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GREETINGS TO OUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND ALL WHO ARE PARTNERING WITH US AS WE BECOME FULL TIME MISSIONARIES TO THE UKRAINE!

Good news! We finally have our email distribution up to date so that we can share more details with you! July and August have been some of the most challenging, life changing months of our lives.

Ben and I have felt encouraged that there are so many people interested in hearing about God's work through us as we move to the Ukraine. Communication with our friends, family, and supporters in the US is going to be really important for us, and we do not want to lose touch.

CZECH ENGLISH CAMP: June 25 – July 13 Ben and I led a team of 14 (10 high school students, us, our youth pastor & his wife) from our NJ church, Fellowship Alliance Chapel, to the Czech Republic. This was our third year taking a team to work with two Czech evangelical churches in Frydlant and Frydek-Mistek. We want to share some of the highlights of our trip with you. From a spiritual perspective, it was very encouraging to see many students who have been growing in maturity in their Christian life over the past few years. There were also many new faces at camp. Many of these Czech teens heard about God's love for them for the first time. It was a lot for them to take in, and we are praying that they will continue to seek Biblical truth and a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Below is our all-camp photo (approx.18 Americans; 50 Czechs)



FIRST VISIT TO THE UKRAINE: July 13 – July 22

The nine days that we spent in the Ukraine were packed with activity. It was such a relief to finally see our future town of L'viv, spend extended time with our missionary partners, Jay & Cameron Hughes, and experience Ukrainian culture in its purest form. We traveled by overnight coach bus from Prague, through Poland, and into L'viv. Our border crossing experience, in total, was over 3 hours, and we were told that wasn't bad! We immediately took another smaller bus to the Ukrainian region of Rivne, where Jay & his summer team were hosting another Josiah Venture English camp. The big difference between Jay's camps and ours in CZ is that most Ukrainians can only afford to tent camp rather than rent a facility. There were about 100 Ukrainian youth at that camp! Many students made decisions that they wanted to live their lives in obedience to God instead of living for themselves. It was exciting to see this response to the Word of God. We got to speak with many young people and begin building relationships. We were reminded that Czech and Ukrainian students are very similar, and that maybe the transition won't be so different once we start meeting with youth. Then we returned to L'viv to stay with Jay and Cameron, who were unbelievable hosts. Their apartment was fantastic, and L'viv was really unique and appealing to us. Jay introduced us to several youth workers in the city. We took various driving tours and excursions to see the country side. We visited another town called Lutsk and a former Communist Pioneer youth camp where some summer camps are now held. The Hughes had their language tutor over for our first one-hour Ukrainian lesson! It's funny – I look forward to learning Ukrainian & Russian; I dread camping and dirty living conditions. Ben, on the other hand, dreads the language part but doesn't mind run down conditions. May God use these strengths and weaknesses to encourage each other while there!

Photos: 1) Our first view of L'viv (outskirts) 2) Many tiny farming villages between the larger towns 3) A glimpse of the center city of L'viv



LIFE AS WE KNOW IT HAS COME TO AN END: July 23 – August 26

We quickly readjusted back to life in the US, but we have had to view NJ as more of a temporary residence as we prepare to leave. We are trying not to allow our to-do list to get the best of us. These next two weeks have been frantic as we leave today for 2 months of training in NC, and we could really use your prayers. We were in and out of doctor offices, trying to get medical sign offs. We've been trying to pack and sell all that we can, including cars, all furniture, and our condo. Our last day of work was Friday, Aug. 25, but there are still many loose ends to tie with insurance companies, wills, banking, postal service, residency, etc. We have been so crazy with the administrative-like tasks to prepare for the Ukraine that we haven't had time to stress about two major components – continuous financial support raising (we still have about \$1300 of monthly commitments that we need to secure before we get permission to move) and saying goodbye to so many wonderful people here in the States. (Check out the attached .pdf file to read an article written about us by our church.)

MISSIONARY TRAINING: August 26-late October

We leave today, August 26 to drive to Union Mills, NC for about 7 weeks of culture assimilation, leadership, and language acquisition training at a Christian missionary training school. Then we drive to Wheaton, IL for another week of training, hosted by Josiah Venture. We are looking forward to meeting with different supporters along the way, continuing to cultivate relationships despite the distance we will face in the near future. Please pray for us! And we are praying for you. Despite the chaos of our current situation, we have seen God work miracles, and we have depended on Him more than ever this summer. When we are tempted to stress and feel frustrated, we try to remind ourselves that all of this logistical planning can't get us down. There are thousands of young people in the Ukraine just waiting for leaders to help them follow Jesus Christ with their whole lives. This is what compels us and spurs us on.

Isaiah 42:6-7 “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.”

Trusting in God every step of the way ~ and stay in touch!

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