

## Bonjour !

As usual life is busy. Busy doing what?

School is always a big part of being busy when one has kids. For us no difference there. Everything starts up in September full of meetings with tons of information to process. Jan-Willem has started high school called Saint Grégoire (dating its roots back to 1636), named after the famous historian and bishop of

Tours. Quite appropriate for Jan-Willem who loves history. Learning Greek and Economics is new this year, so is getting there and back by bus and tram. While Jack is still at "Christ-Roi", he is now really learning Latin and preparing for his school trip to Rome. Doesn't school sound fun? While some of it Greek to us, parents, especially when we are at the end of our Latin, we are grateful that our boys are healthy and doing well.

In June, Jack and his father have joined "Christi foot"! Great fun playing football (soccer) with other kids and dads. We are having the time of our life. Some others from the church have joined this season too. We tried to involve Jan-Willem as well, but he does not see the point of running after a ball and kicking it! How does one explain such thing?

Do you remember our story of trying to get premises (secured) for the church? Over the years we have talked about the different projects and possibilities, probably losing most people in the details and uncertainties. Well, we have finally signed an official rental lease at the notary public's this summer, valid as of August 1<sup>st</sup> for twenty years. Quite symbolic as well, since twenty years ago on the first Sunday of August 1998, we started celebrating God in Tours North with a weekly public worship service.

The lease makes us practically the owners of the place for twenty years but also responsible to renovate the place completely. Once we have the official permission from the city, we hope to start the renovation work in February over a period of two years, and to make this our own. That said, at the end of October, we did rip off the wall paper, cleaned off the walls, and applied a primer as a first preparation and to put us into motion after all the waiting and negotiating. A lot of work is still to be done!



Because buildings can get in the way of who we are and what we are about, we decided that our year theme should be: "Soyons des pierres vivantes!" Let us be living stones! In French, it sounds better... Anyway, what is thrilling to witness is that people are open to let God work through them as He is working things out in them.

A family lost their wanted and prematurely born son last April. Though, a very painful experience, they chose to share their bleeding heart with Jesus and those around them. And God has been speaking powerfully. As a result, it has deepened relationships but also bring life to people being lost. The mom, Damaris, spoke with Sandra, who is battling cancer as they were picking up their kids. Sandra said that she does not believe and is not interested in religion, but she accepted the invitation for just a cup of coffee. Hours later she left, and with a Bible. ☺ Since then, she has been coming to our Sunday celebrations. And another friend, also turned to Jesus. Now, Damaris with the help of another lady from church, is starting a seekers' group to get to know Jesus better.



In July, we baptized Mayi, a young student. She comes from a broken home, like many others. Her relationship with her father was nothing to "write home about". We had talked about how God can change people we think unchangeable. Somehow, last month, she took him to our Sunday celebration. After the sermon, he came to me and we spoke. He repented, and I was privileged to walk him back "home" to our Father. As I encouraged him to tell his daughter about him returning back to the Father, he took all his courage and went over to her. Well, tears flowed and there was a long and much needed hug. Mayi was astounded and very surprised. Now a month later, it sounds like Mayi's dad is still back on track.

Another man, Jean-Jacques, lost his wife last June. Both come from an atheistic background. In the last three years, I have visited his wife in the hospital, and where we talked about the encounters with Jesus in the Gospel of John. In the beginning God was a non-entity, but very soon the non-entity had the face of Jesus. Over the last ten years, we have tried to talk with them. True conversations were always impossible. Mostly we just listened. At our last church meal, Jean-Jacques showed up for coffee at the end. His daughter told me to pour him a coffee. ☺ I was dead tired and wanted to go to bed. Unexpectedly, we had a real conversation where he really listened (for once!) and asked many questions. We sat at the table talking for... hours about God and the Gospel!

How beautiful when people discover Jesus. And how wonderful when people accept God's guidance in their life! And have I already told you that this summer we sent out our first missionary? Well, we did. There are many challenges. There are many frustrations and tears. But God uses everything to build up his Church as He transforms us and brings us to greater maturity in Christ.

Your prayers are much appreciated and needed. Please pray God that He will grant us wisdom, knowledge, and courage to go where He sends us. Pray for love, patience, humility, and discernment when we lead people. Pray that God gives us physical health, strength, and rest to carry the load and to accomplish all that is needed. And pray too that we'll speak boldly for our Lord. And we would love to see a revival among the kids and the youth! Thank you so much for standing with us.

As said above, we have been working now for over 20 years in Tours. We have never had yet so many opportunities for the Gospel and the Kingdom of God as now, even if we have had many already! We really want to thank you for making it possible by supporting us. Your financial contribution is important.

*Marc & Jody,  
Jan-Willem, and Jack*



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