

January - March 2024

ANDERSON UPDATE

Your Bridge to Flemish Belgium

Dear praying pastors, friends, and family,

We hope and pray that you have seen the Lord's hand working in your lives and ministries so far in 2024!

2023 ended with a great time of fellowship in the church at Christmas and New Year's Eve here in Belgium, and it also ended with the salvation of Vincent after the service on New Year's Eve! Praise the Lord for this young man becoming one of the less than 1/2 of 1% in Belgium who know Christ as their Savior!!!

2024 started with a full sanctuary at church and it has been that way almost every Sunday since! It is a nice problem to have, but it also brings with it some logistics problems. Over the years, we have looked for a new building to rent, but now, the church people are seeing the need as well. The church has been in the same building since it started in December of 1999 and a slightly larger building would cost more than 4 times what we currently pay in rent, which isn't in the budget. Our sanctuary only holds 40 to 45 people and there simply isn't enough room if everyone shows up, so lately we have had to be a bit creative with people placement. To alleviate the problem of busting at the seams, the kids go to their classes after the first two songs. Now that the weather is warming up, we can put some people in the hallway as well. We've also talked about putting a screen upstairs in the coffee room which will allow 14 to participate in the sermon via screen... but this won't help with the fellowship time. Please pray for wisdom as we pray for God's will and provision.

The believers in the church are starting to be willing to do more since our last church meeting in the Fall. There have been between 8 and 14 in the prayer time after services each week! Satan has been doing his best to discourage and cause problems, but it's good to see believers turn to the Lord during these trials!!! We have 2 discipleship groups going, ladies Bible study, 2 couples going through the marriage Bible study (another couple just finished), and multiple people going through weekly counseling. It is encouraging to see people finally willing to invest in their spiritual lives! Just within the last couple weeks, Tom has had a couple men volunteer to work on a sermon! Since our last furlough, 2 years ago, he has preached every Sunday but 4. He is worn out and ready for a bit of a break.

Prayer Requests:

Car - Our 2010 Dodge Journey is in for repairs. It is at the point where it will need to be replaced pretty soon. It has been a great car since we bought it in 2016 but it's time... unfortunately, we don't have any funds for another vehicle, so please pray that we can raise the funds to get a reliable vehicle.

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Video project - We are working on a video project to send out to prospective churches. Please pray that this will go well and get into the right hands so that we can increase our monthly support and have a bit of financial flexibility. You, our supporting churches and personal supporters, are so awesome and faithful! We really couldn't have been here more than 20 years without you!!! But our financial need is great. We've always had just enough to just get by, but we have never had any extra to put toward big needs like a home, retirement, (preferably not a retirement home) or even a family vacation. The average income of someone with a masters degree is about \$80,000 a year and while we both have a masters degree, our income is only a third of that. With the cost of living going through the roof these last couple of years, we need to make that up to avoid going into debt and being forced off the field. We remain hopeful because God is faithful and has never let us down!

Furlough - It's been 2 years since our last furlough (mid Feb. - mid June 2022). It's time to plan another one... please pray that we can work out dates and schedules soon. We will let you know as soon as we are able to determine when that will be.

Struggles - several of our church families are struggling with some big issues. Please pray for them to come through these stronger and that the Lord will be glorified. Also, many of our people are the only believers in their family and this weighs heavy on their hearts!

Jona - One of the young men at church, has started back to school after dropping out several years ago (before he started coming to our church). He just turned 20 on Wednesday. He has been growing in his faith and has a heart to please the Lord. Please continue praying for him and his relationship with his family. We call him our 'part time son' because he stays with us most weekends, for a number of reasons.

Owen - He left the rehab center. Apparently, some of the residents were sneaking drugs and alcohol in and it was too much for him to handle. The forces of darkness are doing their best to discourage him and keep him from seeing his victory in Christ. He is struggling but still trying to read his Bible and pray every day. Please keep praying for him!

Once again, your faithful prayers and support are very much appreciated. May the Lord bless you as you continue to live for Jesus!!!

Love and prayers,

Tom, Toni, and Erika

Your Bridge to Flemish Belgium



belgiumbound@gmail.com OR belgiumbound1@yahoo.com

Hoornstraat 12, 8340 Moerkerke, Belgium

Gospel Baptist Church, 5670 St Rt 19, Galion, OH - Pastor Steven Hodges