



AUGUST 2023

4,441.

That's the number of freshmen that Ohio University's main campus in Athens welcomed in the fall of 2022. It was the largest freshman class in the history of the university. Given the consistently declining numbers in the previous five or six years, there were many questions about whether these enrollment figures were a post-pandemic outlier or if they were the start of a new trend.

This year, estimated enrollment is even higher - nearly 4,600 students have enrolled at Ohio U this fall. This past week, they flooded into town and began classes.

We aim to give each of these students the opportunity to connect with a Christ-centered community where they can hear the gospel regularly, some of them for the very first time!

Just this last week, we did our annual "blitz" of the campus to find interested students using a series of questionnaires and events. So far, we have seen:



- **3,900** questionnaires completed
- **647** students indicated they were interested in a Bible study (this beats our last record of 630, in a year when 5,500 questionnaires were completed. So the overall ratio of "yes" is much higher!
- **225** students at our "New to Cru" kick-off event - **the highest number EVER in 50 years of ministry at OU**
- **230** at our first weekly worship meeting, 180 (our last year high was 150)

As you can see, purely by the numbers, something truly unprecedented is happening. We are ready and eager to see what God will do! Thank you for being a part of this work.

Would you pray with us that God will be at work in the hearts and minds of these incoming young men and women as we begin connecting with them over the next few weeks? We are praying for young men and women to surrender their lives to Christ and be changed by His love.

Yours in Christ,

*Clay + Emily*



# FAMILY UPDATE

As a family, we have had a busy July. Elliott and Judah are both doing well as our summer comes to a close. We spent a decent amount of time with Emily's parents and they enjoyed their time playing at the lake. I continued to connect with people about our ministry work and Emily has continued preparing posters, TV ads, postcards, and other outreach materials that we will need for the upcoming fall semester.

Unfortunately, we did have to say goodbye to another beloved family member, as Emily's grandpa passed away in July at the age of 86. John Mueller was born in what is now Serbia in 1937 and was part of a German ethnic minority that were sent to concentration camps in the aftermath of World War II by the Red Army and the Yugoslavian government. They escaped under the cover of darkness to Hungary and later lived in Austria for several years. After emigrating to the United States at the age of 14, he met his wife Carol and they had two children together (Emily's dad Gary and her uncle Michael). Professionally, he worked as a reporter for the Detroit Free Press, and eventually became the head of worldwide public relations for General Motors for many years until his retirement in 2001.

As you can imagine, he was a man that his friends and loved ones had great admiration and respect for. We will all miss him, but trust that he is with the Lord now and is experiencing peace and joy in the presence of Jesus.

Elliott (now 5) is beginning home school kindergarten this upcoming week, and Judah just celebrated his 3rd birthday! All 4 of us are healthy and doing well.



## PRAISE + PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for a fruitful, restful, and fun summer.
- Pray for incoming students, particularly those who God has prepared for us to share the Good News with. "The fields are ripe for harvest..."
- Pray for our student leaders as they welcome and disciple the younger and new students.
- Pray for us, particularly Emily, as we embark on homeschooling Elliott and begin the process of managing his learning and developmental disabilities.
- Pray for our family as a whole - the fall in campus ministry means long hours and emotionally-charged work. Pray for rest and peace.