

# News

MART-JAN &  
TALITHA  
JOY, MICHA  
AND AMY



## Greetings from Kep!

It's an experience to live in Cambodia. To move to the country too. Step by step we discovered our new environment in the past weeks and got (a bit) accustomed to our new location, Kep.

Who googles for Kep will see soon beautiful pictures, a beautiful beach, palm trees, smiling people and the best offers to spend some nights in a beautiful resort. Not a bad place to be, isn't it? And that's where we live.

We learn to see more and more behind the façade of these pictures and beautiful palm trees to discover what actually happens up here. When you unveil that façade and look a bit deeper into it you will see the intense brokenness, the poverty, people who are sold for a night every day, families that fall apart. Booze, violence, injustice.

Not really a holiday scene when you ask me.

Don't misunderstand us, we are grateful for this beautiful environment, but we want to stay focused on the people around us that are in need.

Needy at all kinds of levels, but especially needy because they live without hope, without perspective, without a solution. We want to show the Lord Jesus to them by our lives and by our words.

During these weeks of transition a children's song comes to our mind regularly. This song gives words to our wish. For ourselves, our live and our work here in Kep, Cambodia, but also for all those other places where fellow workmen are working. Together we build Gods Kingdom!

In this newsletter we give an update about our live and work in this new

environment and also a message from our Homefront Team.

Enjoy reading it!

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*"Jesus, open my eyes  
Teach me to look at people  
The way You see them from up high  
You are the Lord I serve  
To give Your love  
To the ones that live with me  
Teach me to look at people*

*Jesus, I open my hands  
Teach me to be a blessing  
Make me a help for other people  
Who live in hunger and pain  
To bring healing  
To those who don't know You  
Teach me to be a blessing  
.."*

- Elly & Rikkert -

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This News is sent out about 4 times a year in order to inform you well about the things that are happening in our lives and enables you to pray with us. Feel free to forward this letter to others.

You can subscribe or unsubscribe via our website [www.2followus.wordpress.com](http://www.2followus.wordpress.com). On our website you will also find more information and a BLOG. If you have any questions please ask us!

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### 'ROOTS':

On a Sunday morning we start early with breakfast because at 8 o'clock the kids club from the local church will start at the Roots ground nearby. The children can go there by their own because the club is at walking distance. Together with a group of about 10-20 children from the neighbourhood they listen to a bible story, make a handcraft and play games together.

After that, after a cup of coffee, we will make a trip as a family like a walk in the national park, having a pick nick near the water etc..

The young church we visit in the afternoon exists mainly out of a group of children and a small but enthusiastic group of adults. Slowly we learn to know them better and we are grateful for this new place.

### SHALOM VALLEY UPDATE

We are nearly ready to start building. We found a contractor who can build the first building for us. Depending on the incoming funds we hope to be able to proceed with building step by step.

Also the groundwork goes on. The road has been prepared again to endure the heavy loaded trucks that will deliver materials the coming time. There are still enough challenges to deal with. But we keep optimistic, heading for the final goal. Together with the team in Phnom Penh we look forward to the first camp in Shalom Valley.

Mart-Jan works mainly (at the moment) at home. Luckily we have access to a good mobile internet connection. He also travels regularly to and from Phnom Penh because of meetings and/or meetings with the contractor.

Talitha works also from the home and coaches new coordinators who follow an online training(watch introduction video [here](#))

### FAMILY UPDATE

We enjoy our new place. The peace, the green, the wideness, the first contacts with the people around us. We do notice we are still in transition and have to invite all kind of thins because everything and everyone is new. It's part of the process. But it is intensive.

The children also are trying to find their balance between school and free time. Micha would desire to lock up some of his schoolbooks until the end of the

school-year! For suddenly there's a sea of space outside the house to run, climb, scramble, cycle, dance and jump the whole day. And a lot of children with whom they can play! They enjoy it to the max. It's a great blessing! They manage well in the local language, the Khmer, combined with the use of hand and feet when necessary. Sometimes children from the neighbourhood come to play with the Lego and Joy and Micha will look after their cows..:-)

Amy misses Sak ('ming') the most, but at the other hand her world suddenly has broadened. That helps her. It's a feast to explore so many new things and people. Who will get a little chicken hatchling as a visitor every day? We call him "Harm": "Nice to neet you☺".

The hot season has started, but to us it is bearable compared to the temperature in Phnom Penh! The sea wind is nice. Of course it is sometimes really too hot, but we notice now that we are more accustomed to it.

We were preparing the house in advance of the raining season that will come, when early this week unexpected a very early rainstorm started which resulted in a total wet ground floor. We don't know yet if this is 'normal' or just a bit exceptional.

### HOME-SCHOOLING

Every morning from about 8.00 to 12.00 Joy and Micha get homeschooling. They are used to this rhythm and the neighbourhood children too by now, and it goes well. They enjoy, roughly, the new challenges. They started to build a fort in the backyard.

Early Wednesday mornings we go for a swim together. The children get swimming lessons and we all enjoy this break in the week. Four afternoons a week the children have , together with a group of local children an hour Khmer lesson. They learn to read and write.

For the coming school-year (2017-2018) we are considering to ask a teacher from the Netherlands to teach our children. Are you, or do you know someone who would be interested in this, be free to send us an [email!](#)

We are happy to know that we also in the coming time will be carried by your prayers and care!

### PRAYER- & PRAISE POINTS

#### GIVE THANKS FOR:

1. For a positive transition to Kep
2. For health
3. For joy in working with Alongsiders(we do miss the team in Phnom Penh!)
4. For Shalom Valley, for the beautiful terrain and the plans getting solid shape
5. For Alongsiders, the way this organization grows and is a blessing also in other countries
6. For the local church we visit now
7. For Talitha' s father. The major heart surgery was successful and he is at home by now. He does well considering the circumstances, and we are very grateful for that
8. For our HFteam 2,0@ and everyone who backs us up

#### PRAY FOR:

1. For strength, energy, faithfulness, joy and health in the tasks end (new) relations of every day(marriage, family, homeschooling, friendships, the local church, Alongsiders)
2. For the Shalom Valley team (Dave&Dawn, Pon, Lakhina and us)
  - For a good cooperation
  - For Pon as he will get married with SreyAn at the end of this month!
  - For Dave, Mart-Jan and Lakhina who now have to travel regularly from Kep to Phnom Penh and back
3. For safety with the traveling but also living here in Kep. There are several (really dangerous) snakes.
4. For the community in which we live with amidst it the local church. We pray that we from the back can be a support and blessing for this young church.
5. For wisdom, also here in Kep we are confronted with a lot of need close to us. We need to have wisdom every time to discern whether there's a task for us or that we are have to let go.
6. For Talitha's father, for the period of revalidation and recovery that lays ahead of him after this surgery.

With warm greetings,

Mart-Jan& Talitha,  
Joy, Micha and Amy



## From the Homefront Team

Cornerstone - Phnom Penh - moving - language school - Alongsiders - furlough - moving again. A series of serious transitions with a relatively short period of rest. It is really unbelievable intense. I am grateful for the resilience that God gave.

It seems that a new phase has started in which Mart-Jan and Talitha and their children can really settle in Kep and with Alongsiders. A reconsideration of the HFT-model in the way it functioned these past years is necessary.

That opportunity showed itself because 3 of the 4 HFT-members uttered in the past months that they would like to hand over their activities, separately from each other, and because of totally different and personal reasons. Rob, Ann-Marie, Eunice and me were thrilled to work together with you. Thanks a lot, you are great.



A word of goodbye:

With lots of pleasure and enthusiasm I was allowed to support Mart-Jan and Talitha and their kids as a HFT-member.

Because it all became a bit too much to me I made the choice to pass on this task. I will withdraw from the extra tasks of a HFT-member and return to the normal family contact as a praying sister(in law) and aunt.

By this way I want to thank everyone who prayed with us in the past years and was involved in many other ways with cards, mails, presents, visits, finances etc. These experiences did well to all of us, to know and trust that the Lord God holds all ropes in His hands and also guided and moved these things.

I also would like to encourage everyone to keep supporting and praying for them.

With kind greetings, **EUNICE**

From the first moments of Mart-Jan and Talitha HFTeam coming to existence I was part of it.

In these past years we heard of their longing to go into mission, we were part of many changes with them and we could see them finding their place with Alongsiders.

Mart-Jan and Talitha see their task within this organisation and want to give their talents to it. I think it is the place for them and time for me to withdraw from the HFT and make place for someone else who can encourage them, support them, back them up in the next period.

With very kind greetings, **ROB**

By this way I want to inform you that I stop being a HFT-member from Mart-Jan and Talitha from 1-4-2017.

I am grateful to you as adherents, the HFT and Mart-Jan and Talitha for the trust, friendship, love and good cooperation in the past years. A new period started for me to withdraw and be actively involved from that place with the work they do in Cambodia. Above all I am grateful to God for the especially beautiful and good way he went with Mart-Jan and Talitha and Joy, Micha and Amy during the past four years.

He guides and I know He will do that the coming time.

Greetings, ANN-MARIE



The HFT is continuing in a new shape. René & Stijntje are joining. Welcome to them!

A moment to introduce...

We are Rene and Stijntje van der Maas from Oost-Souburg. Brother and sister in law from Mart-Jan and Talitha. We have three children, Nathan age 9 years, Elise age 7 years and Joaz age 8 months. We are both 31 years young. Rene works as a restaurant-manager at Restaurant Duinzicht in Koudekerke, next to that he mentors young people who got stuck at home or at school. Stijntje works part-time as a companion for autistic children in Middelburg. We also do kids club once a month and we hope to maintain doing this for many years. On Sunday we go to the Christian congregation in Oost-Souburg but we also go regularly to Almere to the Christian congregation de Wegwijzer.

Past summer we were asked to join the HFT and after thinking and praying about it a great lot we said yes. Rene will be active in the HFT, Stijntje will act more from the back. We look forward to what the future holds!

RENÉ & STIJNTJE

**HomeFront Team**

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On [www.2followus.com](http://www.2followus.com) you can find more information about our Homefront Team and other people who are helping them so that you can stay connected to the work in Cambodja!

The HFT is in this way very compact and efficient. We do want to gather a (hopefully growing) amount of contact persons who will be a specific connection to the places where the adherents are presented.

Otto and Ellen Jager will join us as contact persons for "de Bron" in Eindhoven, the church Mart-Jan and Talitha joined during the period they were at cornerstone bible school.

Representing the HFT, I will take Rob's place as a contact person. Look for other changed data on the [website](#)

Kind greetings,

Erik



**Practical information**

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