

Dear Praying Friends,

We did not have the ability to send mass emails this summer so we apologize for the long delay you have experienced in hearing from us.

A few people have asked about us and **THE FIRES IN GREECE**. As we were in the States all summer and just arrived back in Athens yesterday, we missed all the first-hand experience but one of the fires burned the foothills behind our neighborhood and reached to the edge of our neighborhood just 6 blocks away. Those who were here said the smoke was so thick at our place that you could not see across the street, and loads of ash had to be cleaned from our balconies. We thank God, however, that no people (and only one building) in this area were harmed. The picture below was taken 3 blocks away from our apartment (further away from the fire).

Ellie's entry into our family remains the summer's highlight for us! **OUR LITTLE ASIAN PRINCESS HAS CAPTURED ALL OF OUR HEARTS and wins the "Traveler of the Year" award.** Although she doesn't warm up to strangers right away, she adapted incredibly well to the many places where we slept this summer, and was a GREAT traveler via cars and airplanes. Ellie's post-adoption paperwork from the U.S. side proved to be much more challenging than we expected. Yet, God moved some bureaucratic mountains using our friend Stephanie Harrison, FOUR different congressmen, a sympathetic worker at the USCIS, and lots of prayers so that Ellie could finally get her Certificate of Citizenship and U.S. passport just before we needed to return to Athens. You can visit the adoption blog <http://elliebomccracken.blogspot.com> for pictures and video clips. Please pray for ongoing developmental needs she has.

Another highlight this summer was when our friends NAVID AND LARA MOBAREZ drove up 9 hours from California to Oregon to visit us for one day. Navid shared his testimony at the church where Vicki's parents are members, and **it was so encouraging to hear again how the Lord brought him as a refugee from Afghanistan to Athens where he met Jesus!**

For only the second time in 20 years we have had PRAYER CARDS printed (which also double as bookmarkers). If you would like a copy of one, please send us your mailing address and we will send one to you.

Many have asked about KENDRA'S PLANS now that she has graduated from high school. She still plans to travel with fellow teamie Becky Sirinides to serve in some missions locations around the world where we have friends working. They will both stay in Athens for the next 4 months and help us in the ministry here, and then take off in January. Where they go will depend in part on how much funding is raised between now and then. Thank you for praying about this.

IF YOU HAVE READ THIS FAR, CONGRATULATIONS! WE CLOSE WITH THIS...AND OUR GRATITUDE FOR YOUR PART IN THIS MINISTRY...

Our annual KIDS CAMP for refugee kids went well. Thanks to all who prayed and/or financially invested. Here are some excerpts from Kate Cami's newsletter:

### **FIRST DAY KIDS CAMP REPORT...**

We have a record number of 39 kids! That's 50% more than last year! They are having a blast...

**The camp theme this year is JESUS LOVES ME and the song requested the most, so far is Jesus, You are here with me!** The words are:

"Jesus, You are here with me.

Jesus, You are all I need.

I will follow where You lead me.

I will worship You!

So, I clap my hands and wave them in the air.

Shout your name so everyone can hear (JESUS!)

Jump as high as I can reach.

And dance around to show that I am glad that You love me!"

When the children got to the line about shouting Jesus' name today ... we are pretty sure that they could hear the name of Jesus shouted an hour away in Athens. Though, the loudest of all of the kids has been one of our new campers. She's a young girl that has been raised as a borderline fanatical Muslim (she's 7 years old) and all day today, she was singing that Jesus was here with her. Her older brother also seems to be effected by the message of Jesus' love. Please continue to pray for these children and their 37 new friends.

...as Kate walked around this evening to say good night to the children, she walked into one of the girl's rooms and everyone was reading Bible story books!

**SECOND DAY KIDS CAMP REPORT**...the first time in memory we had mass mutiny at camp this year! It was time for the children to move to their next activity, but they simply **WOULD NOT GO!** Why? **They wanted to sing their favorite song one more time! (See yesterday's update for all the words).** Even after the guitars had stopped playing, they continued to sing a'capella, **shouting the name of Jesus and proclaiming his love for each of us.**

**THIRD DAY KIDS CAMP REPORT**...The first day of camp is spent in a mild state of confusion as everyone tries to get used to the schedule and each other. The second day focuses on building those relationships. And today was day three, the day when we get to relax a bit and just enjoy our time together. The children also start to feel more comfortable in small group discussions, on the playground, and in the water.

This morning, our 39 campers (7 groups of 5 children and 1 group of 4 children) performed the dramas of Jesus' parables for all of us. We saw each group give their interpretation of a specific parable of Jesus ... from the story of the "prodigal son" to the story of the "pearl of great price" and a few in between. Tonight, the children had time to discuss everything that they saw in the morning. One group, which was actually all Christian except for one Muslim, had a very interesting discussion. One of the young ladies said that Muslims worshipped a false god and that their god was a god of war and various other things. As she continued to talk, the leader could see the young Muslim girl not only withdraw from the conversation, but also become more and more angry at the words that were said.

So, the leader interrupted to tell another parable, the story of the potter and the clay. She shared how God was the potter and we are the clay and that the difference between us and the jar of clay was that God had given us a choice ... to stay near to Him or to walk away. She also shared that you can't **MAKE** someone become a Christian any more than you can **MAKE** someone a Muslim. God has to be at work and the best thing you can do is pray for your Muslim friend. And pray that God would make you a person that clearly reflects Jesus' love for all people, including Muslims. The words not only had an affect on the Muslim girl, but they also seemed to affect the other Christians around the circle.

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[www.ITRefMin.org](http://www.ITRefMin.org) (click "Teams", then click "Athens")

[www.iteams.org](http://www.iteams.org)

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

[www.geocities.com/scripturecalligraphy](http://www.geocities.com/scripturecalligraphy) (purchase beautiful art and support our teammates)

[www.helpinghands.gr/en/](http://www.helpinghands.gr/en/)

<http://elliebomccracken.blogspot.com/> (adoption blog)

***Our ministry is striving to be a FULL-SERVICE station on this exit ramp of the Refugee Highway by partnering with churches to offer practical services which demonstrate the love of God for the refugee as a whole person, and which invite the refugee to be a part of advancing His kingdom among the nations.***

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