



Joshua & Kelsie Steele

April 2012

Visas and Beyond



Yes, we got our visas. But that's just the beginning. Now we have to register...

Believe it or not, the visas you see in the picture above allow us to be in Ukraine *for only 45 days*. They'll expire on April 27th. As we re-entered the country on March 14th, the guard at the border warned me in no uncertain terms: "If you do not leave Ukraine by April 27th, we will deport you."

As you may already know, Ukraine has completely changed their immigration system. Under new laws which went into effect last August, a visa is merely a small piece of the puzzle. The class D visas we got in Krakow essentially give us the legal right to pursue

long-term residency in Ukraine for the purpose of religious work. They are step 1, you might say. Step 2 is registration, and 45 days is all we have to get it done.

Even as I write this we are in the process of gathering a rather daunting stack of documents including everything from proof of where we live to copies of our local pastor's passport! If we can obtain all these documents in time and submit them to the proper government





Our 4-day English Club in Skole

agency, we should receive residency cards which will allow us to stay in Ukraine until March of next year. At the end of that year, we'll have the opportunity to renew our residency cards for a second year. Once year 2 is up, we have to start the process over again.

In a word, please don't stop praying about this situation! While we're optimistic that God will keep Ukraine's doors open, there are many hurdles yet to be overcome. One great blessing in the midst of all this is our attorney, Oleksandr. He's a believer and has a lot of experience with immigration issues. His help has been invaluable to our team.

Doors Opening in Skole

One cold and rainy November evening in 2004, I met a young university student named Sergiy Chepara. He had only recently been saved,

and for several months I taught him the Bible one-on-one. Sergiy later went on to attend Bible college in Kyiv. He has proven himself faithful in ministry, and has assisted our team with various outreaches

over the years.

A few weeks ago, Sergiy came to me and proposed the idea of conducting a four-day English Club in his home town of Skole. There is no established evangelical church there, and Sergiy's vision is that one would eventually be formed. Like most towns in Western Ukraine, Skole is a very religious

community with deep seated Catholic and Orthodox traditions. For this reason, it is nigh unto impossible to simply march into town and announce the beginning of church meetings or Bible studies. Instead, one must first focus on building relationships and winning trust. Teaching English often provides an effective means of accomplishing these goals.

Sergiy made all the arrangements with local officials, and on March 26-29, our team conducted free ESL classes at a small high school in Skole. We had a nice group of enthusiastic students who thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to improve their English skills.

No one can tell what the future holds, but for now, it appears that God may be opening some doors in this small Carpathian town. As always, we appreciate your prayers for this ministry.

How You Can Pray

Please pray with us about the following requests:

- Praise for our new visas!
- Pray for our successful registration.
- Pray for continued open doors in Skole as we seek to expand our ministry there.
- Pray for strength and safety for Kelsie and our new baby.

To God be the Glory



Scan this code to see more photos from Skole!

