

Standing in the Gap

Written by Kelsie



Joshua preaches the Sunday morning service at Living Word Church in L'viv.

Over 20 years ago, our friends and fellow missionaries, Mark and Rhonda Blessing, came to Ukraine and began a thriving ministry. Among other things, Mark pastors a church here in L'viv and his family is very active in the lives of the members. At the beginning of 2020, Rhonda needed an operation in the U.S. which kept them there for a few months.

Enter COVID-19. As it has with so many, Covid created a gap for Mark and Rhonda and their church. They were unable to get back to Ukraine at a time when their congregation, like so many others during the pandemic, stood in great need of encouragement.

Over the past several months, Joshua has had the privilege of filling that gap, taking over the preaching for most of the Sunday services. He began with a four-part series from Psalm 34:1-4, teaching on four decisions needful in the life of every believer. Following were messages about the character of God, seeking God, and how to discern His will for your life, among others. I wish I could give you links to access those messages, but you would need to brush up on your Ukrainian first! ;)

At the beginning, only Joshua attended, along with one other member to stand behind the video camera and manage the live stream. Gradually, the musicians were

able to come and be part of the videos, and little by little a few of the members. Joshua will testify that preaching to a small audience is much more rewarding than speaking at a sterile screen! Now, as in many other churches, those who are able are attending in person and the videos are still made available for those at home.



Mark and Rhonda Blessing

The body at Living Word Church is a dedicated and God-focused group of people, one we have grown to love over the years. It has been a true blessing for Joshua to “stand in the gap” for this church, but we know

they are missing their pastor and his lovely wife. Lately, Mark has resumed preaching by recording videos in advance that can be played back on Sunday mornings. Please pray that Mark and Rhonda would be able to return soon to their church family and to their home!

Remembering Bobby Fisher

Written by Joshua

Today we would like to take a moment to honor a special couple that have been a blessing to our family. I first met Bobby and Sunni Fisher as a child in Sunday school. I can still remember Sunni sharing testimonies from their marriage, and how thrilled she was when Bobby came to Jesus. She told a story I’ll never forget about how Bobby went to a bar and shared the Gospel with someone he knew there.

Bobby and Sunni have a mailing business, and many years ago they offered to handle the mailing of our newsletter. Every few months, they fold, stuff, stamp and mail hundreds of copies of *Overseas Field Report* to people in the United States and abroad. And they have done this free of charge as a ministry to us and ultimately to Christ.

On July 2, 2020, at the age of 77, Bobby received his promotion to glory after a battle with COVID-19. While we grieve at his departing, and the sorrow it means for Sunni, their family, and so many others, we rejoice at the knowledge that we will see him again one day. *“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”* (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14)

In addition to a career of 43 years with the U.S. Postal Service, Bobby was also a veteran who served our country in Panama and as part of a special guerrilla platoon which trained U.S. soldiers headed to Vietnam.

Bobby and Sunni, thank you for your faithfulness to each other, for your service to the Lord, and for the kindness you have shown to our family. Surely none can know the full count of those who have seen your light and have glorified your Father in heaven.



Bobby and Sunni Fisher

How You Can Pray

- Pray for Mark and Rhonda Blessing and their church body here in Ukraine.
- Pray for peace and comfort for Sunni and all the Fisher family.
- Pray for *Bible First* and our continuing ministry here in Ukraine.
- Pray for Joshua as he is preaching more frequently.
- Pray for health, safety, and provision for our family.
- Pray for peace and liberty in Ukraine.

To God be the Glory