

of our work and, again, it would be easy not to give that the attention needed, especially once we're in Athens and more isolated from the Bible input and stimuli we have at the moment.

Encouragements As well as getting on with plans we're really encouraged by the way that the Lord has provided for us through the kindness of his people, individually and from our church at Beeston as a whole family. Thank you to all who have begun to support us financially, either regularly or one-off. We are well on our way to getting our full

Thanks to God & his people for all our support

funding needs to IFES so that we can be paid! Costs will increase in Greece a little so there is a way to go still, so if you've considered giving but haven't yet, or think that you can't give enough to make it worthwhile, we would still love to have you involved in this task. Even £5 a week would be great: many people giving small amounts would be healthy. Please contact us if you're interested.

Upcoming We don't have a 'typical' life at the moment. 'What do you actually *do*?' isn't that easy a question to answer, so here's a (usual-ish) timetable:

- Mon: D—kids stuff at church/J—NTI study/Globe Café (evening)
- Tue: Greek study (am)/admin (pm)/Chinese Bible study (evening)
- Wed: D—Bethany group (for women)/J—NTI study/Home group
- Thu: D—NT all day/J—NTI (am) & kids (pm)
- Fri: Greek lesson (am) / IFES admin & support/Globe prep (pm)

Some key dates on the horizon:

- 21 May—speaking at Christ Church Liverpool about IFES Greece
- 8 June—J speaking at FES, Loughborough (Matt 7)
- 22 June—J speaking at Notts Trent (Clifton) (a parable tbc)
- 11-16 July—short break in Vienna for J's brother's wedding
- 17-21 July—NTI residential study N. Yorkshire
- 28 July-4 Aug—holiday in Lancashire with friends

Time will fly and there's lots to do! Please pray for us as a family in the busyness, that we will love each other well and raise Joel, Hannah and Pip to know Christ as well.

Please say hi when you've got a moment and help us to stay in touch with you, for whom we are very grateful to God.

Greece is the Word!

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May 2006

Dear friends

The months are speeding by and our move to Athens is beginning to feel very close now. Every week is packed and lots is happening: at the moment we feel like we hardly have time to stop and reflect on anything we've done before the



Pip scratching forehead

next thing comes along. Which is a bit like the big news, as the photo here will have given away to the observant among you: we're expecting another small Clark. 'Pip' is at the moment 24 weeks old *in utero* and we hope will pop out late Aug.

We're delighted and thank God for another precious gift. This development does affect our leaving plans a bit—originally we'd hoped to be in Athens mid-Sept (for language course to start early Oct). What we think we'll do now is go for a month in late autumn, find a flat, semi-move in, come back for

Christmas and New Year then move fully mid-Jan to start the same course 1 Feb 2007. We'll let you know more when we do! Until then, thank you for your support, friendship and prayers.

With love – Jonathan, Dawn, Joel & Hannah

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February in Athens... ...involved a two-week Greek course, a good look around the city, three church visits and a return to Beeston with really positive feelings about moving. We like Athens and felt at home instantly: enjoying practising our minimal Greek, getting quickly used to finding our way around, and beginning to appreciate Athenian life (a strange mix of frenetic/very chilled). Talking of which, it was literally freezing for most of the first few days, but then warm enough for t-shirts on some days later on.

We stayed in a church-owned flat about an hour from the city centre. We hope we won't end up living that far out long term. The bus/tram/metro system is cheap and easy, but Athens is a big, crowded city so it takes a while to get around.

Dawn's parents came with us to look after Joel and Hannah while we took our lessons each morning, which was great for us. It was also good that they got a chance to see where we'll be for the next few years. Joel and Hannah got on well on, though Joel in particular was very happy to come back. It was a healthy reminder to us that moving will not be all fun and games, for us as well as the kids.

One of the most positive things was a visit to a church in Piraeus (check your atlases) where we felt very welcomed: it's a strong possibility that'll be our church. The pastor is involved in the IFES movement and is already supportive.

All in all, there's lots to be thankful for at this early stage. Doubtless there'll be plenty of unforeseen challenges and struggles but we have experienced the Lord's help this far.

...and Belgrade Jonathan went straight from Athens to Belgrade for the Balkan IFES consultation. Most of the staff from across the region were there including Andy, a good friend from university days and starting with IFES in another country at the same time as us—also with three kids. The conference was wonderful: in particular it was reassuring to meet so many like-minded and godly co-workers. It will be a great encouragement to be part of the IFES family, all of whom know what it is like to hold out the word of life in difficult situations.

International Student Ministry Although Globe Café will finish for us in June it is a great opportunity for us and the team: we'd love you to pray for it and perhaps consider being involved in IS work if that's on the scene where you are. Each Monday evening during term time we have around 30-40 from around the world, though mostly East Asians. It's developed into a mostly regular attendance because the Globe is a safe and friendly place and/or there is some genuine spiritual hunger. The two hours of Globe itself provides opportunities for gospel chat, but in addition there are various Bible studies that spin out of it during the week. We've had the privilege, since March, of taking three Chinese students through Mark's gospel, and there are signs of progress and desire to understand Jesus and the cross. Please pray for Z, X & J. (Big Scrabble scores!) This week we studied Mark 14 (why was Jesus so deeply troubled about 'the cup?') It seemed as though they understood: please pray for true knowledge that leads to repentance and faith to be given to them.

Progress in preparation We're cracking on with our Northern Training/NT Institute courses and enjoying those, and taking Greek lessons each Friday with homework in between. Can we ask you to pray for two things in this area? First, that we'll make Greek a priority *now*: with so many things to do it's easy for that to be the diary casualty. Second, that we'll become good life-long learners and make good preparations for our ongoing theological development once we're in Athens. We are going to be engaged long term in—among other things—helping Greek students develop theologically. We can't do that if we ourselves are not. Reading good stuff and having our knowledge of God and his scriptures needs to be a big part

Please pray for the priorities of language and theological study: now and long term.