



October - December 2022



ANDERSON UPDATE

Your Bridge to Flemish Belgium

Dear praying pastors, friends, and family,

Wow! It's Christmas time already! 2022 has flown by so fast that it has been a blur. It seems unreal that we left Rayna with Grandma in June... we miss her so much! It doesn't seem possible that it will be 2023 in a few weeks. Hopefully, as you look back on this last year, you can see God's hand working and blessing! He certainly has been working behind the scenes in a very hard year for us here in Belgium. It's amazing how He can bring so many good things out of hardship.

Wilfried is missed by everyone at church... It has been a lot of work to try to get things in order because he was involved in so much at the church. Because he was the church treasurer, all the paperwork for the 'non-profit', legal part of the church had to be redone. Shih-Shan has volunteered to step up and take over as treasurer...which is a great help... but because of all the paperwork and the new laws, it is still a work in progress. Wilfried was also our Sunday school teacher for the elementary kids. They really miss him : ((Of course, we really miss him as well, as he was like family... coming every Thursday for dinner, fellowship, and looking over the sermon translation. Martin, who is now 22 and in college for translation work, has stepped up by double checking the sermon translation each week via email.

Since the funeral, we haven't heard much from Wilfried's family. However, his niece, Martine lives close to us and we have kept in contact a little bit. She actually called several weeks ago to let us know that there is an Iranian family staying at the Refugee center who have been traveling by train on Sundays to go to a baptist church in Waterloo...2 hours away. She told them about our church and they have come once and plan to come again. Please pray for them as they have been in Belgium for 5 years now and have been declined a residence card. This seems to be a big problem for non-catholic Christians seeking asylum : ((Roland, a regular attender, has a heart for refugees and is going to see if his connections can do anything to help them. Please pray for Hassan & Zara and their 2 daughters Maria & Miriam (20 and 15). If they are forced to go back to Iran, they will almost certainly be executed for their faith. : (

Please continue praying for Sarah. After all the time cleaning and preparing the 'rat hole' of an apartment, after leaving the windows open for weeks to get rid of the odors, and after moving all her things, on her first night sleeping there, she was sick from the sewer smell. It was so bad that she couldn't stay. She stayed with us a couple days and then found out that the landlord was planning to sell the apartment anyway so he didn't want to do anything to fix it. The social rental agency then said that they would try to find her another place. Problem is there is a huge housing crisis here in Belgium, especially for low income people. God worked it out that they were able to find her another place that was almost ready, but this meant that she ended up staying with us for about 6 weeks. We were glad to be able to help but it was not easy. We don't have a big house, and we live about 20 minutes outside of Brugge. There are only 2 buses a day into town and only 2 or 3 buses that return from town. Praise the Lord, she is finally settling into her new tiny apartment...but please continue to pray for her as she picks up the pieces of her life and starts a new chapter as a single mom of a 16 year old daughter.

Christine, Sarah's friend that we met during the cleaning of the 1st apartment, has stayed in contact. She also, is going through some hard times and is interested in visiting the church in the future. Please pray that she will come to salvation.

Michael, Angie, Alessia, Laura, and Mathias are doing well and have been a blessing. We finally finished our 10 week course Christianity Explored with the whole family. They came after church and stayed the whole day for food, fellowship, and Bible

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study. This was awesome, but we are also ready to be available to others on Sunday afternoons and evenings. They are a sweet addition to the church!

Utility bills have been ridiculous, but praise the Lord, our landlady just had a new boiler put in. It's only been a week and we are still working out the kinks, but we hope and pray that this will reduce our energy usage!



On October 17th, we celebrated 25 years of marriage! In November, the church surprised us with a party to honor our 25th Anniversary. The whole church went to a Chinese restaurant after church to celebrate with us! They had a beautiful cake and gave us a love offering. This was amazing as it was the first time since we've been here that they have done something like that! It was truly a blessing!

The last Sunday of November, we celebrated Thanksgiving after church. This is always a blessing and the Belgians love celebrating with us!

Another Sarah has been coming with her 2 year old, Raphael. She is a believer but her husband, who grew up in an evangelical church, doesn't have any interest in coming to church at the moment. Sarah wanted to do a baby dedication for Raphael on his 2nd birthday, and Gunner was ok with that, so we did a dedication for him at his 2nd birthday party. Please pray that Gunner will come back to the Lord and that the whole family can be on the same page spiritually.

An 18 year old young man named Jona, has been coming to church for a couple months now. He is really searching. His past is a bit messed up, but he is trying to find truth and move on in life. This Sunday, he also brought his parents and younger brother to church.

It is so easy to get overwhelmed with all the needs and very little help, but we know that God is good and He gives us the strength to carry on! And because of your faithful prayers and support, you encourage us to keep fighting the fight! Thank you so much for your faithful prayers and support as well as for all the extra's that have been sent along the way. You are truly a blessing. Please pray that as we witness, teach, counsel, encourage, and build up those around us, that their hearts would be open and receptive to God's leading in their lives! God is faithful! You are close to our hearts and we have a great appreciation for each of you. One day in Heaven, we will all have the time to fellowship in the presence of our Lord! Until then, we all have work to do wherever He has called us! May the Lord richly bless each one of you and your families.

Love and prayers,

Tom, Toni, and Erika



**Praying that you have a truly
merry Christmas,**

Your Bridge to Flemish Belgium



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