but no one wants to install the cables. Pray for perseverance and no bitterness towards the country.

#### **April '07 Praises**

- We purchased a 1994 Volkswagen Transporter that seats 9 people. Our mechanic in Poland tuned it up and said the engine is in good condition. May it last a long time!
  - We had some great relationship building w/ our missionary friends Trevor & Cassie in Czech Republic, and we learned a lot from our annual missions conference w/ 100 other Josiah Venture missionaries. It was spiritually energizing, and we love the care JV gives.
  - The condo finally sold!
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#### **March '07 Praises**

- We found a wonderful apartment! It is very clean, safe, and has good space for visitors. We signed the contract in Feb. and are finally settled in – and all our boxes arrived!
- The Josiah Venture (JV) Annual Women's Conference was a wonderful time for Kristy to meet with 30+ other American missionaries for 5 days of fellowship and spiritual renewal in Rome, one of the greatest European cities. JV missionary care is exceptional!
- We continue to plug in with the New Life evangelical church here. We've met many students and feel like we are making new friendships, but we have a long way to go!

#### **March/April '07 Prayer Requests**

- Our American teams (college interns, high school groups) are currently raising financial support to come to Ukraine this summer to help us with our camps. May God provide!
  - We have begun planning a youth leader training conference to get our Ukr. partner churches ready for English camp preparation. Pray that God would prepare us all.
  - Our apartment request for a private telephone line & Internet was rejected by UKRTelecom. God knows about this need of ours, and we hope to find an alternative ASAP.
  - Now that we are settled, it is time to seriously search for a van. There is some availability, but reliability and price are questionable. May we find the right vehicle.
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#### **February '07 Praises**

- On Feb. 11, we'll celebrate our first month anniversary of living in Lviv! We've visited a variety of churches and already made some great connections with people here.
- Ben attended a Josiah Venture men's conference in Slovenia. He came back encouraged and more connected with other men in our organization.
- We're adjusting to culture a bit each day and feel very content here in Lviv. God has faithfully led us this far, and we count each day as a big blessing to be here.
- 21 out of our 31 shipping boxes have arrived without trouble! God really put His hand of protection over our belongings.

#### **February '07 Prayer Requests**

- We've visited a few apartments, but we haven't found one yet. According to the realtor, there isn't much available right now, as most people don't move in the dead of winter. Pray for God's leading to a perfect place for us. We've been blessed with a wonderful temporary residence, and we need more patience and faith as we wait on the Lord.
  - Valentyna Stohova, a Ukrainian young woman, will move to Lviv and join our team this month. Pray for God's unity among the five of us as we live and work together in these early stages.
  - Kristy will attend the Josiah Venture annual women's conference. This year's theme is "Tending Your Vineyard." Pray for a fruitful time with other missionary women serving here in youth ministry.
  - Pray for more connections with youth here. It is hard to go from having a vibrant youth ministry in NJ to having no church home or youth group here. We have to start over and make all new friends! May God put people in our paths whom we can befriend and disciple. And may things move at God's pace and not our own.
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#### **January '07 Praises**

- We spent a wonderful, extended holiday time in IL & NJ, visiting friends & family. The goodbyes were sad, but God comforts us, reminding us that He's our joy and strength.
- We praise God, who is faithful in His perfect timing to get us to the Ukraine. We are so eager to get started.
- We celebrated our 4th wedding anniversary on January 4th. Pray that our marriage remains strong and focused on Christ during this intense time of transition to Lviv.

#### **January '07 Prayer Requests**

- We shipped 31 boxes by sea to Ukraine through a reputable courier company. We're nervous about customs, import taxes, theft. Pray our goods arrive safely, w/o damage.
- Pray that we quickly become familiar with Lviv and their ways of life. We desire to be comfortable there. We will begin apartment hunting and language lessons upon arrival.
- Pray that we make friendships with high school students and with church leadership. We'd like to start discipleship as soon as possible.