

FAMILY UPDATE

The Van Wijngaarden Family in the **United States of America**

Please pray for:

- guidance and wisdom in regards of the possible partnering of the missionary organisation Presbyterian Mission International (pmiweb.org);
- a new pastor in the church (oldorchardchurch.org) we attend. The hope is that he will come and stay in the coming month;
- Luca & Sem may grow in their faith and bear fruit while they have entered such a new context in their lives;
- relationships to be established and may blossom for especially Andreas & Katharine;
- applying in what we will be learning in the coming time of study in such a way that it will highly contribute to a further dependency on God as well as it may be used to shape us more to the image of Jesus Christ.



“The eagle has landed”

We were recently watching the landing on the moon with the Apollo 11 which happened in 1969. The phrase in the title above is a quotation of Armstrong, as many or all of you probably know, that was being said after the landing on the surface of the moon. Well, the moon is by far a greater journey than going from Europe to the U.S., but nevertheless we can relate to the relief, the excitement but also the presence of a healthy anxiety when you arrive at the place you have been preparing for (and travelling to), which in certain perspectives was for a long time.

In this update we would like to inform you how these past few months after ‘our landing’ has been for us and also what we expect for the coming period.

Lots to do

Looking back now since we arrived it has definitely been intense in many ways. There were a lot of practical things to take care of from the very first day. This involved finding an



To box your heart?!

It was April this year when we started packing our personal belongings. We were not able to take the furniture, but at least all the personal belongings. And then you realise you have a quite lot with 6 cubic meters.

Three to four months later it arrived here in St. Louis and we were so excited. There came a full realisation that you do attach to your belongings and at the same time it is a strange awareness that your material belongings can influence so strongly on your well-being.

It made us realise again that there is a (healthy) tension in possessing your belongings (between idolatry and asceticism) in which we desire to honour God with our means instead of making the (lack of) means a goal itself.

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"

Matthew 6:21

affordable, but reliable car (is that a paradox?); studying (and passing in the meantime) for the driver's license, because the one we have may only be used for three months in this country; going to the doctor, dentist, etc., because all of a sudden our family had several health issues (no worries, it all worked out, but it was definitely time consuming and, well, let's call it different); visiting primary schools for the boys; all kinds of paperwork, etcetera.

Next to the intensity of the practical things we also experienced quite a culture shock. But we are hopeful that by Christmas we could even feel us at home in this country, because we are improving with that on a daily basis.

And then we took a deep dive

After being pretty busy with many things while also trying to find back our rhythm in life, which we found, by the way, it became June and Andreas started with his 'Summer Greek'. Long story short, he passed for it, grades were good, but it was a big challenge from no Greek at all to doing a whole (normal) year of studies in just 7 weeks. The break that followed was a necessary, but also well enjoyed time to, let's say 'recover'.

Until Christmas

Last Monday Andreas started with the new semester. In this fall term he will study New Testament exegesis, covenant theology, communicating the scriptures, archeology and the bible and Christian formation and calling of which the latter will also be studied by Katharine.

In the meantime Luca and Sem started with school since the week before and they are so excited. Katharine also is a volunteer at the school and is thankful for that opportunity. And, we didn't mention it, but we pretty soon found out that living on campus would be the best for our family, at least for now. However this does involve we will have to move to another apartment next month, because the one we are in was temporarily available.

Let us end with a great thanks for all you who have been praying and supporting us in other ways. All the points of prayer of the

last (and first) update have been answered in the past months and it is so encouraging to know that we are not alone in this.

