



The Hamley Herald

March 2011



Division = Multiplication?

We are very pleased with the growth we are seeing among our Latino group, which meets once a week for Bible study followed by dinner—so much so, that we have outgrown most living rooms we meet in! We realize that in order for our group to grow, it is going to mean that some sort of division is going to need to take place. The problem is that we can't just split the group up because they have started to form meaningful bonds with one another, and imposing group division would not go over well at all! But we also can't continue to cram more than 20 people in a living room that comfortably seats 10. What to do?

We've decided to take a very casual approach to group division. Rather than forcing the group to split, we will begin to offer a second "session" on a different night for those who missed the Bible study that week or who find the new time/night more convenient. And because dinner is served so late on Wednesday nights, we have encouraged those who couldn't make it in time for the Bible study to join us for dinner afterwards. They can enjoy a time of fellowship and then to try and make it to the second session that week to receive the teaching. We are also exploring holding one session each week in Oostende and the other in nearby Bredene, as there are many who attend when the group is held in one place but not the other, and vice versa. (Although close by, it can be a LONG trip when one doesn't have a car, which is the case for many.)



Carrie watches as Flor tries to put the books of the NT in order during a recent study on how to use the Bible.

You Know You Were Born an MK When...



There are certain phenomena unique to missionary children, as Andrew can attest to. You know you were born a missionary kid when...

10. The nurses at the hospital talked to you funny. You couldn't understand a word they said!
9. You get held by at least ten different people every Sunday and just eat up the attention!
8. Your birth announcements went out in more than one language to 8 countries on 3 continents.
7. You take your first trip abroad when you're less than two months old.
6. Long car rides and visiting many churches is normal to you. Isn't that how everyone spends their weekends?
5. Your inbox and mailbox are full of "fan" mail from across the world.
4. You think grandma is a talking picture on a computer screen.
3. There are more Bibles in more languages in your house than the city library.
2. You're never quite sure which "aunts and uncles" are biological relations and which are family-of-God.
1. Your travel crib is your crib, period.

Ministry Center Grand Opening

At the beginning of March, our church took up its place in our brand-new ministry center, located here in town a short walk from...well, just about everywhere in town. We've been gradually furnishing and equipping it for all kinds of ministry, from Bible study groups to children's gatherings to counseling. It also has office space for our pastoral staff. We look forward to using it for a series of special Easter events including our first "official" Spanish church service and a children's day full of stories, crafts, and of course, Easter eggs!

Please pray that we are able to finish furnishing the center in the next week or so and that it would serve to bless this community for His glory!

You're WHERE Now?

For those of you who only receive our newsletters from the post office every six months or so, suffice it to say that a whole lot has changed since our last newsletter! We have a new baby, a new country, new ministries, a new house, and new languages! [Other than that, not much has changed. ;)] If our being in Belgium is news to you, perhaps you could find someone from your church to print off our monthly newsletters for you so that you can join us on this European odyssey full of twists, turns and surprises! But here's the quick version:

Our journey to Belgium began last summer when fellow FM missionaries Richard and Sheila Dickinson met a spiritually hungry group of Spanish-speakers in Oostende, Belgium, where they live and work. This group asked them to start a Bible study for them. The only problem was, Dick and Sheila don't speak Spanish, and it would have taken a very long time to send them Spanish-speaking missionaries. Fortunately, God had a much better, faster plan in the works.

They sounded the "Macedonian call" ("Come to Belgium and help us!"), and we were able to answer. We came for a confirmation visit in November and felt God's blessing on the whole process. A month later, we moved from Spain with the help of fellow FM missionary, Marvin Klein—even though Carrie was 7½ months pregnant at the time!

We can honestly say that we've seen God's hand at work in virtually every detail of this transition, from miraculously finding a nearly ideal house here in Oostende, complete with wonderful landlords, to the timing of our trip across Western Europe. A day or two earlier or later, we'd have encountered some very ugly weather, but in 3 days' journey we only saw 10 minutes of rain—and got a rainbow out of it to boot!

But best of all, our long-awaited firstborn, Andrew Ryan, arrived on January 25, healthy, happy and always eager to be included in whatever's going on around him. Having waited almost 11 years of marriage for our first child, we are definitely taking the time to enjoy him!

That said, our work here is going well, leading the Latino Bible study/fellowship group and ministering in the New Hope Christian Community, a highly multicultural English-speaking church here in Oostende. We're gradually acclimating to the language and culture here, and we're enjoying every minute of it.

Praises

- Andrew continues to do well and is growing fast!
- We have the new ministries center up and running.
- Andrew received U.S. citizenship this past week. You might think that he would automatically qualify since we are both U.S. citizens, but we learned that is not always the case and that missionary kids have been denied in the past!
- We are truly content with our new life and ministry in Belgium.

Prayers

- For Michael as not only is he taking language classes, but he is also taking "enculturation" classes for the next two months as well.
- That the Latino group will grow in number and in faith. We've already given away an entire case of Bibles and many are on the brink of making a decision for Christ.
- That we can balance work and ministry and family life as we adjust to being three.
- That our financial support would keep pace with ministry expenses. A big "Thank you!" to all of our faithful givers!

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"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."
—Romans 1:20