



Remaining in Country

At a glance:

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- **Remaining in Country**

Baby G will be here before we know it!

R started showing signs of pre-term labor a few weeks ago, but thankfully she responded very well to a recommended medication and has made it to 37 weeks! The medicine is no longer necessary and now we get to wait for Baby G to make her appearance whenever she's ready 

We are excited that A's parents arrived earlier today and will stay with us for a whole month to help with our transition to being a family of five! Baby J is pumped to have another little sister, and we think Baby M will take after Baby J and be an excellent older sister herself when Baby G arrives.

Please pray for a safe and healthy delivery, against complications, and for wisdom and patience as we adapt to being outnumbered by the munchkins.

Ramadan

"One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. **The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.**" Acts 16:14

The month of Ramadan is coming to a close! We've had the very sweet opportunity to join some of our friends and neighbors as they break their daily fasts in the evening which, on top of enjoying absolutely delicious meals, has provided great opportunities to ask questions about what this month means and why it's important to them. It rarely feels difficult to enter into spiritual conversations because religion is deeply weaved into almost every aspect of life here, but this month people are especially open to spiritual conversations. Recent topics of conversation include:

- The majority religion's cleansing ritual before being able to approach God in prayer vs being cleansed by Jesus and being able to approach Him with freedom and confidence
- The Trinity
- Assurance of salvation
- "Shoulder angels" vs Holy Spirit
- Ramadan being a time where good works are worth more

Please pray for all of our local relationships: that the Lord would soften hearts, give dreams, bring Scripture that we've shared to mind, give a holy discontentment with their belief system, and open their hearts to really pay attention to what we share from the Bible. Pray that spiritual conversations would move from an exchange of facts to something that they personally and genuinely want to explore. Pray that God would work in the hearts of those we are currently in relationship with and that he would guide us to those whose hearts he is already at work in!

We need some help to remain in Country.

In January we shared about the worsening visa situation across all of our country and especially in smaller cities like ours. The visa that most workers here have been using is no longer a realistic option for us to remain here long-term, or even for another 12 months.

We asked you all to pray for wisdom and discernment for how our family could best remain here in a way that maximizes **family health** and **ministry potential**, and those prayers have been answered. After conversations with our sending church, partnering fellowships, and organizational leadership, it is clear that for effective life and ministry in our city we need to pursue obtaining what is called a **property visa**.

To qualify for the property visa, our family must purchase a property (a home, in our case) that is valued above the country-wide limit of \$200,000 USD. Because we are foreigners and are therefore unable to receive loans from local banks, we will need to have the full amount available when it comes time to purchase. We are hoping to raise the required amount through a combination of our personal savings, one-time tax deductible gifts from supporters and fellowships, and personal loans from individuals who are in the financial position to provide significant (\$5k, \$15k, \$25k+?) loans that we can pay back over time.

We recognize that this is a very significant ask. Our family has been blessed and encouraged by your faithful prayers and generous support for many years - even since before we moved (February marked three years since we moved here!) - and we do not take that for granted. We sincerely appreciate your prayerful consideration about what partnership might look like to help us secure a visa to remain here. Please don't hesitate to reach out and ask us any questions via email or by commenting on this update - we know this situation is unusual.

Gifts: Our organization created a special fund specifically for our property visa where we can receive one-time tax deductible gifts. If you would like to give a gift toward our visa fund, contact your missions team leader.

Loans: If you or somebody that you know may be interested in providing a personal loan, please get in touch with us. We would love to share some more details, discuss what we expect this process to look like, and answer any questions that you might have.

An update on our team leaders who had their tourist visa application denied in January: they also decided to pursue the property visa and we're happy to report that the Lord provided all of their funding and a home that they were able to purchase just a few weeks ago! Please pray for them and their three girls as they meet new neighbors and adjust to their new space.

Thank you for reading our updates and taking the time to pray for and encourage our family - we love you all and it is an honor to participate in the Great Commission with you.

"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word." 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Grace and peace,
A+R+J+M+G