

# the Divine Adventure

ADVENT 2019 | Volume 35 | the Allen family

Merry Christmas, dear friends. It is our desire to share with you yet another edition of the Divine Adventure newsletter. It is always a joy to tell you how God has relentlessly shown His faithful hand in redeeming and sanctifying us as a couple and family. We hope to encourage you to seek Christ, and we also we want to remind you that we love and care for you! Thank you for all your love and care for our family over the years.

As you know, we are a bit difficult to keep track of, so here is an official update. After two years teaching and counseling at the high school in Honduras, we moved back to Southern California in the fall of 2018. The last year and a half has been full of God's grace and blessing as we continue to



adjust to major changes in all areas of our lives and to re-acclimate to life in the states.

As we commemorate 22 years of marriage, one of the richest experiences God has given us is that of being parents. The years of watching how our boys grow into men have flown by. In May, we anticipate Joshua graduating from the Master's University in

Los Angeles, with a degree in Political Studies. We are watching him makes plans for life after graduation, and we are grateful that he is submitting all his plans to the Lord. Jennifer and I expect that his pursuits will take him much further away from us geographically than we'd like, but we trust the Lord to protect and direct this young man.

Samuel is doing well his sophomore year in a small charter school here in suburban San Diego. He is the kind of young man that will do anything for anyone, and he tends to make wise choices about his influences and his friendships at school, at church, and on-line. As an analytical thinker, Samuel loves all things math and electricity-related and plays a mean game of chess!

Our youngest, Simon, is in 7th grade at the same charter school. He constantly brings us laughter with his quick wit, articulate expressions, and frequently dramatic way of observing his life and surroundings. He does a fantastic job caring for Neblina, our Siberian "Muttsky." The first eight months of our return to San Diego were tough on him – and

the rest of us - as we had to leave our family pet behind in Honduras. But the Lord orchestrated reuniting her with us, which has been a great blessing. Our backyard is a regional park, which is the perfect playground for young men with their bikes and dog!

Jennifer has returned to her full-time role as a mother and wife and does such a great job managing our family's budget, menu, schedule, studies, and goals. Last year, she also served as the manager of all production and sales operations for our little dried business fruit in Honduras. Upon the closure of the business, however, her schedule has been less hectic, with more time for personal ministry to our boys and to friends. In January, Jennifer will start a temporary job with the Registrar of Voters in San Diego County. She will be working



for about two months in training paid and volunteer workers in advance of the March primary elections. This should be an interesting experience and a blessing of some additional income for our family.

Matthew concluded a year of work as an IT project manager for a large spin-off of HP, and then he recently accepted a leadership role with a tiny software start-up in North County San Diego. After catching up with a former colleague of his from years back, Matthew now leads projects for clients in the UK, Australia, Japan, and on the East Coast. Not too much travel so far, but lots of time on conference calls and managing the demands of clients. The company only has 15 employees, so he has to wear lots of hats and is enjoying creating a corporate culture with his love for people and communicating.



Meanwhile, back in Honduras, God continues to show His hand of favor in the life of Iglesia El Camino de La Vida and upon the faithful service of the Zelaya family. After years of investing, praying, and sharing the need for a Tegucigalpa facility, 2019 saw the “completion” of a beautiful facility for worship, preaching, teaching, and fellowship. Jennifer and I have been able to travel back down to Honduras a handful of times this year to see our beloved church family use the building for outreach and regular exposition of God’s Word.



In the south, the church in hot, arid Tegucigalpa has acquired a considerable piece of land upon which they are building an after-school program to feed and tutor the growing number of children at the church. This area is perhaps amongst the most impoverished part of Honduras, where schooling and access to proper nutrition are inadequate at best. Pastor Nixon and the church identified this need as an open door for the proclamation of the Gospel; we are so thankful that the Lord has provided!

In Casitas, our family is very excited that Josue has graduated from college. After many years of diligent study and hard work, Josue concluded his studies in November and now holds a degree as a lab technician. Please pray for him as he seeks employment that will not require him to move away from his family and leadership role in the Casitas church.

We humbly ask for your prayers as well – that the Holy Spirit would keep us tender and attentive to using all that we have learned about Christ, Scripture, ministry, and pastoral care in the contexts in which we find ourselves. Life is completely different than it was 16 months ago in Honduras, yet the truth of Christ and the spiritual reality of those around is no different. May we never be distracted by vain striving, nor forget all of the rich blessings of sanctification that we experienced on the mission field and are ours to be had here as well.

Please pray that we would not entertain vain thoughts about our identity, as we are often tempted to want to define ourselves as expatriates, missionaries/MKs, full-time Gospel ministers, or professionals. Who we are must be grounded in the person and the work of Jesus Christ, without whom we are nothing. He is the treasure that indwells us, and proclaiming His gracious work in our lives must be the desire of our hearts.

As you celebrate this Christmas season, our prayer is that you, too, will find your identity in Jesus Christ our Risen Savior and that He would be the treasure of your heart.

Please drop us a line to fill us in on how we can pray for you during this season of your divine adventure. Here’s this year’s contact information for the Allen family.

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**With Love, the Allens**