

Dear family and friends –

THANK YOU FOR AN AMAZING VISIT!



As a human, in general I consider hellos to be great and goodbyes to stink. But as a Christian, both hellos and goodbyes contribute to our growth, maturity, and ultimately our joy in The Lord. Now is our time to say goodbye.

Tomorrow morning (Fri) we are wheels up in Seattle at 7:35 am for Atlanta. For those in GA we'll be at Emmanuel Church this Sunday (4/5) and Christ Church next Sunday (4/12) and fly out to Moscow on Monday 4/13 – arriving the next day.

Last summer after 14 years on the field, and the most recent term of 5.5 years we said hello to you all. We arrived tired and worn. While here with our GA, TX, and WA families we have prayed together, played together, worked together, worshipped together, and grown together. We shared with you the miraculous moments of the birth of a child and the healing of a child. This is the wonderful restorative power of family. Being here with you has been delightful and encouraging. Hellos are fantastic. But they are not all.

Goodbyes keep us moving in the direction in which God is working. God brings us together for a season to stoke our fires, then he sends us out to share that light and warmth in other darker, colder places. This brings glory to God and joy to us as we walk out being His hands and feet. But it requires goodbyes, which are tough in the moment, but deeply rewarding – and absolutely necessary not only for the fulfillment of the great commission, but also for growing our own joy in God as we confirm our dependence on Him and observe His power and grace at work in us.

We have five passports with valid visas, and my work permit was issued and awaiting me there. While explaining to Pasha and Jon how we couldn't just go to Russia, but needed an invitation from the President and his officials to come visit his country, he responded, "Why is he so lucky that he gets to be there and we don't!?" To (mostly) end it, I had to make him a "go to Russia advent calendar" where he is marking off the days. (OK – he is sad at times too; it sinks in in waves...)

Thank you for your love, your sacrificing with us through prayer and giving, your counsel, your prayers. Although we give up our proximity, we do not give up our unity. Keep in touch with us at adam@richardsons.ru and inna@richardsons.ru.

Please pray for us as we go:

- for the grace to say goodbye well
- for a quick transition back to Russian life and ministry, with minimal jetlag and the frustration that an 11-hour change can bring!
- for patience and success in registering our documents
- for Pasha and Jon to jump back into their Russian preschool and Russian language immersion.
- *Pray that they would enjoy school and make friends quickly.
- And most immediately, please pray for strength and patience as we travel tomorrow with many bags, car seats, toys, snacks, and tickets to juggle

Grace be with you all!

Adam and Heather, Pasha, Jon, and baby Anna



PS - BY THE WAY, this goodbye is not only for the Richardsons leaving the country – it is for all of us every week. We come together (the hello) on Sundays to worship, small groups to study, meetings to fellowship, etc. to rejoice in the restorative power of family – but then leave (the goodbye) to take our brightened fire to the world since we long to see the family grow. Just as Christ said goodbye to Heaven to bring His life and light to this world, let's continue the tradition of goodbyes in memory of Him. A paraphrase of the great commission – "Say to one another, 'Goodbye for now' and go, taking the fruit of your fellowship out to the hungry, so they may also taste and see that The Lord is good. I will always be with you as the well of life – from which the thirsty will drink."