



Our bags are packed!

On Our Way Down Under

After four years of praying, preparing, and waiting, God is sending us to Sydney, Australia! The nations are increasingly on the move to global cities. We want to be on the move with them. With Sydney's nearly 100,000 international students, Australia is the 2nd most desired location for international education after the U.S. Four years ago during a conference, Australia Cru staff asked if any Bridges staff would consider helping them reach Sydney's large number of internationals. Because of their ask and need for more full-time ministry workers, we said yes!

Our desire is to be a family who holds out the light of Christ to those who are in darkness and have little opportunity to hear about our Lord. We desire to see lives transformed by Christ and students sent as a light to their communities all over the world, so that God's name would be worshipped among the nations. Yet we could never do this by ourselves. God has provided you! You have joined us on this journey of faith. Thank you!

In February we applied for our visas not knowing how long the process would take. Toward the middle of May we were thrilled to receive a long awaited email from Australia granting our family temporary resident visas for a maximum of 4 years. We also praise God that He has provided all the support needed to move to Australia. Thank you for all your prayers, support, and encouragement. We are so grateful!

For the past three weeks we have worked hard to uproot from our Houston home. With our bags mostly packed, we are now ready to depart. Currently, we are in Ohio visiting Emily's family. Our Sydney team leader and other staff are preparing for our arrival by collecting donated furniture! We depart June 27th from Houston. For the first three weeks we have temporary housing lined up to give us time to find an apartment and settle-in. The semester starts August 1st when thousands of new students will arrive to Sydney from all over the world! Nathaniel is looking forward to a ferry ride across Sydney's harbor and to see kangaroos, so that will be one of the first things we do as a family.



On June 4th, we had a going away party in Houston.

Uprooting from Houston

Acts 17:26-27 talks about how *God made the nations to inhabit the whole earth appointing specific places and times for each to dwell. He did this so that the nations would seek and find him, though He is not far from each of us.* Uprooting is hard work. Saying goodbye to the people and places you love is challenging. We believe this points to the reality that God has shaped our hearts to dwell in a land - to be at home. Knowing this, we take comfort that our true home is with Him and with His people and that God is on the move with us. From the passage above, we can gather that God has an appointed place for international students to dwell so that they will one day know Him.

While we've lived in Houston, our community pointed us to Christ and has been an encouragement in our lives. We look forward to seeing how God will

continue to provide a place for us to be in community with His people, to grow in Him, and to join Him in making Christ known among the nations.



Visiting Emily's family in Ohio before we depart.

Thank you for being with us on this journey of faith as we seek to be planted in a new city where the nations are gathered.

Blake & Emily Ackerson

Praise & Prayer Requests

- Thank God that our visas were granted and that we are able to depart on June 27!
- Pray for all the transitions over the next several weeks that we would experience God's peace and presence, especially during the long flight!
- Pray for all the settling in logistics like finding a place to live near campus, buying a vehicle, getting furniture, etc.
- Pray that our boys would be able to adjust to the time-change quickly, and for our family as we get settled into a new home. Pray especially for Nathaniel as change can be very challenging for him.
- Pray for God to prepare our hearts for what is ahead of us in ministry, and that we take the needed time to settle-in as a family. The semester starts August 1st, so pray for the new students arriving that the Lord would prepare their hearts.

****See our new U.S. mailing address below.****