

Fwd: Means Family to Czechia

1 message

First Baptist Church Geneseo, IL
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To: Paul Franklin <pf101069@gmail.com>

Sun, Sep 8, 2024 at
7:58 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Nathan** <nathan@meanstoczechia.com>
Date: Sat, Sep 7, 2024 at 1:11 PM
Subject: Means Family to Czechia
To: <firstbaptistchurchgeneseo@gmail.com>

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One Year In

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This will not be a typical monthly prayer letter. Lisa is writing this one instead of Nathan. As we approach being on deputation for one year, I have been reflecting on what God has done. Surrendering my life to God involved giving up our worldly goods, giving up our family structure, and giving up the security I had in Nathan providing for our family. I would say that I trusted God and I thought that I did. After the honeymoon phase of deputation passed and reality of life on the road set in, God started revealing himself and my areas of weaknesses more than ever before.

I honestly don't miss all of our "stuff" that we sold. It was honestly a little freeing to have less material goods. However, as birthdays rolled around and the kids were asking for different desserts, I had to be creative without all of my baking tools I used to own. We made it work and made memories at the same time. I think having so much was a distraction to my walk with God.

I do miss my family. It's so hard to watch our granddaughter grow up through video calls. I miss my daughter and my parents. I love my family, but I had to choose to love God more. As I have surrendered my family to God, he has blessed with opportunities to see them on the road. I thought I was doing well with loving God more than my family and then we were faced with Steele's

medical needs. We kept praying for answers and for help, but when God answered that prayer it meant that Steele would have to leave and move in with my parents to receive the treatment he needs. (He has gained more than 30lbs and is up to a healthy weight now and for the first time in almost 4 years is starting to do things a “normal” teenager would do! Praise God!!! He is not cured, nor is there a cure, but he is learning how to manage his symptoms and he will be starting gastrointestinal physical therapy in October.) As we were praising God, I was also grieving him moving out. I don't know how to adequately explain the peace that God gave me or the comfort. God is an experiential God. I fear that so many Christians are missing out on truly experiencing God because they don't fully give their lives to God. God has truly blessed the times we have been able to spend with our family and friends along the deputation trail.

God has fully provided for us this past year. We have never gone without and have been given so much and not just from a monetary cost of living. When the camper broke down on the side of the road, the church we were going to be presenting at had a missions apartment that was available for use until the camper was repaired. When the stairs rusted off the camper, the next church we were at had a welder in the church that fixed it for free. When we needed extra stabilization to keep Makayla's bed from tipping over, God provided someone who could fabricate a metal bracket. Our bucket list of things we wanted to do included going to the ark and creation museum. We had a church pay for our entire family to go. When I was starting to feel lonely, our path crossed with other missionary friends or friends that moved across the country. I could easily sit here and write several pages of ways that God provided. We have a unique perspective with visiting many churches and no church is the same. I see how God is at work and alive in some churches and sadly where the pastor is the only one who loves God in other churches. It is always refreshing to be in a church where you can feel God. When God told us to move from Colorado to Texas, we were not expecting a move of that nature. We thought when we moved away from Colorado, it would be to serve in full time ministry. We thought that we had messed up and that God couldn't use us anymore. We obediently followed God to TX, but we were saddened. Now as we share our testimony across the nation, we hear how God is using it in other's people's lives. It is humbling to know that God *is* using us. I also always find it so amusing when a church has been such a blessing to us, but the people keep telling us that we are a blessing to them!

It is so easy to stay in our own little world and stay in our comfort zone, but that is the most dangerous place to be. I gave up my comfort zone and experienced God in the highs and lows this year. This will sound cliché, but I don't know how else to say it. I challenge you to get out of your comfort zone and draw closer to God. You won't regret it!



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