

Family Hess

Missionaries to Russia

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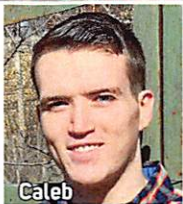
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Tony



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Caleb



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Marc & Ciera



Joshua & Rebecca

Dear praying friends and family-

This is the day you hear from your missionary! Yeah. I am glad to get this update out to you. Just a few hours ago, I got a word from another missionary: "Congrats on 25 years with BIMI." What came to mind? Well, I thought - yikes! I am too young to be this old. Twenty-five years as a missionary - wow! What a joy!! A privilege this West Virginia boy sure doesn't deserve. God has been MIGHTY good to the Hess'.

We are living in a snowy wonderland - Since Thanksgiving, we have seen the grass two days... today was Day 3. There have been not inches, but feet of snow that lie on the ground and in MASSIVE snow-plow mountains. Well, it has been an experience to say the least, but folks remain faithful even on snowy roads. We did have a bout with FLU this winter, but everyone is over it and back to normal. I told my wife that viruses don't last long up here. I guess they freeze and die off..LOL. So I know that we've had more than 103 inches of snowfall this winter (yes, that is 8 and 1/2 feet of snow) and I DO still like winter. Staying warm is simple - just one extra BASE layer and keep gloves in your pockets. God has sent us to this northern lake effect snow belt to this town on a mission. I honestly try to keep ONE EYE ever on the mission and three to five years down the road.

Praise the Lord, God is using us. I have told multiple folks that I've come to realize that God sent us here, not just for the church, but to "pastor" the town. Some of whom may not come to the church for several years, but the Lord is working and it is SOOOO THRILLING TO BE WHERE HE'S USING US. Life with great purpose beats empty wandering and endless pursuit of "making a living" ANY and EVERY day of the week. When life = adventure... YES, that's the life for me - an adventure that makes an eternal difference - LOVE IT.

This past Friday, we had another youth event where we invite the kids from the church and community. It is our follow-up from VBS this past summer and has been successful. Although we always have a different crowd each time with certain very faithful ones, I so, so enjoy the opportunity to share the Good News with these young kids and now their parents who come nearly every time. We had three new kids this past Friday and God is building toward a harvest with these kids as they are now getting the Gospel. When I say "getting it - I mean that we can now tell that God is working in their lives and they are understanding and OPEN as we can ever imagine. It has been a long road of month by month sharing the Good News on a kids' level and powerfully - so that they are literally hanging on every word. Some of you don't know what an adventurous challenge it has been for these kids going from totally unchurched kiddos to where we are now and how they listened this past week - I'm just saying: "Indeed THERE IS A GOD IN HEAVEN!" and He had to do it!! Praise the Lord - keep praying for the HARVEST with these young people. Our oldest kids there are 11 down to age 4. Yes, everywhere I go, I put a solid emphasis on reaching the YOUTH - because kids are teachable, mold-able, energetic, willing to serve and do more and VERY FEW HAVE ARTHRITIS... lol ☺

God has used the YOUTH in our church overseas to basically keep all the ministries GOING. We are laying a solid foundation here as well. We are praying about having Bible Time here this summer. I traveled two summers as an NBT evangelist back in my college days and I know it is REVIVAL TIME with the youth and help for the entire church. PRAY WITH US ABOUT THAT. It's a little expensive for this small church, but we're growing, and NBT, I believe and PRAY, will be a solid boost for us as well.

As a whole, things are going quite well here and we are making steady progress in the ministry. We are doing our best to keep SOWING THE SEEDS OF THE WORD and loving folks in the church AND in the community. Seems Satan had a stronghold here that my Jesus is breaking up, but as Jesus said - "these kind come only forth by prayer and fasting." We have a spiritual battlefield in this town, BUT I know WHO specializes in hard cases and IS VICTORIOUS EVERY TIME. HE'S IN CONTROL. He cannot lose! PLEASE PRAY FOR GOD TO RAISE UP PREACHERS, PASTORS AND HELPERS IN THE MINISTRY HERE. We pray twice weekly in the services for Revival here in Wattsburg - trusting God for that too!!

As you all know, I continue all the services with our church in Crimea. Let me share just a little closing word on our Timothy Class -- I guess it's youth time or something, but it's another testimony on God's work among our YOUTH in LifeWay Baptist in Crimea. So many weeks we make SUCH a connection, even though I'm thousands of miles away. It's actually quite miraculous -- ONLY GOD COULD DO IT and praise God, He is!

THESE TEENS JUST NEED and WANT STRAIGHT FORWARD BIBLE TEACHING from someone they know who cares! IT IS A PROFITABLE MINISTRY. I can't get enough! One Sunday morning, early morning for me, ONE DAD whose son just entered our Timothy Class said, "My son so looks forward to Friday's class and is always talking about the last or next youth activity." He said, "He goes on about church and the youth group and Bible Verses- Praise God!" Well the Lord is working. This young man is not saved yet either... but soon I believe. Pray for Alan - He's 12 years old. We have three others in that Crimean ministry that need saved -- please pray for Vera, Yulliya and Artor as well (these are not typos) - you say them the way I wrote them here.

You all are such an encouragement, help and God-sent blessing to our ministries. We truly "thank our God upon every remembrance of you." THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO. We remain...

YOURS FOR PRECIOUS SOULS,

Tony & Dawn Hess

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