

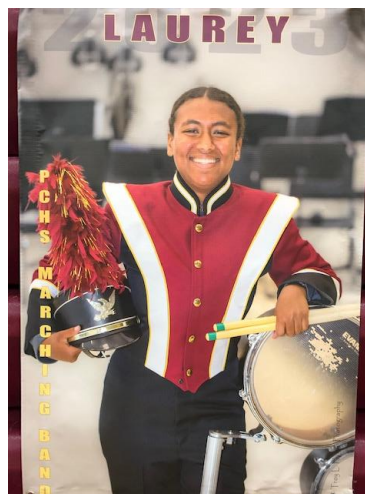


July 2023

Dear Friends,

We hope you are having a wonderful summer. For the Johnson family, we're all busy with work—except for Thekla, who played softball. Marie, Laurey, and Ellie are continuing in ministry with Child Evangelism Fellowship outreach. Laurey is the summer coordinator for the Indian Lakes Chapter (south central Iowa), while Marie is the summer coordinator for the Hawkeye chapter (Cedar Rapids-Iowa City). In addition to holding 5-day clubs with biblical themes, the girls also serve as CEF counselors for their two camps.

Laurey finished Pella Christian High School in May and ended her high school tennis career, finishing fourth in the district after dealing with several minor injuries throughout the season. She is planning on attending Iowa State University this fall and will major in Human Development-Family Studies and is likely to add French as another major since she tested out of the first two years of college French. Marie will be returning to the University of Northwestern-St. Paul and continuing in Music Education. Her university choir toured for 10 days in England at the end of May and sang in some of the nation's most notable cathedrals—including Westminster Abbey, where the King's coronation had been held the previous week.



Above left: Marie's college choir in England. (Marie is 2nd row, 5th from right).

Above right: Laurey was recognized as a graduating senior for PCHS's Pops Concert. She plans on continuing to play percussion in an Iowa State University concert band.

Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at kgilmore@rca.org to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.

I have spent much of my time on the French-language curriculum, working on the Old Testament and the Preaching courses. For the Old Testament, I'm using The Bible Project Videos in French as the basis for providing an overview of the Bible to my students, who don't have time for large reading assignments. These videos do a wonderful job of presenting the major themes of each book of the Bible and I highly recommend them to use (they're in English and several other languages).

I recently took receipt of the French translation of Mary Hulst's book, "A Little Handbook for Preachers: Ten Practical Ways to a Better Sermon" by Sunday Paperback. We use this as a text in the Coram Deo preaching course and I found it so insightful that I asked and was given permission to have it translated into French, which was done through Axis Ministries in Niger, who also formatted the book into a print-ready PDF file. They are also recording it into an audiobook, which is a first for them, and which I think will be useful for Africans from oral cultures who enjoy listening more than reading. We just had it printed by [Publish4All in Minnesota](#) using their micro print-on-demand technology. This process makes it economical to print paperback books in limited quantities, unlike a normal printing press run that may require 1,000 or more copies at a time to be economical. It took me about a year to coordinate the details for this modest project and I want to thank Third Church in Pella for the funding!

I've also been visiting Congolese immigrant churches and pastors in Marshalltown, IA, Cedar Rapids, IA, Des Moines, IA, and Columbus, OH. Part of this has been to try to recruit more students, but I've also preached and shared some of the French materials we use that might be useful resources for the pastors and their churches. We're hopeful that we can create some partnerships and provide training for French-speaking immigrants here. In Cedar Rapids, we've even had a bit of overlap with Marie's CEF working with an African Church that has a French service.

PRAYERS AND PRAISES

1. We give thanks for another high school graduate, Laurey, in our family. Pray for Laurey's freshman year at Iowa State and for Marie's sophomore year at UNW-St. Paul.
2. Continue to pray for Aïchatou's health. We learned in June that our insurance doesn't cover the extended use of the long-lasting injectable drug that she has done so well on (that costs over \$40,000/year), preferring that patients switch to the cheaper pill version. We've filed an appeal and we're praying that she'll be approved, as she has never been able to stay on pills in the past due to their side effects.
3. Pray for new Francophone students to come into the Coram Deo leadership formation program and for our ministry to make new connections with French-speaking immigrant churches and congregations. Pray that our current students will remain motivated and engaged.

In Christ,
Tom and family

