



Dr. Cork and Ruth Albright

Missionaries to the Netherlands

August – September 2006

Ruth's Notes from the Heart

What an honor! Odilia, a five year old in my Sunday School class, handed me her "Friends Album". I put a picture of myself in the designated area and began to answer all the personal questions about myself. I answered the question, "Who is your best friend?" with "Cork". Later that morning when she had read my answers to all the questions she exclaimed, "Uncle Cork? Uncle Cork? But he is your husband!" Everyone around us just laughed and laughed. Inside my heart I was so "proud" that Cork is my best friend. Of course, Cork was pretty happy with this answer himself!

Family throb: The more involved I get with this marvelous family I automatically inherited when I married my best friend, the better life seems to get. Angele is home for six weeks to spend time with Hilbert, her best friend. Their relationship is growing and their love for each other is becoming very obvious. Cork and I enjoy doing things with them and witnessing their relationship. Amy, Griz and girls are getting settled into a loving new home only five minutes from school and ten minutes from church. We are so "proud" of Amy's best friend, Griz, as he had made it a goal of his to see that his family is comfortable and settled in their new home before he leaves on October 16 for Navy duty. And Amos' best friend, Christina, is doing well. They are very excited about the growth of their baby which is due in December. It is fun to hear about the doctor's visits.

Ministry throb: Heidrun, the lady who taught Sunday School for the first time in September, loved the experience. She is a very good teacher and I feel as though I just might be working myself out of teaching Sunday School. How exciting to see this area of ministry being taken over by one of the church ladies. I still teach the Ladies' Bible Study once a month but we are praying that this will be someone else's responsibility soon. It is getting closer to the time to leave and start another church! What is there left for me to do?

Praise throb: I do praise the Lord for His wisdom and guidance on behalf of the church in Valkenburg. One of the men of our church has agreed to join the teaching team for the Wednesday night Bible Studies. This is new for him. We are excited and are looking forward to many good studies. We praise the Lord another person is getting involved!

Prayer throb: I would like to repeat the same request I mentioned last month for Amy and Griz. Griz has received word that he will be full time in the Navy for 21 months beginning October 16. The training he received in August and September went very well. As I mentioned last time, he received his orders and they have learned that from Oct 16 - March 15 he will be at various military bases in the U.S receiving more training. From March 15, until they decide he is done, (they can only keep him a total of 24 months as a reservist being mobilized) he will be in Iraq. I have claimed and memorized a few verses to be a comfort to me but my heart still skips a few beats when I pray for him. Please, pray for the girls as they adjust to Daddy being gone. Also, please pray for Amy and the absence of her best friend. And, of course, pray for Griz's safety and that he will be able to find a good Christian friend while in Iraq.

Dutch throb: The Sunday School children are loving learning a new song every month. They are actually requesting to sing in class every week. The first week we started these songs, I thought I had made a mistake in trying to accomplish a new song each month but they came through and love learning Bible songs. Here is a new song for you. We have already learned it. "Ik ben gelukkig" (I am happy) "Ik ben gelukkig, zo gelukkig, kom en zing met mij (2X) Wij zingen: Ik ben blij want Jezus maakt mij vrij. Ik ben gelukkig, zo gelukkig, kom en zing met mij!" ("I am happy, so happy, come and sing with me. (2x) We are singing: I am glad because Jesus made me free. I am happy, so happy, come and sing with me!")

Cork's Ministry News

Every Dutch person has a opinion over America. It's no wonder: the Dutch eat American hamburgers, drink American cola, listen to American music and watch American films and TV series. If there is something wrong with American culture then there is also something wrong with Dutch culture.

Europeans view over weight Americans with abomination, yet they are on their way to being just like us. The Dutch believe that Americans are always thinking and talking about money yet there is no country like the United States in the world where so much money is given to charity and churches. The Dutch willingly protest the death sentence in the States yet half of all Dutch are not against it.

Why are churches in Europe emptying with lightening speed while in America they are overflowing? For example, in the Netherlands of 1991 67% of the population went to church; in 2004 that was only 38% according to the Social and Cultural Plan Bureau of the Dutch government; 24% never went to church in 1958 with 64% not going to church in 2004. According to the study "Religious changes in the Netherlands" in the year 2020 72% of the population will not be found in any church whatsoever. If we just look at their statistics for Bible Churches, Baptist Churches, and Charismatic Churches all lumped together in one column, we discover that in 1958 3% of the Dutch population claimed they were Bible, Baptist or Charismatic increasing to 5% in 2004. The expectation is that the Bible, Baptist and Charismatic churches will increase to 7% of the population in the year 2020. Although it must be noted that many of these new church members are coming from the official State Reformed Church where 23% of the population attended in 1958, just 6% in 2004 with only 2% expected to attend in 2020.

Europe and the Netherlands are in great spiritual need! I will be writing more on the spiritual needs of the Dutch in my next newsletter. Our desire as missionaries is to enlarge our church planting, beyond the four churches we have started and turned over to the Dutch, through our college ministries to impact an ever needy Europe.

	<p>If in the Bible there's a command, we're going to obey it; if there's an example, we're going to follow it; if there's neither command nor example, we're praying about it.</p>
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