

Chris & Terri Chapman

Happy belated Valentine's Day to everyone! Valentine's Day seems to be a growing thing here in Holland. Our first year here you hardly heard anything about it and now it seems to show up all over the place! Terri unfortunately had to go to classes that night, but since our anniversary is the next day, we went out on Friday to celebrate anyway.

Lots has been happening since we wrote last. Just after our last mail Terri met again with the Dutch Sign Language Bible group. They have now moved from saying "If we do this...." to asking "How are we going to do this?" The last meeting also had tons of good information from various groups like the Dutch Bible Society, Wycliffe, the Deaf Pastorate from the Reformed churches, etc. We now have one of the pastors for the Deaf (he is hearing himself) coming to all our meetings and including members of our group in a group he is working with to develop standard signs for Christian terminology. The two groups can work hand in hand. Another group is also putting the finishing touches on a new DVD for name signs for Bible books, people and places. That should be coming out in April.

God's timing with all this is perfect! The Dutch Bible Society has also offered us the use of any of the Dutch translations that they have done (digital versions can be made available to us) as well as help from their translation experts. One of our Deaf group members attended a conference for Deaf leaders and pastors in Russia recently and was able to make contact with people in Denmark, Russia and Spain who are also working on sign language Bible translations. So keep praying! This is a long term project, but God is moving it forward. Our next meeting is March 11. There is a prayer/praise list that is being sent out here regarding this project. We have translated it into English and put it on the prayer page of our website as well.

<http://www.thechapmans.nl/prayer.html>

We had also asked you to pray for Folko and Esther to find housing. Just after we sent out our last update, they announced that they have a new apartment. In Holland you have to put your name on waiting lists to get affordable housing. The lists can be years long. For this particular apartment, they were somewhere around number 85 on the list....a number of years away from being able to get anything. There is a rule, however, that hardly ever gets used. If 10 people in a row turn down a particular house, the organization can grant it to anyone they want to. That almost never happens, but it did this time and Folko and Esther are now busy getting the apartment liveable...flooring, painting, kitchen, etc. In Holland you often get housing with bare rooms, concrete slab floors, etc. So thank you for praying!

At the same time that the housing request was answered, a new need surfaced. Our church has been meeting for almost a year now in a different community center while our old location was being remodeled/expanded. We anticipated being able to return to the old facility once the work was done, or, if possible, continue using the place we are in now without much if any additional cost. However, we were notified by the group that runs the community center that we can only use the old location every other week now...a community flea market is taking precedence over us the other weeks! To stay in the room we are now in would cost around 5000 euros more per year, which the church doesn't have. We could use another room in the same center,

but it is smaller and has no atmosphere (an important consideration in this culture). Our current contract runs until June, so we are okay for a couple more months. Please pray with us that God will provide a suitable location, preferably one that we have exclusive access to, centrally located (people come on bikes) and with a reasonable atmosphere. With God, all things are possible!

Another prayer need in the church has to do with the ongoing need for leaders. Two of our cell groups are currently without cell leaders. Please pray that God will raise up leaders, not only for these groups, but also for other needs within the church. Pray also that those whom God calls for these tasks, will respond!

Chris has been busy lately converting a ton of old sermon tapes into mp3 files. We've been able to use a couple of them already for our English language cell group and he has been donating the tapes to Tyndale Seminary in Amsterdam. What doesn't get put in the library is being given to students. He is also busy developing some new Dutch PowerPoint slides and backgrounds to be used with the worship time.

Terri's school schedule is now greatly eased up, but administrative problems that have been going on at her school have not. The last semester there has been a lot of complaining among students and faculty.

The complaints are well grounded and "klagen" (complaining) is common in this culture. There is value in expressing dissatisfaction and asking for something to be done, but there comes a point when it is just needless complaining. Three weeks ago Terri began meeting with 3 other fellow students who have decided that there has been enough complaining and that they need to be praying about it all instead. So once a week this small group meets in an empty classroom for a half hour of prayer together. It has been a wonderful time to pray for the school, fellow students, teachers and each other. Most of the time empty classroom doors are locked, but every time God has provided an open room for them to use.

Another new development is a new web based group that Terri has set up. About 2 weeks ago now she got an e-mail from a gal in an on-line expat group that she is part of. Until that mail, she had no idea that Valerie was a believer. Valerie wrote to ask if it might not be good to set up a group for Christian expat women to provide a forum to discuss their faith and the special challenges of being a believer in another culture/country. Terri polled a couple of ladies that she knew and got overwhelmingly positive responses. As of February 9, Terri and Valerie are "co-owners" of the Expat Christian Women group. There are already 8 members and well over 100 posts on the group site. Terri set up daily prayer focus items with Scripture references to go with each item. Several of the ladies have said that it has been a big help to their prayer life and the last two days the prayer focus has been a particular blessing to two different ladies. They indicated that the focus and Scripture verse came at just the right time for them! Others have commented on how encouraged they have been by the group and everyone has been sharing requests and praying for each other. There are several ladies in the group who have been hurting in one way or another and it has become a sort of on-line discipleship group. Praise God for bringing unexpected ministry opportunities our way!

Saturday night we'll be having dinner again with Pieter and Bobbi Jo. Bobbi Jo has been going through some tough times lately, but it is encouraging to see how she is turning to God for strength and peace. She has also been quite open in telling Pieter how God has been ministering to her. Pray for Pieter, who still needs to come to faith in Christ.

The first week of March we are taking a week of vacation and flying to the Turkish Mediterranean (from here that is a cheap vacation, especially this time of year before the Spring and Summer high season starts). We'll be staying in Side, near Antalya and will be surrounded by places that Paul visited on his first missionary journey. We're hoping for a bit of sunshine, although the temperatures are still not exactly hot. If it is at least warmer than here, we'll be happy. The last week here we've had to scrape ice several times and have been watching the ice layers on the local canals!

Thank you again for your prayers, encouragement and support! We couldn't be here without you!

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Dutch word: "ziekzoeken" - (sick searching) This word showed up in an article about the Dutch bulb industry. It refers to the process of removing sick or imperfect bulbs from the field. It made us think of people who are spiritually sick or weak. Gratefully God doesn't simply kill people like that off! He calls us to come alongside them and nurture them into spiritual health. In particular with the new on-line group, we are seeking to nurture people who are hurting. To see other Dutch idioms and expressions check out that page of our website: [www.thechapmans.nl/idioms.html](http://www.thechapmans.nl/idioms.html)

Praise & Prayer:

-Praise God for the progress with the Dutch Sign language Bible group (for specific requests see our website: <http://www.thechapmans.nl/prayer.html>)  
-Praise God for providing housing for Folko and Esther -Pray for a new church location -Pray for leadership for two cell groups -Praise God for a new prayer group at Terri's school -Praise God for the new Expat Christian Women group -Pray for Terri as she ministers to the women in the new ECW group -Pray for Pieter, especially as we have dinner with him again on Saturday

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Financial contributions/support pledges can be sent to:

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