

News Letter

MART-JAN &
TALITHA

JOY
MICHA
AMY



By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

John 13:35

We go to the Netherlands, but we don't go alone...

Over the last months we have been talking a lot with each other and in a smaller circle about the new season that will come for our family: the second half of March 2020 - the Lord willing - we will move back to the Netherlands. More about this new season for us is written in this news letter.

The date we leave Cambodia is 'loosely' set on the second half on March, but the process of thinking, praying and talking together began a long time ago already.

Before we went on furlough in the summer of 2018 we thought about our new term in Cambodia (from which we have had 9 months already). We saw different things coming together that would, in one way or another, mean a new great transition for our family. Work wise, living wise and schooling wise.

Besides some smaller things we took the next things into our prayers and considerations.

In the summer of 2020 Joy will finish primary school and will start with secondary schooling. In Kep, where we now live, this will not be possible and it would mean we have to either move back to the capital city, Phnom Penh, or move to Siem Reap, a city more in the north of the country) for international schooling.

At Shalom Valley there will be a period of transition as well: the campsite will be finished far enough in 2020 and the systems that are needed will be in place by then. Our task in this project will come to an end. Of course there will always be more work and more things will be added, but the foundation is laid. Adding things is way easier than building things up from nothing and making them work.

Besides that Mart-Jan's job at the board of the language school in in Phnom Penh

will come to an end in 2020 as he served the school for the maximum period of 4 years.

We didn't find it easy to make a choice in all of this. We really wanted to hear God's voice again. Because we experienced in the years behind us that when the Lord gives a clear calling, this calling becomes something you can always go back to. This is true when life is easy, but especially in times of trouble.

Together and with others we sought for the Lord's guidance. Is there a new task for us in Cambodia? In the Netherlands? Somewhere else? How? Where? When?

We are encouraged and amazed how - one step at a time - it became clear there will be a new season for us in the Netherlands. It is a beautiful, but personal story, which we would love to share with you personally. Feel free to ask for it.

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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.

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ALONGSIDERS EUROPE!

From the first moment we started working with Alongsiders International we were encouraged by the simple yet powerful model. We are positively surprised when we see the impact this movement has in the lives of so many young people and, with that, in the church.

Over the last years we saw how Alongsiders moves to different countries and people groups in the third world.

Besides that we were touched by the need people shared with us when we explained to them what we do within Alongsiders. Discipleship does have a special place in our hearts for a long time already. Our desire is - together with the Church world wide - to respond to the great commandment in Matthew



28: to equip a new generation of young people to actively follow the Lord Jesus in their daily life. How amazing is it when, in this process of learning, they deliberately choose to walk alongside a younger vulnerable brother or sister, who walks alone. To start walking, learning and growing together. Our hope is of course that, in this process, the younger brothers or sisters want to follow Jesus and they themselves choose a little brother or sister too and start walking alongside them! This is full-circle around..., a movement.

When this happens we will be amazed and full of joy as we see how the Church grows, gets stronger and shall be a powerful testimony in a broken world.

We started to ponder over the questions that started to live in our hearts: Would this be the time and possibility to bring the Alongsiders model to the west, adjust where needed, and start to use it to support local churches in their call for discipleship? Would there be an opportunity to start this movement in the Netherlands and from there see how the Lord leads? We started to pray actively over these questions.

When we shared our desires with others, we found out that it was not only our desire. Others would love to see Alongsiders walk alongside churches in

Europe as well, and to see them encourage youth to become Alongsiders and walk actively alongside their youth and children and take care of them.

A wonderful process followed (which we would love to share with you personally), and the vision for 'Alongsiders Europe' was born.

First steps were taken. Steps in faith, as we cannot see where this all will lead to. How will the vision for Alongsiders in the Netherlands / Europe develop? At this point so many things are still unclear. It is exciting!

This is true for Alongsiders but for us as a family as well. How will the transition back to the Netherlands go? Where will we live? How will schooling be? In this whole process we trust the Lord for the right time and details. We're sure steps will become more clear and the pieces of the puzzle will fall in place. As the Lord has led us before, He will continue to do so in the future. We trust in Him!

So, we'll come back to the Netherlands, but we don't come alone... We take Alongsiders with us.

We will keep you informed!

Dear news readers,

In this letter I would like to introduce myself shortly. My name is Jessica van Assche and since last December I live in Kep to teach Joy, Micha en Amy. We have been working together for some months now and it is a great experience. In the Netherlands I worked at a primary school as speech therapist. To transition to my new job well, Talitha helped me the first weeks to get used to the homeschooling system. Besides teaching I enjoy living in Cambodia, with the challenges that come with that. In January I did a 2 week course 'kickstart Khmer', where I learned enough of the Khmer language to be able to go to the market for some shopping, to ask for direction, etc. Almost every day I learn new words from the children, or from my neighbours. I live about 10-15 minutes from Mart-Jan & Talitha's home. My neighbours invited me for several activities already, and this helps me to learn a bit about Khmer culture as well. I am grateful for them and for a new friend from Phnom Penh who started to live in Kep. The school year is almost finished now, but after summer holidays I will stay here some more months to teach Joy, Micha and Amy. I am looking forward to the meaningful adventures that are to come!

Greetings, Jessica





HOMESCHOOLING

It is going well with homeschooling. The kids finished their school year really well with great support and guidance from Jessica.



They will have one more week with lots of games and other fun stuff and, last but not least, a Skype meeting with their classes in the Netherlands to tell them about next year. Then it is time to enjoy a well deserved summer holiday break!

We are happy and grateful for Jessica and her input in our lives. On the previous page she introduced herself shortly. Besides homeschooling we have a lot of time together and we enjoy a valuable friendship in which we can share the beautiful and the challenging moments together, and have lots of fun. We keep reminding each other about where and for Who we live for.

Jessica has started to be Joy's Alongsider:-) and it is wonderful to see them learn and enjoy ter time together. Jessica will stay with us till March 2020

and, Lord willing, we will travel to the Netherlands together.

GIVE THANKS WITH US:

1. for Shalom Valley and for the blessing this place is for so many in Cambodia and abroad.
2. for Tom from Rotterdam who - during his 3 months internship - gave very meaningful input to the Shalom Valley development.
3. that we will be able to hand over our work in capable local hands.
4. for open doors to bring the Alongsiders model with us to the Netherlands / Europe.
5. for the support from Alongsiders International and from you as our (prayer) partners.

PRAY WITH US:

1. for the coming period when there will be a time of closure and handing over tasks to local leaders.
2. for wisdom in all the plans we still have for Shalom Valley.
3. for faithfulness in the different tasks the Lord gives us to do here in Kep over the next months.
4. when we, as a family, will prepare for and transition to a new season in the Netherlands.
5. for wisdom and insight when we continue to work on the vision for 'Alongsiders Europe'. For the right people at the right time.

Until next time!

Warm greetings from us from Kep,

Mart-Jan & Talitha,
Joy, Micha and Amy

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Financial support:

Alongsiders does not pay us a salary. We're very grateful for those who want to support us financially. If you want to do so, then please use the Dutch bank details as stated below:

Foundation: Nehemia (ANBI)

Please note: Project church-work
Cambodia

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On 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 Cambodia!

