

MISSIONARY #6501

October 2024



Going to Great Lengths

The two decades during which we served in Germany, we often took friends to see the famous Neuschwanstein Castle. Every visit, as we would climb the mountain to approach the castle, I would marvel at the lengths to which the kings of this world would go to avoid people: mountains, soldiers, moats with drawbridges, and sometimes even crocodiles. In my mind, I would contrast this with the lengths to which God went to make us accessible to Himself. We presently serve in an area which many people would go to great lengths to avoid. We serve with people going to greater lengths to stay.

When we first visited our present location of service, it represented one of the easiest places in the world to obtain visas. Desperate for tourists and Western investors, immigration officials bent over backwards to help people get in. Today they are doing their dead-level best to kick people—especially people like us—out. Most of the balance of this letter will be regarding our current struggle in this arena.

People from Our Church Here

One man we have been helping to train for ministry is from Iran. He is winning souls to Christ. The officials are making it very difficult for him to stay. He would love to move to Canada and serve with Pastor J____, but much money is needed for that. Our most faithful family comes from Pakistan. They live far removed from us and travel seven hours round trip to attend our Sunday services. Recently, their visa renewal was denied. The man decided to enroll in university so they could stay with a student visa. In order to accomplish this, they needed two years' tuition paid in advance. God provided, and they're still with us! Another family that serves in our church is from America. They are not part of our team officially but are like-minded and co-labor with us. Recently, their visa renewal was denied. They are trying again under a medical visa. The man needs regular treatments that cost ten times as much in the U.S. as here. Pray they can stay.

People from our Team

Each of our four team families is dealing with visa issues. One family returns in four weeks and due to visa denials has had to alternate staying for three months and then leaving for three. Another team family had their renewal rejected. They had to go back to the U.S., where they are applying for a very unusual visa to return. It isn't definite yet, but they just got preapproved! A third family just got denied renewal. They are trying now for work permits and will know in a couple of weeks. Our own family will have to renew this spring. A young student recently got saved. She has gotten in the Bible and is growing but still fears her Muslim parents will catch her reading the Bible. She and many like her represent the reasons it is so important for us to stay, but every effort costs time and money. We are now trying to raise funds for a building. Not only would ownership give our people a sense of permanence, but it could also help several of us resolve this constant visa challenge. You can donate by sending funds to FBMI #6580. Pray also for me, as I will be preaching Stateside from October 25 – November 25.

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