



AN UPDATE FROM **BOBBY & JULIE**

MISSIONARIES SERVING IN CENTRAL ASIA

Dear Parkside,

It's been a little over a year since we landed in central Asia. We've done this move a few times before to Taiwan and China, and, despite the upsets, I am thankful for the grace and wisdom that come from multiple launches. It's a little like parenting when the fourth or fifth kid comes along. I'm thankful for freedom from worry and a focus on what's essential. Worry, unbelief, and grumbling are poor traveling companions for a pilgrim's progress. As I write these words, we probably still need to decisively ditch these robbers that we find brazenly clinging to us at every turn. Lord, help us to take authority and to come boldly before your throne of grace, like you commanded us to.

Our priority outside of getting settled and caring for our family and teammates has been language learning. As a linguist I'm tempted to go into detail and put most people to sleep by describing how Russian and English are akin. Having been immersed in classical languages along with German, most days I'm thrilled by repeatedly seeing the preservation of our shared Indo-European

ancestry made apparent by virtue of Russian's age and differing isolation. For example, the word "redeem" comes to mind repeatedly when I see many Russian words, like the word meaning "understand" or another word meaning "pay attention."

There are also connections that Persian (also Indo-European) and Hebrew have to the Kazakh and Uyghur languages. These sorts of discoveries have helped me keep going, because we felt so sluggish and slow in language acquisition when we got here.

***“ Please pray for God’s
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to bring the dead to life. ”***

Meanwhile, Julie has been patiently slugging away like a stranger in a strange land without these nerdy connections. Please pray for us—that God who gives understanding and power will help us excel in language learning for the sake of loving others and the good news that so many have never heard here.

This coming year we will continue to focus on language learning, but we are also thinking and trying various ways to reach people with the gospel. One current point of connection is through our company's CrossFit business. There have been a lot of gospel conversations through that business, and we are praying for a few people in particular who have been invited to study the Bible.

We are also looking for opportunities that would facilitate short term teams supporting local church outreach efforts through summer outdoor tourism and camps, which are

popular here. This past summer we had three college students come. They served local village churches, and God opened the door for them to share the gospel with new friends. Please pray for God's miracles and power in these relationships to bring the dead to life.

***“ It’s like there’s a pearl
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Sharing these prayer requests, I’m reminded that wherever we have lived—whether in Asia, the Midwest, the South, or New England, the barriers to the gospel are multitude. I think of James O. Frayser, who worked in southwest China. His dependence on God’s Spirit and the power of prayer were how God opened wide the prison doors and saved many who had never heard the gospel. It’s like there’s a pearl worth getting, and prayer is the tool which God has given us for cracking the oyster open. C.H. Spurgeon in a sermon on the power of prayer said, “We ask for the knocking of [someone] who means to stop at mercy’s gate ‘till it opens, and all his need shall be supplied.” Please keep us in prayer and let us pray for one another in this way!

Love,
Bobby and Julie

If you would like more regular updates, please reach out to Jacque in the church office at jrplatek@parksidechurch.com.