

Dear Praying Friends,

We have been having a great furlough, visiting with some friends, family, and supporters. We wish it were possible to visit with ALL of our friends, family, and supporters, but it is not. However, we are VERY GRATEFUL for all of you who fall into one or more of these categories. Thank you for your prayers, financial support, and/or loving encouragement.

Would you please continue to pray for the following...

1. Dr. "S" has changed his name to JOSEPH. He recently shared his testimony at a Greek evangelical church our teammates (the Morleys) attend, and hopes to be baptized soon after we return to Athens (we return September 3rd).

His situation has NOT changed for the better. In fact, his wife and 3 small children (pictured in attachment) were in the area affected by the devastating floods and he has not been able to communicate with them since then, though he has heard from someone else that they are alive, but cut off from transportation and communication.

2. We are hoping to purchase some assistive devices for Ellie before returning to Greece. She needs a stander, a gait trainer, and possibly a TheraTog (<http://www.theratogs.com/>). It looked like we might get some or all of these used at a discount or for free, but until now nothing has worked out.

3. Many of you know that I (Scott) am getting more involved in raising awareness about human trafficking (modern slavery). I have had the privilege of speaking about this at several churches, Sunday School classes, small groups, and a Christian school while in the States. Beginning with this update, and in all of our following knee-mails, I will be including a links, facts, stories, book/film recommendations and/or statistics about this wicked and evil travesty.

For example, did you know that human trafficking (the **Recruiting, Harboring, Moving, or Obtaining of a person by Force, Fraud, or Coercion for the purpose of Involuntary Servitude, Debt Bondage, Slavery, or Sex Trade**) is the second largest and fastest growing crime on the planet bringing in over 32 billion US dollars a year? Did you also know that this is the life experience of about 27 MILLION people in the world TODAY?!

4. The ARC in Athens has been closed for a couple months due to some extensive renovation. As a result, team members have been more involved in ministry outside the ARC. Below, teammate Stacie Shopp writes a little about this...

We head to the Attiki square to meet with refugees. It is an open area of green in the midst of the crowded city, which is ringed by cafes and tavernas. The grass is sparse, and the dirt below peeks through in almost any shady spot. The refugee men gather today to discuss work and life. The women and children are close by. Our team walks into the square, as we have for several Saturdays, and begins to stake a claim to a shaded area. We lay down sheets and prepare some crafts, hoping to continue our relationships with refugee friends, and meet new ones.

Women began to move toward our area, and the beading and coloring begins.

One sits on the sheet amidst the chaos of the square, and does not hear the loud arguments or discussions. She is coloring. Despite the fact that today she has lost her home, she seems to be able to focus. Her family huddles close by

seeking out options for where to go, as their suitcases are clustered around them. It is in the 90s in the sun, and their faces reflect the heat of uncertainty and Athens. Yet she sits coloring, and shows me a brightly colored drawing of a two story house. Is it her home I wonder?

Other refugee little ones gather around jostling for space on the sheet closer to the crayons and crafts. Many of them draw a house with big windows and flowers in the front garden. The sun is always shining in their pictures.

Is this their lives? Or is this what they had before? Or is this their dreams?

I smile at them as they speak to me in Farsi, a language that I only know in sounds and brief greetings. They smile. I smile. I color alongside their children praying for these little ones to find the peace that is symbolized in their colored realities.

Who are these that sit around me?

One is a beautiful mosaic designer, who would spend months on a single work.

One married at twelve and had two children with a man that she had barely met before the ceremony.

One is facing a birth in a country where no one speaks her language, and she does not understand theirs.

One is looking for hope and reunion with her family in another country, which seems at times as far as the moon even though it is just a flight away.

One is searching for security and safety, as she has no male to accompany her.

One is asking about truth, and about Jesus and about faith.

As my eyes roamed the park around me, it seemed almost surreal to think of the mass of humanity. My life has been so very vastly different from theirs, and I continue to learn over and over about strength of character and perseverance from those who have lived it.

I am honored to have met each of these 'ones'.

As the day ends the crayons are put away, children wave goodbye and the sound of Hodafis (goodbye in Farsi) ring in the air. I look at the pages of drawings in my hand, and I take them home. I want to keep these children in my life, and in my memory. I want to remember their drawings of two story houses.

The two story house might just be the one that God is preparing for them in heaven?

That is my prayer anyway.

Shalom in Him

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Stacie Shopp

Mobilizer

International Teams

Athens Refugee Ministry Team

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THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH US FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF GOD'S KINGDOM  
AMONG THE NATIONS!!!

Grateful,

Scott and Vicki



Dr. Joseph's wife, two children (and a friend's child)

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[scott.mccracken@iteams.org](mailto:scott.mccracken@iteams.org)

<http://vimeo.com/1207537> (ministry video)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nj8YotW2R3U>

<http://elliebomccracken.blogspot.com>

<http://refminathens.blogspot.com> (refugee stories)

JOIN THE BLASTOFF NETWORK:

<http://my.blastoffnetwork.com/welcome/>