



Hopping around the USA

Dear Friends and family,
Our last update found us in a winter wonderland in West Virginia — this one finds us in sunny Florida! Since our last update in February, we have driven over 3000 miles and visited friends and churches in Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, South Carolina, and Florida. While we afterward regretted trying to pack quite so much traveling into such a short period of time, we are nonetheless grateful for all the people we got to reconnect with these last couple months, including many of you! Thank you to all who hosted us or made time to get together!



He knows the number of our days

In mid-March, I was finalizing some logistics for our trip to Wisconsin the following week. In particular we were planning to share at a supporting church that we'd never met in person before. So, I reached out to the pastor, whom I also had never met, to work out some details of our visit. Shortly thereafter I received a call by someone else in the church informing me that the pastor of the church had passed away very suddenly a couple days earlier and was with the Lord. He was 63 years old. I don't have to tell you that we were stunned by this, and for a moment we even considered changing our plans. (Continued below)

He knows the number of our days continued...

However, the church still wanted us to visit, despite it being the same weekend as the pastor's funeral, and it ended up being a sweet weekend together. However, these events were a striking reminder to us of our frailty as humans. Not to be too dark, but we truly do not know how much more time God will give to any of us, be it decades, years, or minutes. But none of this should discourage us as Christians or make us worried, but rather compel us to live wisely (Ps. 90:12, Eph. 5:15-16) and be faithful with every breath God gives us to declare His praise.

Better to go to the house of mourning
than to go to the house of feasting,
for that is the end of all men;
Ecclesiastes 7:2

So teach us to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom."
Psalm 90:12



Our hearts' plan and God's direction

One verse that continues to be a theme for us recently is Prov. 16:9 — "A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps." For those who don't know, our plan has been to be in the states until early May, move to Manaus, Brazil, and live in the city until building our house in the tribe somewhere around September. First of all, our return date has moved to the beginning of June so that we can be part of Spencer's cousin's wedding. And what's more, in a surprising turn of events, we are now happy to announce that we will not be moving to the tribe as a family of five like we'd thought! That's right! Baby #4 is due October 8th! Needless to say, this does affect our plans for house building and moving into the tribe. We may have to wait until after the birth of the baby to begin construction of our house. We are still in the process of adjusting our plans, but we are so thankful that God has worked out many of the details already! First of all, we now have a place to stay lined up in Manaus for when we get back. We will be living at the Puraquequara International School on the banks of the Amazon River from June-July and then at our mission base from August-October, at least. Spencer will be helping with a dorm renovation project at the International School and also preparing logistics for our own house building. Also, a close friend of ours has graciously agreed to come and live with us for several weeks in Sept.-Oct. in order to help us with our kids when our baby is born. This is a huge answer to prayer!

Praises & Prayer Requests

Praises

- That baby #4 is healthy and due Oct. 8!
- We have finished our speaking engagements and are now able to get some rest in Florida.
- God is working out the logistics of housing in Brazil and our friend coming to help us!

Prayer Requests

- Wisdom planning our tribal house design/coordinating plans for materials, etc.
- For our permanent visa application in June to go smoothly.
- That the door for ministry among the X people group would stay wide open despite efforts of some to complicate access.

Thank you so much for keeping up with us and for your prayers and support! Please reply to this email and let us know how you are doing and how we can pray for you, as well!

All for His glory,
Spencer & Joanna
Abigail, Gabriella, Judah, and Baby!
1 Thess. 5:16-18



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