

NEWS Letter

MART-JAN &
TALITHA

JOY
MICHA
AMY



Open hands and grateful hearts

De Kleine Hoeve volunteer Annet warmly welcomes us.

As we walk through the sunlit garden together, going over the final details for the retreat, she suddenly stops, kneels down, and says, "Shall we pray together and place this weekend in God's hands once again?"

What a beautiful way to begin the **Compass Retreat**. Moments like that remind us that we do not do this work alone.

Time and again, we are reminded of how many people are praying with us — here in the Netherlands and far beyond. Thank you for that! It is one of the reasons we look ahead with expectation to what God will do during weekends like these.

Angela, Jettie, and I deeply enjoyed the eight young adults who stepped into De Kleine Hoeve to enjoy a time of retreat — with open hearts and open hands: hungry for God, vulnerable, and at the same time full of love and kindness toward one another. We were also grateful for the warm involvement of the volunteers at De Kleine Hoeve, who, together with their community, are sharing in what God is doing here. For months, they have been praying with and for us in the preparation.

There were tears, there was a lot of laughter, and we saw God at work. What a privilege it is to play even a small part in that. Personally, I am in an intense season right now, one in which I sometimes feel quite vulnerable. It was especially during this weekend that I was reminded again of how true it is that God works through weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). Often, being a part of

His work is not about doing great things, but about creating space: facilitating, being present, becoming still together, and seeking God side by side. Offering tools that help people continue growing once they return home. Being creative, enjoying nature, sharing delicious meals, enjoying each other's company, and embracing the conversations that unfold.

And perhaps that was the most beautiful thing to witness: how God uses that space to invite people into courageous steps. Steps of surrender and trust — not always easy, but when taken, life-changing.

The first registrations for **the November retreat** have already come in. Are you a young adult, speaking Dutch or English and thinking, this might be for me too? Then sign up and experience it for yourself.

Continue on page 2>>>

News | June 2026

48



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This News is sent out about 3-4 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.com On our website you will also find more information and our BLOG. If you have any questions please ask us!

ALONGSIDERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Last week we had our final team day before the summer holidays begin. These are precious moments that go far beyond just “work” — moments where we share life together, have fun, complement one another, and learn so much from each other. Gratitude is often the word that colors these gatherings. And it is that same word that comes to mind as we look back on the past season.

Grateful for all that is behind us: the [Vision Trip](#) in January, followed by [D-Day](#). For the beautiful growth of the [Compass Retreats](#) and the partnership with De Kleine Hoeve. For the two new people who, as it looks right now, will soon be joining our retreat team.

For [The 180](#), which different groups across the country have been engaging with, while new groups are already preparing to start. For the conversations with a partner about opportunities to make this material more widely available across Europe.

For the beautiful resources connected to The Chosen: [Group Discussion Guides](#) in different languages being used in churches and youth groups. These guides are linked to [reading plans in YouVersion](#), which are currently being read by around 10,000 people worldwide each month.

Grateful for the wonderful partnerships with churches. With communities here in Almere and, for example, in Gouda. For opportunities to share at events hosted by Stichting Jij daar!, Heart Cry, and Opwekking. And for all the people behind the scenes who walk alongside us and our family — supporting, encouraging, and helping us build.

It remains special to see how we are allowed to sow with open hands, and how God is at work through the different things we get to do with Alongsiders. How it connects with young people and helps them follow Jesus.

And while we look back, expectation is also growing for what lies ahead. After the summer, new groups will begin with [The 180](#), [five new Compass Retreats](#) are planned, and the first registrations for the [Vision Trip in January 2027](#) are coming in. More and more churches are asking us to walk alongside them as they consider what practical discipleship can look like.

We look ahead to the new season with expectation — eager to see what God will do once again!

FAMILY UPDATE

And now the summer holidays are almost here. We're ready for them. A lot is happening, also in our personal lives. Beautiful things, but also things that are complicated and deeply affect our hearts.

We are enjoying our children so much. Over the past season, we have seen all three of them grow in so many ways, and we are truly proud of them.

Joy has completed her VWO with great results, and her annual Muziekvrienden concert is already behind her. It was a beautiful evening. Micha is still fully immersed in football and took part in a tournament in France last month. Next year will be his exam year. Together with Joy, he is part of a wonderful group of friends here in Almere, and it is a joy to witness, from the background, some of the fun, meaningful conversations, and sense of connection that comes with that.

Amy is still enjoying horse riding. She is an eager learner, full of great ideas and

plans. She would love to become a veterinarian. At school, however, she has not yet found her place, so together we are looking for a form of education that will suit her well for the coming school year.

And last but not least... we are moving!

For quite some time, we had been thinking and looking for ways to create a little more space in, around, and for our home. We have always been incredibly grateful for our place by the park and have enjoyed it so much. At the same time, we began to notice that with the five of us, it was really starting to feel too small.

That search has led us onto a new and surprising path: during the summer holidays, we hope to move to a new place, very close by — less than a five-minute bike ride away. A place where we can largely remain within our existing network, something that is very valuable to us. A place where very little needs to be done, which means we can move without major renovations and the summer holiday can, for the most part, still feel like a real holiday!

Looking back, it is special to see how, over the past few weeks, so many things fell into place so quickly and how the Lord kept bringing people onto our path. It feels like an unexpected gift, one that all five of us are incredibly happy with.

In the meantime, our current house by the beautiful park is cleaner and tidier than it has ever been, we have already had several viewings, and we have received our first offer. We are very curious to see how this will continue to unfold!

Of course, we will keep you updated.

Continue on page 3 >>





PRAYER SUPPORT

Your faithful prayers and support make a difference!

1. Join us in giving thanks for the **Compass Retreat** last weekend: for the openness, the vulnerability, and the steps that were taken.

Pray that what God has begun in the lives of these young adults will

continue to grow and bear fruit.

2. Pray for the five new **Compass Retreats** that are planned: for the right participants, open hearts, and God's guidance in the preparations.
3. Thank God for the new groups starting with **The 180**. Pray that these groups will become safe places where young people can get to know Jesus more deeply and learn to follow Him.
4. Pray for **the Vision Trip** in January 2027: for the young people who are already signing up, for their preparation, and for God's confirmation about who is meant to go.
5. Thank God for **the Alongsiders team**: for Angela, Chris, and the new people who will soon be joining. Pray for ongoing unity, wisdom, and joy in working together.

6. Pray for rest and restoration during the upcoming summer holidays, so that as a family we can recharge after an intense season.

7. Pray for our children: for Joy and Micha, for their friendships and the choices ahead of them, and especially for Amy, that together we may find the right place of education for her.
8. Pray for our move this summer: for a smooth transition and practical wisdom in everything that needs to be arranged.
9. Pray that our new home may once again be a place of peace, rest, hospitality, and blessing for everyone who enters.

Shalom!

In Christ,
Mart-Jan & Talitha
Joy, Micha and Amy

Practical Info

Our address from **July 16 2026** :))

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Building Together

Alongsiders does not provide our income. For the work we do, we depend on donations.

With your support, we can continue investing in young people: helping them follow Jesus and pass on the life they receive from Him to others.

Would you like to help build this work with us? You can make a donation to the following bank account:

Foundation: Nehemia (ANBI)
Please note: Project Alongsiders Europe

IBAN: NL66 SNSB 0931 7011 39
BIC: SNSBNL2A

