

February 2024, Michael & Rani Grivas-Allison



Michael and Rani Grivas-Allison
Serving the Lord in Belgium



Dear Friends,

Thank you to all of you who were praying for Hérauts, the GBU's annual conference, earlier this month. It was a great day to be part of, with a record turnout of around 170 people.

Below we've written a **special 'Hérauts' edition**, with some reflections on what stood out to us as newcomers.

We hope it helps you get a taste of some of the **unique opportunities and challenges of university ministry here**, and spurs you on to keep partnering with us as we work towards joining the work that God is doing through GBU Belgique!

Warmly in Christ,

Michael & Rani

'Hérauts': a glimpse of what it looks like to be a herald of the Gospel in Belgium...



You might be surprised that Hérauts was actually really different to our experience of uni ministry conferences in Australia (and we've been to a few!).

Of course, there were plenty of **'familiar' things** - faithful Bible teaching, lots of singing, the buzz of students gathered together...

But there were also some **key differences** - and not just that it didn't involve bunk beds, or that lunch came with dessert!

Below we've shared what stood out to us. We'll leave any comparisons to an Aussie context up to you. But we think you'll be able to notice **some distinctives in what it looks like to be a 'herald' of the Gospel in Belgium** (where evangelical Christians make up only 1.4% of the population)...as well as **some real strengths that God is forming in the GBU** as it seeks to meet the challenges of this setting.



A focus on evangelism. 'Hérauts' is the one conference GBU runs and every year the focus is on equipping students for evangelism. This was reflected in the strong Gospel focus of the main sessions, seminar topics, the book stall, even the song choices. In all these things, we could see the GBU's **deep heart for mission in a strongly secular context.**

A hub for Christians of different backgrounds. Far from being an 'in-house' event, 'Hérauts' brought together **students and people who minister to students** from many different contexts in French-speaking Belgium and northern France. We loved seeing this **very deliberate leadership in Gospel unity**, especially in a context where the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few (Matthew 9:37).



All kinds of people serving behind the scenes. In this picture you can see a student, members of local churches, GBU staff, and future GBU staff...a good summary of just **how many different 'hands' were on deck** to make the conference run (note - we also spied graduates, supporters and board members pitching in before, during and after the day). It was great to see the many parts of a **'broader GBU body' in action** (1 Corinthians 12), pooling resources and partnering in a very 'hands on' way for God's kingdom.



Above: a more superficial difference - the church which hosted the conference randomly had a ball-pit(!), much to Alexi's delight. Maybe one day he will graduate to helping move conference books in the Belgian rain...

Some student testimonies from the day...

*"I attended the 'Engaging Your Campus for the Gospel' workshop, which was incredible. **It gave me a new perspective on evangelism and also tips on how to do it in practice.**"*

*"I've been able to learn new things, and be freed from misconceptions I'd had. For example, I used to think I was weird because I was completely different from others. **But it's precisely this difference that makes me special and can attract others to Christ.**"*

Please thank God...

- For the success of **Hérauts** and his work through the ministry of GBU.
- For a **great pastoral visit** from Elizabeth, CMS' Regional Director for Europe.
- For helping us **pass our exams**.

Please ask God...

- To keep **shaping the GBU to equip students in their witness to Christ**.
- For **healing and energy** after a few weeks of colds.

- **To lead Rani and N** - they are still Zooming/Bible reading sporadically, but N appears closed to the core Gospel message.

From Michael and Rani

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

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

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If you'd like to give through financial support, please head to our [CMS giving page](#).

If you would prefer to give using a BSB and account number, please email CMS and they will send you the relevant details.

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

Email: mrgrivas-allison@cms.org.au

Profile: <https://www.cms.org.au/missionaries/michael-and-rani-grivas-allison/>

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