



Dear Friends,

We are back in our apartment in our city after more than six weeks in limbo in Europe. We are incredibly grateful for the timing of our training in Germany and that we were able to extend our stay there. We spent almost four weeks in a guesthouse on the edge of the Black Forest and were grateful for a chance to rest and process what's been an intense year. Thankfully, the boys school decided to offer the option for some students to join classes via zoom and while that was a blessing we quickly realised it would be easier to be in the same time zone rather than starting the day too early. We therefore spent a little over two weeks in Athens, where we were able to keep up with school and work while preparing ourselves to return.

It was not an easy decision to come back into what is still a very volatile situation. However, we are blessed to live, study and work in an area that is largely unaffected by the violent attacks that are taking place. While our kids were attending their classes via zoom the majority of their classmates continued to attend face to face as usual. There were only three other students across their classes also unable to be at school. The rest of life in our suburb looks relatively normal and we even noticed several new restaurants have opened nearby in the time we were away.

Downtown, however there is an almost constant sound of surveillance drones and there are many, many displaced people. Some have been able to find places to rent or been offered places in government shelters, others are sadly camped in tents or under a makeshift shelter around squares and public. Praise God that many churches and believers have stepped into the gap and are providing shelter, meals, healthcare and other services to meet this huge need.

At immigration we got a lot more questions than usual about why as foreigners we were returning now. There have been moments when we questioned that ourselves. Unlike our coworkers who are teaching or leading churches the need for our presence didn't seem so great. While Andrew's team continued to train, the leagues are on hold indefinitely and for Bec it was somewhat easier to do her role, to meet with, plan, strategise, and care for people, from our temporary base in Europe with stable wifi and no security concerns. However there were multiple times during our first week back that we saw God affirming the value of our return. Andrew was greeted with much excitement by his players, many of whom were struggling to have hope and find joy in a pretty bleak situation but who were buoyed by his return and the prospect of not just good training but good conversations. After a friendly game on the weekend one of Andrew's players was getting involved in a lot of fiery exchanges and pushing and shoving with opposition players and management. When we were finally able to calm him down he apologised and shared that he had lost his family home in the preceding days. He was excited by the opportunity to play football but the emotions were too close to the surface to control himself like he had hoped to. For Bec it's been encouraging to be able to sit face to face with our local team who have persevered through many stressful days and sleepless nights while serving communities greatly affected by the situation.

We would love you to be praying for our family and for this country as we face so much uncertainty about the future. Please pray for wisdom and clarity and that God would be opening doors to serve him.

With love,
Andrew, Bec, Jem, Mac and Tad

PLEASE PRAY

- For enduring peace and stability in the region.
- For Andrew's player and the many like him who have lost their homes and so much due to the bombing (as the situation spreads everyone knows a team mate, work colleague or family member killed, injured or displaced).
- Continued safety and energy for our team.
- Pray for wisdom to speak into people's lives in a positive way.

- For Bec to be able to balance the needs of her regional role with people on the ground here.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN US ON ZOOM

We would love to invite you to join us online to pray for us.

Monday 25 November

8.30pm Sydney Time/9.30am Universal Time

Reply to this email or write to andrewandbec@outlook.com and we will send you the link.

Financial support

Regular, ongoing giving enables us to invest in developing long-term relationships and building bridges between the church and communities where He is least known. It will make it possible for us to build sustainable models and thrive as a family in a difficult location.

We are also asking for one-off gifts to meet the additional costs of this particular situation.

For more information, a link to our giving page or for any questions please email us at andrewandbec@outlook.com or contact the Australian Partner Relations Team on 1300 746 580



Respite in the Black Forest



Flying back

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