

## Shindigs and Such



***By far our largest conference was the Black Hills Mini Shindig in South Dakota. We were blessed to meet and fellowship with so many like-minded believers!***

You could sum up our last few months in just 2 words: travel and people! Here are some of the highlights from our time in America, broken down into 4 phases.

### Phase 1: Shindigs and Road Trip

On September 1st, we embarked on an adventure of travel and speaking in the US. Our journey has taken us through 11 States, two conferences, and to the homes of many friends and family.

The first of our stops was a homeschool Shindig in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Here Joshua spoke a number of times, covering topics like *Active Forgiveness* and *Continuing Steadfast in the Faith*. I had the privilege to share about *3 Strategies for a Happy Home* with a friendly ladies' group there. We rarely saw our kids, who were enjoying camp life: volleyball, gaga ball and even square dancing! When camp finished, Joshua's parents were able to join us for a family trip to the iconic Mt. Rushmore.

Next up, we enjoyed a fun visit in Minnesota with our friends, Hank and Amy Thompson. Despite not having seen them for over a decade, we resumed our friendship as if it had never left off. We had many stimulating conversations, also comparing notes on best coffee making strategies. 😊 Our kids experienced some of the joys of country life like target shooting and four-wheeling. By the time we left, Hank and Amy had all but convinced us to return in October for some exciting plans they had underway. But would we be able to do it? Time would tell...

Our next family camp was in northern Ohio, right in the heart of Amish country. Many of the attendees were formerly Amish, having left that community when they found faith in Jesus Christ. It was fascinating to learn more about the Amish teachings and ways. These people had a noticeable passion for the message of Christ's finished work that paid our debt in full! At this gathering, Joshua spoke about chronological Bible teaching and strategies for evangelism.

We made our way south toward Texas, stopping with friends in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Finally, on October 5th, we pulled into Joshua's parents' driveway in TX, after over a month of travel!



***Enjoying some family time at Mt. Rushmore***



***Rebekah shares testimony after a group evangelism outreach in South Dakota.***

BUT AS WE WERE ALLOWED OF GOD TO BE PUT IN TRUST WITH THE GOSPEL, EVEN SO WE SPEAK; NOT AS PLEASING MEN, BUT GOD, WHICH TRIETH OUR HEARTS. 1 THESSALONIANS 2:4

## Phase 2: Minnesota Gospel Outreach

You might think we'd be done with traveling, but remember those Minnesota plans we mentioned? Details came together for Joshua, Hosanna and me to fly back to MN at the end of October. Hank and Amy had been preparing weeks in advance for a gospel outreach at their cabin near International Falls. A large group of committed young people and adults from the Thompson's church participated. Over the Halloween weekend, we went out to surrounding towns to invite folks to a gospel fellowship. Using a simple Bible survey, we opened conversations and gave people the opportunity to sign up for Bible First Online. In fact, several people did sign up over the course of the weekend!



*Our dear friends, Hank and Amy Thompson, graciously hosted our family for a whole week in Minnesota!*

When Joshua and I were invited to the MN outreach, one of the strong draws was a large Ukrainian immigrant community in that area. During the outreach, special efforts were made to meet and invite these families, who were largely from a Pentecostal background. On Sunday night as we opened the barn for gospel preaching, about 20 of these Ukrainians attended. Joshua and I had the unique privilege of presenting in tandem, as he preached to them in Ukrainian and I gave a translation in English. I believe it was a piece of home for us and them! Many good connections were made.



*During the Minnesota outreach, Joshua preached in Ukrainian while Kelsie translated into English.*

## Phase 3: Time with family and friends

Understandably, one of our primary purposes in the US has been to spend time with our loved ones. Prior to our arrival, we had not seen our family members for 3 years, and little

Mia had never been Stateside. So it's been extraordinarily special for us to enjoy different activities together. In addition to our Mt. Rushmore memories, we've had several gatherings with Joshua's siblings, including a fun Steele ladies' trip to Beaver's Bend, OK. Abigail and Hosanna had fun celebrating their birthdays with family, Abby hitting the sweet 16 mark and Hosanna turning 11! My parents have also hosted us a couple of times at their home in The Woodlands. We are grateful for these wonderful memories!



*Kelsie's mom, Cindy, spends some girl time with Rebekah.*

## Phase 4: Returning to Ukraine

This week we received a big answer to prayer – our visas arrived in the mail! We now have the needed documents for our scheduled return to Ukraine on January 16th. The next big hurdle is getting negative COVID tests for our family before we fly. Thankfully, we are not required to be vaccinated in order to enter Ukraine, and we pray it continues that way. Over the next few weeks, we will be making preparations for our travel back. It is always a busy time of packing and shopping, not to mention recovery from jet-lag after we arrive. We covet your prayers for all these things, that God would go before us and that His grace would be over us. Our hope and prayer is to be effective servants for Him in the days to come!

## How You Can Pray

- Praise the Lord for new growth with our digital evangelism platform, Bible First Online!
- Praise the Lord for providing our new Ukrainian visas! Pray that the remainder of our registration process in Ukraine will go smoothly.
- Pray for CMO 2022. We hope to post an announcement about that very soon.
- Pray for health, strength, and safety as we travel back to Ukraine in January.
- Pray for peace and liberty in Ukraine.

*To God be the Glory*