

FAMILY UPDATE

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

Please pray for:

- approval of the application to become part of the team with missionary organisation Presbyterian Mission International (pmiweb.org);
- Luca & Sem, that they will be able to go back to school again (which is the expectancy) in August and will be protected from too much stress in this ongoing pandemic;
- encouragement as we undertake the first efforts to start raising a support team;
- that we may meet the people that want to partner with us in regular support through prayer and finance;
- clarity on the exact vision God's calling us into as well as on the next steps to be taken in order to be prepared well.

Pandemic pandemonium

You may add us to the list of people that did not see the pandemic coming, underestimated the impact on the daily life (including the many necessary, but tiring hours online) and in the end do not know how long this pandemonium may go on. But nevertheless we are grateful for last year and how things developed and shaped, while it was not always easy (of course).



We would like to update you with what happened in this past year as well as what we are expecting for the coming period.

"It is all Greek to me"

Although Andreas have done some academic studies in the past it still have been challenging for him to do this study in theology. Especially learning a new language (Koine Greek) did not come naturally, but thankfully it all worked out and he is now around forty percent of the degree programme.

But studying was not only done by Andreas. Also the boys have learned a lot in their first year of school here. Academically that went very well, but culture wise it has been more challenging to them (and to us all actually). And last, but not least also Katharine partook in some classes so one could easily say we are a genuine student family.

A season of preparation

Although the study of Andreas is an important reason to be here since last year, it is not the only reason. We believe from early beginnings that the place we are now is meant as part of



Typical American?!

Recently we were able to borrow a tent and spent more than a week in Colorado, which was lovely. It was here that we became aware again of a basic cultural question what is typical to this country.

The classic answer results in observations like everything is big, a need for a lot of "elbow room", how they smile, etc.

Being in another state we realised how American culture still differs so much locally. Thus we still are not sure what is typical 'American', so the investigation about what in the culture unites all Americans is to be continued.

In the meantime we do know one thing: that all humans, and thus all Americans, are united in being part of the same race: the human race.

"And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth."

Acts 17:26a

a season of preparation, which is so much more than only the academic part. After all, if life is about relationship (with God, our fellow humans and the environment) it is our desire to grow in such a way that we will be better able to relate and thus to engage. Hopefully it makes sense that this growth (just like living abroad in general) goes with ups and downs, and even more, is a lifelong development. But to be where we are now, does mean we have extra possibilities in time and with counseling for personal growth (and healing where necessary) which is a blessing for all of us. One of those blessings is that we now have a better ability to discern our gifts and how they may be of use to serve others.

Partnering

Since the fall of 2019 we have been communicating with several missionary organisations in order to find out which organisation would be the best fit to work with as an intermediary for the future support partners. Long story short we concluded last June that PMI, the missionary organisation for international students of Covenant Theological Seminary, would be the best option. This led us to applying this summer to be part of their network and as we speak, we are waiting on their approval. As we expect to partner with PMI for the support from the US, we already received approval from another Dutch missionary organisation (ANBI Stichting Samen op de Bres) that we are now part of their team. These collaborations are very important to us as we are on the doorstep of the next phase in which we hope to start raising a support team for prayer and finance. And as soon as we have clarity on the exact vision for the future, which we hope to find out in the coming months, we also hope it may soon after become clear on questions like what? where? and when? We end for now with sincerely greeting you all

with the warmest regards,

Andreas, Katharine, Luca & Sem van Wijngaarden

