



April 2024

Dear Friends,

It's so nice to know that spring is here and that we're in the season of rebirth and renewal! Easter came early this year after a fairly mild winter in Pella, IA, and Laurey and Ellie helped with the Sunrise service. Our warmer temperatures almost guarantee that all of the city's tulips will have bloomed before the annual Tulip Time festival during the first weekend in May! In all of this, we learn that our expectations are always subject to God's plans and his timing is perfect!

After two years of putting together a French track for Coram Deo's pastoral training program, we going to get some help from a part-time recruiter, Pastor Sepa from Grand Rapids, MI. A Congolese immigrant, who is currently enrolled in Coram Deo's English program (despite his fluency in French), Pastor Sepa has agreed to use his widespread contacts among immigrant churches to promote and recruit for us.



Pastor Sepa will help Coram Deo with immigrant recruiting.

This development is an exciting opportunity for Coram Deo and for the many immigrant churches in North America that are being established and rapidly growing. Several are realizing that they need to prepare and equip leaders in their new context, as the old training models from their countries of origin won't suffice and few potential pastors can pursue full-time seminary. As I've been creating and adapting the French courses, I've realized that I required help on the outreach side of the equation, so that our program can find the right audience. Ideally, these immigrant churches will trust us and see our equipping programs as vital to their ministries.

On the family side of things, Marie and Laurey are enjoying college. Ellie participated in Large Group and Individual Speech contests, as well as the school production of "To Kill a Mockingbird" in which she played Calpurnia. All three girls are likely to work with Child Evangelism Fellowship this summer. Laurey applied and was selected to work with CEF in Hawaii! Each girl will need to raise funds since the jobs are considered summer missionary positions by CEF. Thekla is now taking gymnastics and swimming lessons and will need to decide if she wants to go out for Little League baseball and start piano lessons in May.

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.

PRAYER AND PRAISES

1. I'm thankful that Coram Deo was able to engage Pastor Sepa to help in recruiting pastoral leadership candidates, which hasn't been one of my strengths. Pray for the Lord to guide him in his efforts and for new students to enter into the program.
2. We give thanks for the scholarship contributions that are coming into the RCA to support training immigrant pastors. Pray that the Lord will help us match those funds to deserving pastoral students. If you'd like to participate, you can give on my RCA webpage (www.rca.org/johnson).
3. Pray for the girls' CEF summers (Marie is still uncertain to what degree she'll participate).
4. Our family is making plans to visit Ottawa, Canada, in late summer to see Aichatou's brother and her visiting parents. Pray for this planning as there are a lot of details to work out with schedules, logistics, and dates.

In Christ,
Tom and family



All of us (except Marie) watched Ellie perform in "To Kill a Mockingbird" at PCHS.