

thewhitesinspain

November 2020

Dear St James,

We have now been back in Spain 2 months after our short trip to the UK in the summer, so we wanted to update you with all our latest news.

We really enjoyed being in the UK even though it was a shorter trip than usual, and half the time was spent in quarantine, which we survived! Time in the UK, no matter how long, does give us a break from the cross-cultural stress that we live under.

It was really special to celebrate Leo's 10th birthday with grandparents, cousins, etc. We can't believe it's been 10 years since Leo arrived into our world and we love seeing the sweet, caring, funny, happy boy he is becoming. He loves worship, music and drumming, so for his birthday we bought an electric drum kit. He has been having some lessons and loves going each day to play drums in our basement.



The boys are now settled back in school, which is good. We are so thankful for every day that they are there, after having had them off at home for over 6 months.

There have been some hard times with Leo at school, which can be tricky & emotionally challenging. He can be quite difficult to motivate to work and is learning about boundaries and pushing to see how far they go. This is normal behaviour for children but as his verbal communication is still limited it can be hard to know exactly what he wants at any given time. This past week he has been particularly good, so we are praying and hopeful for some breakthrough!

Sam just loves being back with his friends and copes so well with wearing a mask all the time. This year he is doing physical education 4 times a week, all with the mask on! He has also started playing tennis, so most of his afternoons (before lockdown) are taken up with either football or tennis. Which is great for his high energy, sociable personality.

We were encouraged on our return from summer to see several families who attend our church had been getting together whilst we were away. This continued through September and the beginning of Oct, we would gather for picnics and share time together, making the most of every opportunity whilst we had freedom to meet up. As in most of the world things then began to get stricter again. We had planned to have our first outside 'church' gathering when the rule of 6 came into place, so that stopped that happening. We carried on meeting people individually, sharing with them and praying with them when we could, which has been a good and fruitful time.

As always, we try to listen to Holy Spirit's guiding as to whom we should invest time in. Just recently Chris had a great evening out with our plumber Jose Luis. He lives in our neighbourhood and 2 years ago we got to know him through a series of God appointments. He is from our town born and bred and is an interesting and engaging person. We went out for a few tapas and after talking about Spanish history and politics we ended up looking



at and talking about the Bible and how Jesus is God and not just a good man. At the end of the evening he said 'I want to invite you out again but next time we just talk about Jesus'!

We have been spending time with our neighbours Angela & Royston as well as Felix and Corin (two friends of Chris who have been on a journey with us over the past few years). They are part of our family and Corin has been coming most days to build things in Chris's workshop. He is from Bath originally, with a Spanish girlfriend, and grew up in a Hippie community. He was never taught about God growing up and it has taken time for him to trust us. He comes over, helps himself to what he needs, and we share a family lunch together – which is veggie as he doesn't eat meat. We love using our home to love people, share life with them and share what a relationship with Jesus means to us.

We have gone back to our daily rhythm of prayer/worship to start the day as a team. Also, we have been investing more time in prayer walking La Zubia with Dave & Kellie. This has been a refreshing & fruitful time along with encounters with people on the street that we have prayed with. We have wanted to be regularly present in the centre of our town so people know who we are. We now see the same people we have talked to or prayed for again and can ask them what has happened since we last spoke. We want to be known as people who love Jesus and make time to stop, listen and connect with our community.

Here the Coronavirus situation has continued to get worse, with Granada currently being one of the worst places in Spain! At the moment we are unable to leave La Zubia, without a justifiable reason. All non-essential businesses and shops are closed and there is a night-time curfew from 10pm to 7am. It's a difficult and frustrating time for us wanting to build church and connect with people. We are seeking God for the way forward and always looking for and expecting meaningful interactions with people within the limitations. We are back to sending lots of WhatsApp's to encourage and speak life to our friends and spending time with individuals. The huge difference for us this time is we are allowed to leave our house to exercise which is so good for our mental and emotional well-being.



We heard God say at the end of summer to be kind to ourselves, relax a little and recuperate from having 6 months of being full time on our boys. So we have been trying to do that.

Chris is getting on with some finishing off projects in our house. He has also been doing a number of online preaches for various different UK churches, which he has now got used to doing, and really enjoys. Liz is currently continuing English classes with just 1 student and hoping to pick up more in the new year. We are undecided whether to travel to the UK for Christmas, but it looks unlikely at the moment.

We hope and pray that you are doing ok in your current lockdown. These are strange and challenging times for all of us but God knows what He is doing and we still expect great things from Him!

Thanks for journeying with us, we really appreciate it! With much love Chris, Liz, Leo & Samuel.