

May 2025, Michael & Rani Grivas-Allison



Michael and Rani Grivas-Allison

with Alexi (3)

Serving the Lord in Belgium



Dear Friends,

In the month since we wrote our last newsletter, it seems that we have now properly transitioned from 'mainly learning language' to 'equally learning language *and culture*'. 🧠🏠

Despite being one of the main goals of our first term of service in Belgium, up until this point, learning culture has largely **bubbled away in the background** as we've (necessarily) focused on language. However in this last month, we've found that **our normal life has started to yield a steady stream of opportunities to talk with people, share meals, listen, observe, ask questions and participate in life here on a deeper level**. As you can imagine, all of this has been pushing our French, tiring us out a little more than usual, and giving us much to talk and think through together! 🧠🔧🌱

We've shared a little of what this has looked like below, to fuel and encourage your prayers. As we look ahead to this next month, please pray for **continued experiences and insights into culture** - and that God might **bear fruit from these over the long term in helping us to love people well and point them to Jesus**.



Warmly in partnership,

Michael & Rani

'Learning moments' in May...



Having more French means we can now seek out 'learning moments' more **deliberately**, particularly as we try to better appreciate the dynamics of Belgian Christian culture.

This month Michael joined **a day seminar run by the Brussels Bible Institute** (above). He got to observe some high-quality French Bible teaching in action and connect with people from different Christian backgrounds. Meanwhile, Rani read **a short history of the birth of the modern Belgian Protestant movement** (above). She has since chatted with people at church whose grandparents were part of this period of Gospel growth, which came largely through the partnership of Belgian soldiers (converted on the front or in British hospitals during WW1) and American Baptist missionaries. A very encouraging read!



As part of our learning, we've also started a monthly 'visit a new church' habit.

We are hoping this will help us to better serve GBU students, who come from a range of Christian backgrounds; to develop a list of 'recommended churches' in Brussels; and to better appreciate the character of GBU ministry in its broader Christian context. It's fantastic to have sufficient language to do these visits, and to gain a glimpse of what God is doing in Brussels beyond our own church.



In the school holidays, we also managed a short family holiday to a city called Dinant in Wallonia, the French-speaking region of Belgium. The culture in Wallonia is quite different to Brussels, and is considered by most French speakers to be more authentically 'Belgian'. We enjoyed a few days of great weather, green scenery, the river Meuse, discovering a WW1 fighter jet, and learning a bit more about the history of the region.

Looking ahead to the 'end of the year'...





Because the school year in Belgium ends in June, we have already started our train of 'end-of-year' events. This recently included a GBU board and staff dinner (pictured above), this year with the exciting addition of a few 'observers' - **young GBU graduates considering serving on the board in the future.** It would be a great step to have people who have gone through the GBU ministry themselves to serve in this way. Pray that God would lead some/all of them to take up the challenge in the future!

Upcoming dates...

- **Rani speaking** at church women's event (7 June)
 - **Class presentations** (18 June)
 - **Exams** (30 June - 2 July)
 - **Alexi finishes school** for the year (4 July)
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Please thank God...

- **For the faithful Gospel work** done in Belgium over a century ago, which is still bearing fruit today.
 - For **growing cultural integration and learning** in our 'normal life'.
 - For a fun **time away as a family** earlier in the month.
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Please ask God...

- **To deepen our love for people as he grows our understanding of culture.**
- **For energy and moments of rest** as we juggle exams and 'end-of-year' busyness in the next month.
- **For wisdom, clarity and faithful words** as Rani prepares to do an extended interview at a church women's event.



From Michael and Rani

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30 JUNE DEADLINE

Say 'hello' or let us know you've prayed for us!

"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing."

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

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We're so thankful for your partnership with us to see a world that knows Jesus!

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