

# Overby Odyssey

September 2022

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Wow! We have now been in Germany for nearly two months, and it has been an intense transition. We are so amazed by God's goodness and faithfulness, and constantly reminded of our dependence on Him. We are now into the second full week of school at BFA with Samuel starting this Thursday and Stuart next week Monday. This letter will be a little longer than usual since so much has happened.

- In our first two weeks in country, we were able to make two trips back to Weimar. The first was more practical, to get our remaining belongings and see some friends before they left for vacation. The second was a chance to see more friends and to celebrate the marriage of Nico and Johanna. The wedding was amazing and we are so thankful that we were able to attend. Our trip was also a little surreal as we were still battling jet lag and the familiarity of Weimar but the realization that this was no longer home. We are looking forward to showing our Weimar friends around Kandern when they come to visit.

- Settling into Kandern has been good and challenging at the same time. It took three weeks for us to get the internet hooked up, which made communication and accomplishing tasks that require the internet fairly difficult. We are so thankful for our new home, as it has everything we were praying for leading up to our arrival. 1. Enough rooms for everyone and an office. 2. Within walking distance of BFA. 3. A large living room which will be great for hosting. 4. A guest room for visitors. However, one of our culture shocks was the realization that while everything in East Germany has been renovated since the 1990's (or more likely the 2000's) West Germany housing does not have that guarantee. Our house was built in 1971, and it feels like it was built in 1971. There are many things that are breaking or not in very good condition, so we get to practice being thankful in all circumstances, and to not dwell on what is wrong, but to rejoice in what is good. Here is a quote from "The Hiding Place."

"Give thanks in all circumstances," she quoted. "It doesn't say, 'in pleasant circumstances.' Fleas [cockroaches] are part of this place where God has put us."

As we have spent more time making home, putting up shelves, and figuring out where things will go we have grown to love this home more and more.

- Our kids are also working through the emotions of an international move. The first few days were hardest for Stanley, but when he was able to connect with a few boys during the summer, things looked better. But with the beginning of school the pre-existing friend circles, it has not been easy. He is enjoying the freedom of being able to go for walks, scooter over to a friend's house, or go for a bike ride in the woods. But as usual, he finds the most joy



playing Minecraft with friends from Oregon, Weimar, and Kandern. Holly has also bonded with some girls from her class, but has also had the full range of emotions from wanting to return to Oregon to being so excited to be here. She auditioned for the BFA Middle School Play, "The Lion, Witch, and the Wardrobe," and she was cast as Lucy Pevensie. She is thrilled and nervous about this challenge, and it is fun to see that joy in her. We also got Holly a cat named Nelly, to give her something else to root her in Kandern. Stuart and Samuel have really benefited from the new and all staff orientations during the first few weeks of August. It allowed them to make friends with the other staff kids. One Friday in August we took Stuart and Samuel to the home of one of the other new teachers and they were able to have a movie night with his kids while we played a game with him and his wife. Stuart and Samuel's German have regressed the most from our year in Oregon, but slowly their German is coming back to them. While Stanley, Holly, and I went back to school, Stuart and Samuel have been enjoying some extended time with Heather to wrap up the summer for them. Their schools are on the local school holiday calendar, while BFA has a slightly different schedule to better accommodate the dorm students.

- The orientations were wonderful for Heather and I to attend together, where we got to learn more about BFA, the school and city culture, and the direction that the school is heading. We love the mission focus the school has, and the heart of everyone serving here. None of the teachers are here for the money, but for the mission of supporting, educating, and nurturing the students. The school has a new director this year (Phil Dow) and we are impressed by his humility and heart for God's work at BFA. The spiritual theme this year is "Captivated," and seeing students being captivated by Christ. John 10:10 is the theme verse. However, at the same time, we have felt more of a spiritual battle during these past six weeks. As we reflected on that this past evening we pinpointed a few reasons.

1. Compared to our return to Oregon a year ago
  - a. We don't have the relational connections/history with people already here. We are building relationships from the ground up, and many of those relationships are with well intentioned people who can be relationshipped out or have said goodbye to so many friends that they can tend to be reluctant to get too close too fast to new people.
  - b. We don't have the church roots here. We have struggled with where to go to church. We have settled with the local German church as we had always expected to attend, but again, building relationships takes time, and Germans are slower to build relationships than the people at the international church here in Kandern. But for Stanley and Holly, they will probably attend the international church because that is where most of their friends from school are, and the church is geared towards teenagers.
  - c. Roles and responsibilities. In Oregon we had clear goals. Recharge, reconnect, and raise support. I was also working to earn money for our family to live off of. We were trying to avoid extra roles and responsibilities beyond that. Now, there are almost too many things to





do and be a part of. I am helping out twice a week with cross-country, and Heather is trying to make home and connect with other moms, but there are so many other good things vying for our attention. Having to say no, but also wanting to build community is a difficult line to walk.

- d. The spiritual warfare is more intense here. We are on the front lines of a spiritual battle, and we can feel the attacks of discouragement and discontent.

2. Compared to our first arrival in Weimar 11 years ago...

- a. Teenagers. Teenagers come with more baggage, have a stronger opinion, and don't just "go with the flow" as easily as little kids.
- b. Expectations. When we first arrived in Weimar we had no expectations, and while it was really hard, we had no idea what we were doing so we were quicker to go to our knees in surrender. This time around we subconsciously thought it would be easier, but it has still been hard for other reasons. That has seemed to throw us more for a loop.

Here are some specific praises from this past month.

- God brought us to 100% of our needed funding. Thank you for those of you who said yes to investing in the work God has called us to. For those of you who wanted to, but never got around to it you are more than welcome to still sign up.
- For our home with all of the elements we have been praying for.
- To be able to work at BFA with so many amazing people.
- For the friends our kids have already made in this first month and a half.

Here are some specific prayer requests

- BFA needs more workers in the maintenance department. They have gone from 5 full time and 2 part time, to 1 full time and 1 part time workers.
- Prayer for school work and workload. I had a last minute change in classes that I will teach. I am no longer teaching public speaking, but physical science! I want to be able to teach my classes with excellence and to the best of my ability.
- For us to find a healthy life rhythm for everyone to get the love and attention they need.
- We want to be part of a small group Bible study. We need wisdom to know if we should start one or if we will be invited to join an existing group.
- Pray for relationship building. Specifically, all of us need a "Best Friend." Pray that each of us will find that friend.
- Pray for bureaucracy and paperwork as we are trying to get everything done and get our work visas.

Thank you so much for being part of this journey with us.

Serving Jesus in Kandern, Germany,  
Scott for Heather, Stanley, Holly, Stuart, and Samuel



Our flag progression ceremony, where the seniors bring in all the flags represented at BFA. Whether it is a country a student has a passport from, has lived in, or a people group their family works with. 65 countries are represented at BFA this year.



The new staff at BFA. Unfortunately, Heather missed the picture because she was waiting for the internet people to show up after a 3 week wait.



The BFA staff for the 2022-2023 school year.

