



## Prayer Letter from the Vineyards July 2023

*For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*

— 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 —

Dear Friends,

As the verses above point out it involves radical change to be(come) a Christian, and it is an important reminder what your life is then about. This includes our upcoming period towards a transition later this year. If in this we would put ourselves at the center, we might not do what we supposed to do. But if we acknowledge that we exist for Jesus, then by the grace of God, we may also know by faith what it is to be obedient to Him, and expect that the LORD will lead us the way. May these two verses be of encouragement to you, just as it is to us.

Since the last letter of early May we spent several weeks in the Netherlands for the wedding of Andreas' sister, but also for a vision trip. And although it was supposed to be a bit of a slower season, truth to be told, it did not feel like it at all with all the travelling that we had to do. Nevertheless it was a blessed period as we were able to visit several geographical areas and had organised meetings with forefront initiatives in pioneering and church planting. This all helped to have a good impression on the developments and needs, and how to relate that to the mission and vision that God calls us to. A particular

blessing is that we since then sense that the LORD has deepened the affirmation to continue the second season of church ministry in the Netherlands. Praise God for the affirmation, and conviction. But not only that, we also rejoice that we have been offered a house to live in for approximately six months. This is truly amazing as it is far from easy to find a place to live, and even location wise it seems to be ideal to figure out all the details of the next steps (including where exactly to serve and live for the long term). Thank God that He also has provided while He also guided (and still does).

We will be back in the Netherlands (housesitting for Katharine's sister) for a few weeks in August, and hopefully can continue to further prepare our next season. After all, there is much to be done, and Andreas has already started to plan follow up meetings in connection to the first meetings that we had last month. Please pray that the visit in August will be blessed, and will give us all the necessary details so we can keep moving on. After that we will then physically prepare the move in September so we can transition there in October. It is one thing to know the big picture, it is another thing to live faithfully and dependent upon the LORD day-by-day as we continue our journey of life, and thus of faith. Thank God that we may know the big picture, but also pray to God that in time we may know the details we need to know.

Before it is time to move, life is not standing still here as well. Although this Spring Andreas was able to hand over most of what he was engaged in, we do not stop to continue the hospitality ministry for as long as we can. In this we mainly have people over from the local area, although sometimes they come from a bit further, like recently we had an American family from Scotland. In most of these cases good food is combined with fellowship, and that often leads to blessed conversations. Thank God for all He has done during this first season in England. Please pray that God will keep blessing the work of the Gospel that we were, and are involved in, and pray that He will do great things as we keep meeting people, especially that Jesus may be seen, and found through this all. Which makes us think of a recent Saturday in which we partook in a local Open Gardens event. The result was that we got acquainted with a lot of new people, including a Dutch couple that lives nearby. They are planning to

come over again soon, and please pray also in particular for this providential connection, that God will bless it, and we may be a means of grace.

Another development to mention is in regards of the European Church Planters Forum. Although we found multiple pastors in Europe with significant interest, we prayerfully discerned to postpone it with a year. Not only because we ourselves will be deep in a transition when we originally planned this, but also because our fellow organising missionary family in Portugal have had unexpected family circumstances that require their attention. Nevertheless we still believe the Lord had been leading us into the organization, so please keep praying for more positive responses as we reach out to European pastors. Also pray as this summer there will be the creation of a schedule that hopefully will meet everyones needs in the best possible way. Next to that it was exciting to receive a recommendation to speak with the director of City-to-City Europe, which Andreas expect to be happening this month. Please pray for a blessing upon that connection.

Andreas finished his final courses of the seminary last month. Thank God for this. What is remaining, and significant, is to write a thesis. Please pray to make the right decision as the topic over time somewhat shifted a bit. The conviction is now to focus the research on building church community in the secular context of the West, as such a research could be beneficial for the future church ministry context that we expect to be working in.

On a personal level we would call it intense. It gave peace to receive the Lord's directions, and now know how to figure out the final details before we can fully enter our next season. We can not wait to continue, and serve so that the church community, and thus the Kingdom may be build. At the same time we can get overwhelmed with anxiety as we look what is ahead, and the decisions that need to be made. Please pray for us, to stay close to Jesus, to one another, as we travel this path. Furthermore the boys are doing well, even in the midst of an upcoming transition. Please pray for them particularly that whatever happens, it may draw them even closer to Christ.

Although we can't call it a short letter, it is still a bit shorter than normal, but if anything is unclear so far, shoot us an email. Or wait for the coming prayer

letters (this summer and after), as we expect that in the following months, we will gain more and more clarity about the nitty-gritty of what the LORD is exactly leading us into in regards of the church ministry in the Netherlands.

In the meantime we want to let you know that you all as partners are a vital part of this work of the Gospel. Thanks to you we were able to be sent out, to start the first season here in England, and now also continue our second season in the Netherlands. And while the national location will change in the future, the vision remains the same, namely *to see that against the secular stream in the West, and in particular in the main national centers of the Reformed tradition (i.e. the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States) we need a countermovement of transformed lives as a result of following Jesus Christ in every area of life.* Please pray that God will build His kingdom through our partnership with you, as we work towards the vision as pioneers in church ministry.

Yours in Christ,

Andreas & Katharine van Wijngaarden



*Partnering with Nationals  
to Advance the Gospel*

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