



## Nathanael Smith MAF Engineering Trainee

March 2026

nathanael.smith@mafint.org

joanna.smith@mafint.org

### **5,600 miles**

We are off to Madagascar on the 15th March. A journey of 5,600 miles. This is also the distance Joel has spent in his car seat travelling the UK since birth.

Joel experienced snow for the first time (and probably the last time in a while). He has had some vaccinations and will get the last two he needs before we leave (praise God that this has happened after lots of difficulty). He is now sitting up and enjoys seeing people and being the centre of attention. Praise God his sleep training has been largely successful and he now normally only wakes up two or three times a night.

### **Before Madagascar**

In this season of winter rain we have continued to see God's provision as we have had to trust Him at each hurdle we have met.

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (Psalm 27v13-14)

The weeks since Christmas have been characterised by organising, applying and traveling. It turns out when moving to work overseas for an extended period there are more things that need to be sorted and set in order than we first imagined. This is perhaps more complicated with a property in the UK and a small child. But nonetheless every time we tick something off our 'to-do' list we think of something else we need to add on, or some kind person says "What are you doing about ..." and it turns out we weren't doing anything, but probably should be.

We have also had to apply for many things; international driving permits, visas (though it turns out the Malagasy embassy is very helpful), tax exemption for personal belongings we are shipping to Madagascar (still in progress) among other things.

And just for good measure we have been up and down the length of the UK to visit family, friends and some of our supporting Churches one last time before we go. We were blessed to have a commissioning service at our Church in Norwich in January and another at the MAF offices more recently. We have also delivered our belongs that are going to be shipped to Madagascar to the shipping agent's warehouse and handed off our car, so we should now be fairly stationary in Durham until we leave.

Nathanael also travelled to the United States for a week-long training course on the Cessna Caravan (which MAF operate in Madagascar). This was a really good opportunity to get hands-on experience and run through troubleshooting scenarios on the aircraft. And he managed to get home despite the snow-storm at the time.

### **After we get there**

After we arrive in Madagascar we will have four weeks to settle in and start Malagasy

language learning before Nathanael begins work at the hanger. Nathanael will also make a trip to Cape Town, South Africa, for an engine training course in April.

### Recent News from Madagascar

Please be praying for Madagascar as it is cyclone season at the moment and the country has been hit by two cyclones in the last few weeks and many people's homes have been destroyed.

Read the story from MAF Madagascar at: [madagascar.mafint.org/news-stories](http://madagascar.mafint.org/news-stories)

#### Praise

- Joel's sleep has improved.
- Joel has had, or is booked in for, all the vaccines he needs.
- The MAF teams in the UK and Madagascar who have helped and advised us with many things in the last two months.
- Good time spent with family and friends.

#### Please pray

- Smooth and safe flight to Madagascar on the 15th March, and that our luggage arrives with us.
- For the details of shipping and the last few jobs to get sorted.
- Malagasy language learning when we arrive.
- Building of relationships with colleagues and friends in Madagascar.
- For those in Madagascar who have been affected by the cyclones.



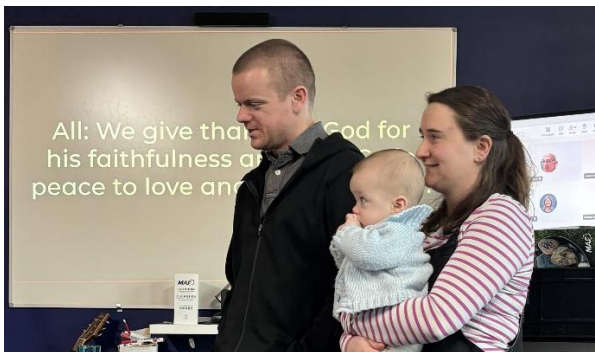
Joel in his car seat



At the MAF offices



Experiencing snow



Commissioning at the MAF offices



A winter walk