

A little like Jonah

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Eric and Wendolyn Trozzo are new ELCA missionaries who will be serving in Malaysia. They have two young sons, Dante and Caedmon. To support the Trozzos, or another of the ELCA's over 200 missionaries, go to www.elca.org/missionarysponsorship.



Daedmon makes a wish with a danelion.

Way back, before we started thinking about becoming missionaries, the “Rhyme Bible Storybook” was preparing us. If you’ve got kids in your life, you should learn about the Rhyme Bible – most kids have theirs memorized. And for us, Caedmon’s favorite story was about Jonah. “God said to Jonah, ‘I have a little task. Get up and go to Ninevah, and do what I ask. The people there are wicked, so tell them to obey, but Jonah got on board a ship, and sailed the other way.’” And our kids shout, “Ut-oh, Jonah, you should’ve gone to Ninevah!”

So when things started falling into place for us to become missionaries, we had the Jonah story ringing in our ears. It wasn’t so much about being afraid of God sending us a storm or a big fish – we know God works through more than fear. It was a sense of being sent and of what happened to Jonah after the fish. He went to Ninevah, expecting no one to pay him any heed – but the people there responded about 100 times more passionately than he was ready for. It was like the people there were hungry for a message, and when God sent Jonah to them, it wasn’t so much about Jonah’s work as it was the people being prepared by God, for God.

And so as we head to Malaysia, we feel a little like Jonah. Honored (if quite nervous) by being chosen; curious (to see what God is already doing); and hopefully, humble, because though the Rhyme Bible talked about people being wicked, the story then and now is about people needing connection to God. And having talked and prayed together, our family believes that God has already put things in motion in the church in Malaysia. We are excited to get there and meet the active people of God and learn about all of God’s children there. And like Jonah (if you read to chapters 3 and 4) we expect to learn a whole lot about ourselves and how much we rely on God’s living word. Our hope is to be a little like Jonah – maybe skipping the fish guts part and hopefully finding joy in serving God and the church.