

TROELL FAMILY

May 25, 2024

Dear Pastor and Supporting Church,

WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS

As many of you know on Monday, November 7, 2022, my husband Stephen Troell was called home to be with his Savior after he was shot by an Iraqi militia group in Baghdad. This was not how Stephen and I had dreamed and planned that God would use our lives in the Middle East. As a couple, we had prayed together and asked God to give us forty years in Iraq, but God, in His sovereignty and wisdom, chose a different path for us. The end of the chapter of Stephen's life here on earth had been written, and the beginning of a new chapter in our family's life had begun. There have been moments, times, days and even weeks that have felt overwhelming and unbearable, BUT God has walked with us through every moment and step of the way. He has been faithful and good. His grace has been abundant. The joy of the Lord has been our strength, and truly the peace of God that passes all understanding has kept our minds and hearts through Christ Jesus. Often these key truths from the Word of God become trite sayings or cliches, but for my family and I they have been the unsearchable riches from God. They are our treasures in the darkness.

While the Holy Spirit has been our Comforter, we also clearly recognize that God has used the family of God - the church- to also come alongside us and be the physical hands and feet of Jesus. The body of Christ has prayed for us, supported us financially, reached out to us, fed us, and clothed us. We have received flowers, care packages, gift cards, precious letters, shared pictures and memories. The family of God has helped with car repairs, maintain and fix things around our house, and has continually checked in to see if we are in need of anything. Christ has taken your love for us and multiplied it over and over again. While the physical things are a tangible expression of the church's care and love for us, the prayers and earnest pleading on behalf of the children and I have been equally (if not more) important. Only eternity will tell how the prayers brought before the throne of God sustained us in the darkest hours. We as a family are exceedingly grateful. No words, gifts or action could ever repay the debt we owe.

OUR FAMILY

The children and I continue to move forward with each new day. We are learning to trust God in a deeper way, and lean into Him when the wound of grief is raw and tender. It has become true in our own lives that one does not get over grief, but simply learns how to carry it everyday. The love Stephen had for his family and that we had for him has not disappeared; his life and love live on especially as we honor him and continue in the things that he taught us.

Abigail has just completed her first year in college. She is attending the Crown College of the Bible in Powell, TN with the intention of pursuing a degree in nursing. It has brought so much joy to my heart to watch her grow in the Lord and take this first step into adulthood. She is passionate about serving the Lord, and my prayer is that the Lord will "continue the good work that He has begun" in her life.

With counsel and much prayer, Katelyn added several online college courses to her already full high school 11th grade course load. She has excelled in both high school and college classes, and she is praying for where the Lord would have her study after high school graduation in 2025 and earnestly seeking God's will for her future. She recently got her driver's license as well, and it has been such a blessing to have another driver in the house again.

Alexandria just turned 14 and completed the 8th grade. She is huge blessing especially in helping with Little Stephen and chores around the house. Allie is the creative one in our family. She has used this gift to be a blessing in making, creating, and fixing the little day-to-day things that need attention. Her heart to serve the Lord both at home and at church is genuine and refreshing. Little Stephen is a ball of energy and a "chip off the old block"! He keeps me on my toes as he always wants to explore and look for another adventure. The little quirky things he says and does remind me so much of his father, and often, the girls and I are laughing with him at his silly antics. The gift of my children has been priceless. God has used them to be a source of comfort and joy. Daily I thank God He protected them though this trial. He has been true to His promise in the Word of God and has been a Father to the fatherless.

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CONTINUING MINISTRY

The Lord has opened several opportunities to speak at Ladies Meetings, Mission Conferences, and other events. It is an honor and privilege to be asked to speak and share my testimony.

I am grateful for the confidence you have in me and my desire to still serve the Lord. As a young person, I surrendered my life to do whatever Christ wanted me to do. It was a simple understanding that if He spoke, I would obey. It is still my heart's desire to obey and serve the Lord. He is my precious Savior, and it's the least that I can do for all that He has done for me. John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" has become more dear to me this past year. God has made it very clear to me that He still has a purpose and plan for my life. I do not yet know what that is or what that looks like, and so I rest in Him, I trust Him, and I wait for Him. My confidence in who God is has only been strengthened since Stephen's home-going and in His perfect time, He will show me the "next" thing He has for me. In the between time, I do today what I know to do today, and tomorrow (if the Lord allows) He will show me what to do tomorrow. There are many, many deep abiding lessons the Lord is rooting in me, but especially that we truly only have this day to do what He asks of us.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Stephen and I carried the weight of the stewardship of God's resources everyday. It was a serious and sobering responsibility. We understood that we would answer to God for what He put in our hands both in physical possessions and monetary funds. Many of you have given generously to the work of God in the Middle East, and you have prayed for the lost people under the "shadow of the crescent". While my heart is still in the Middle East and I wish that I could live, serve, and minister there, it is not God's choice for me right now. With that being said, I know and understand that we will all be held accountable for the resources God entrusted us with. Many of you have reached out and asked if we have any needs. God has been faithful and met every need we have had to date (and I know He will continue to do so.) The life insurance that Stephen so wisely purchased years ago has finally come through.

For those of you who believe the Lord would continue to have you support our family, we say thank you and we do not take this responsibility lightly. We will continue to steward this money and use it wisely for the sake of the Gospel.

For those of you who believe that God has led you to move on and redirect the financial support, we say thank you for your prayers and support all these years; and we would encourage you to channel the support that you graciously gave to our family to other missionaries going to (or are already in) the 10/40 window, especially those who serve in the unreached people groups of North Africa and the Middle East.

We are asking the Lord to guide each individual pastor and church in this matter.

OUR CONTINUED PRAYER

Our prayer is two-fold - first that in these last days, a mighty harvest of souls would come forth from both our prayers, our giving, and our going. And second, that a new generation of believers would obey God and surrender to take the gospel to the most difficult places.

Many have reached out in recent days to assure us of their continued prayer support and have asked for an updated picture and information. Please find enclosed a new prayer card. Our hearts remain committed to helping those who are interested in gospel work in the Middle East, to those who are eager to share the gospel with Muslims here in our own country, and to be faithful in sharing the gospel both here in the US and in the Middle East.

Once again, we say thank you with all of our hearts for loving our family through our deepest trial. May God richly bless you in the kindness you have shown to us!

Because the Lamb is Worthy,

Jocelyn Troell and Family

