

ABIGAIL'S UPDATES



Our USA trip in January already feels like a long time ago.



We came home and immediately hit the ground running. Since returning, there has been sickness in the house and several days with a broken washing machine where we were completely snowed in and marooned. The sickness has now ended, the roads have been sufficiently ploughed and a new (second hand) washing machine has been gifted and delivered to us. Needless to say it has been a full and slightly chaotic start to the year.

At the same time, new routines have begun. I've started a new job and Thomas has begun his paternity leave at home with Bjørn-Andreas and Elinora. Slowly, in between illness and snowstorms, life is settling into a new rhythm again.

THE USA TRIP — AN OPEN DOOR

Our trip to the USA for Thomas's JAARS evaluation was a significant moment for us as a family.

Going into the final meeting (the big conversation where the examiners tell you yes or no) we were understandably anxious. And, in true family fashion, the first thing that happened was complete chaos: Bjørn-Andreas had a full meltdown and did an explosive poo, and Elinora face-planted the table and burst into floods of tears. In the middle of all that drama, they gave us a yes.

A 'yes, we want you'...but without many details yet, which was both encouraging and slightly frustrating at the same time. Even so, we immediately felt a sense of peace about moving forward, though we knew we needed to step back, pray, and take time before making any big decisions.

Thomas felt during the week that he wasn't flying particularly well, and we both felt discouraged at times. But we were surrounded by kind and encouraging people and somehow, though disgruntled with jetlag and with minimal belongings, we began to feel at home and we could imagine ourselves returning.

After much prayer and conversation since coming home, we believe we are saying yes too. We have decided to walk through the door in faith.

If things continue forward, this would likely mean returning to the USA around autumn 2027 for about a year of preparation — specialised flight training for Thomas, followed by pre-field and cross-cultural training before an eventual assignment, most likely in Papua New Guinea. There'd be no more hoops to jump through, no more tests, no more exams. If we go to the USA then we are enroute to serve overseas once they have prepared and poured into us as much as they can in readiness.

It is exciting and also sobering, because that training year 2027/2028 will be very expensive, especially compared to the follow years on assignment. The challenges ahead are financial.



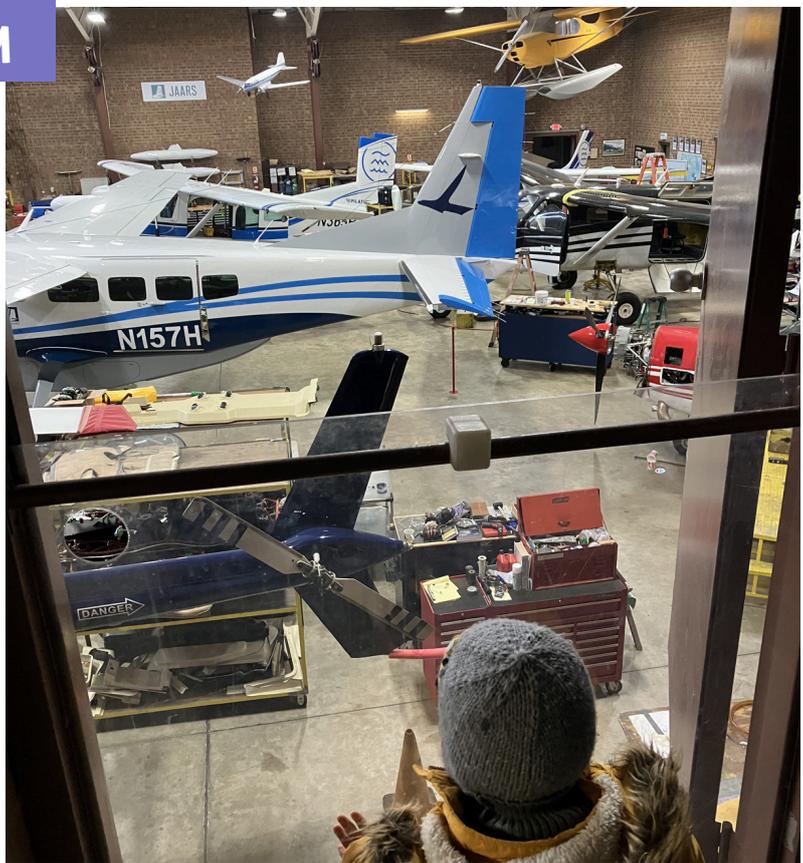
LEAVING THROUGH THE STORM

When it was finally time to leave the USA on the 26th of January, a major winter storm was hitting the country, particularly North Carolina. Ice and snow covered roads across the state, flights were being cancelled in huge numbers, and we genuinely weren't sure whether we would even be able to reach the airport. The JAARS base is quite remote, and the expectation was that the roads might become icy and impossible.

For a while, it really looked like we might not make it home at all and would have to stay another week.

But our flight was not cancelled, and one very brave soul was willing to drive us to the airport despite the conditions. Somehow, through quite a lot of drama and uncertainty, we made it.

It felt like another quiet reminder of God making a way when things felt uncertain.



UNEXPECTED PROVISION ALONG THE WAY

After the evaluation, we had two extra days in the USA before travelling on to the UK. During that time, our accommodation for the UK part of the trip suddenly fell through. A wonderful friend from my time at Lee Abbey who had planned to host us was no longer able to do so.

So I sent out a prayer request to our small WhatsApp prayer group (if you'd ever like to join that group, let me know and I can send you the link or scan the QRcode on the next page).

Within a few hours, another Lee Abbey friend offered us a place to stay with her, about 20 minutes from my parents' house by bus. It was such a clear and timely answer to prayer. We had space to get over jetlag without overwhelming my parents and plenty of time to visit them and catch up with my hometown.

We were able to visit Springfield Church, who have been supporting me during my OM role this past five years. We shared about our trip to America and plans ahead with Wycliffe Norway, and I gave a short five-minute message about finding hope in God's hands.

If you'd like to see the four of us in the flesh, slightly awkwardly standing on stage, [here's the link](#):



After that, we hired a car and drove up to Rutland to stay with my eldest sister and her family for a few days. We hadn't been there since before Bjørn-Andreas was born, so it felt especially meaningful simply to share everyday life together — playing with the cats, reading picture books (my sister has an incredible collection that I am deeply jealous of), and spending time with family. Those quiet moments were really special.

LIFE RIGHT NOW

Alongside all of this, everyday life continues.

My new job has been a learning curve, but I'm really enjoying it. I'm baking and cooking in the kitchen of a church-run café in the centre of town. It's a lot of responsibility, and it has been good to step out of the home office, interact with people, make things with my hands, and learn new skills.

Please pray that I would have grace with myself as I learn on the job. I am by no means an expert baker, especially as someone with coeliac disease, so I need to be mindful of the health implications of working with flour. I will likely wear a face mask while baking, and prayer for protection of my health would be appreciated.

Thomas is at home with Bjørn-Andreas and Elinora during paternity leave. They are at a stage filled with laughter but also plenty of sibling clashes, big emotions, and conflicting nap schedules. Prayer for patience, energy, and wisdom for him would mean a lot.

We have applied for the children to start at a Barnehave after the summer. Whether part-time or full-time is still undecided, but it should give them time with other children and allow us space to work, prepare the house, and take practical steps toward the future.



PREPARING FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

Over the next year and a half, we will be preparing practically for this next stage.

That includes:

- getting our house ready to be rented,
- working and saving as much as we can,
- and figuring out how a year of training can realistically be financed before assignments begin.

We are being looked after well by Wycliffe Norway, who will be our sending organisation, and we hope they will help us develop a clear financial plan for both the training year and the years that follow.

My role with OM Norway is also in the process of changing as we begin transitioning toward serving with Wycliffe Norway. I'll be able to update you more clearly on what that will look like once the OM board has had time to talk things through.

Right now, we don't yet know how much support will need to be raised to move ahead, that calculation is still coming together.

Please pray that as we step through this door, God would provide everything needed, financially, spiritually, and practically, and that our faith would grow as we trust Him with what lies ahead.



HOW YOU CAN PRAY

- Clear peace as we step through this open door.
- God's provision financially, spiritually, and practically.
- Wisdom as Wycliffe Norway helps us form a financial plan.
- Growth in faith as we move forward without knowing all the details.
- Protection for my health at work.
- Strength and patience for Thomas during paternity leave.
- Good provision of childcare and clarity around barnehave plans.
- Energy and unity as we prepare our home for renting.



SCAN HERE



I also made a short video originally for Bjørn-Andreas to help him remember the trip, which I thought you might enjoy too.

I He loves it, particularly the part with my sister's cat, Stitch.

Here's the link if you'd like to watch: <https://youtu.be/mE8JgY7YJ9c>

Thank you for continuing to walk with us, pray for us, and encourage us.

We are very aware that we are not taking these steps alone.

With love,

ABIGAIL & THOMAS

BJØRN-ANDREAS & ELINORA JOY

