



marco
justine
naomi
noah

November 2012

Our baby – it's a BOY!



Last Month

Marco returned from Germany at the end of October. As a surprise to the grandparents he had taken Naomi on the trip with him. They spent three weeks in Cloppenburg and the rest of Germany together. Unfortunately, we don't have any pictures (we need to work on that ☺), but the presentations all went really well and a few important new contacts were established for Sibongile. Many private groups and churches have planned fundraising events, especially for December. We are excited to see what happens!

Beyond that the trip was a wonderful investment into their father-daughter relationship. Naomi took the constant change of beds (9 different locations!) and many business meetings with globetrotter ease. Marco can't wait for Noah to be old enough so he can accompany him on a journey like that one day. Meanwhile, I spent my days on the couch with horrible pregnancy nausea and tried to entertain Noah with Naomi's playgroup, our volunteers and Bob The Builder DVDs ☺. It was not pretty but thankfully I am doing much better now and our kids have their normal Mommy back.

Thankfulness

Last week Americans all around the world celebrated Thanksgiving. Even though it's not a holiday we traditionally celebrate we have lots of American friends and heard about their preparations. Then the year is coming to an end giving us another reason to reflect on what to be thankful for. So often those things are so obvious – and we overlook them nonetheless (or maybe that's exactly why overlook them?). Bestselling author [Ann Voskamp](#) writes: "Gratitude for the seemingly insignificant – a seed – this plants the giant miracle." This miracle is joy. Joy in the every day, joy in the chaos, joy in suffering, joy in desperation. Joy in the Lord, even when we feel so far away from Him. Gratitude - being thankful - then is like a gate opener, a forerunner for this joy. These last few weeks Marco and I "had to" be thankful to make a path for the joy, or else discouragement would have easily overgrown the path. Thank you, that the kids have been playing for 5 minutes without fighting. Thank you, that Sibongile has staff and we can pay them every month. Thank you, that Noah slept through this last night. Thank you, that we did not start an argument with each other despite the stressful day. Thank you, that our baby boy is growing healthy and strong in my tummy. Thank you that we could help a colleague in a crisis... As you can see, we are well. In the midst of current discouragement through practical challenges, demotivated staff, screaming kids and people that don't want to take care of their own problems, we are thankful that there is always something to thank for. And that the Joy of the Lord is our strength.

So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:6-7



Albert and Peter trying to squeeze their long legs into the school desks in Wakkerstroom.



Cedrick and Judith visiting us at home. Judith is also pregnant and they are expecting their first baby in June next year.

Wakkerstroom & Zambia

Last week Marco spent some effective days in Wakkerstroom with the steering committee of the [Wakkerstroom Friends](#). At the time, there were violent uprisings in the region in which wine farm day laborers got together to protest against their low wages. Unfortunately, the violence got out of hand and had to be answered with heavy police presence on the streets, which is so untypical for the otherwise quiet Breede River Valley. Several times, Marco and the team were not able to get to Wakkerstroom because the two only roads leading deeper into the valley were blocked by burning cars and protestors throwing stones. None of our people got

harmed and the protests are starting to calm down. However, some of the meetings that had to be cancelled were rescheduled for this week and so Marco was off for a few more days, translating, facilitating 'passionate' discussions and giving advice to the steering committee. The protests showed us all how invaluable the work of Wakkerstroom Friends and similar initiatives is. The anger of the day laborers is certainly understandable, but they also do not have any opportunities for better jobs or promotions because of their deficient or non-existent education. They get sucked into a frustrating cycle of poverty and meager jobs upon which no one

can build a stable and secure life. The financial support and performance monitoring of the Wakkerstroom Friends initiative aims at this exact problem: to enable those youth, who are without any means, to have relevant career options for the future. Just to mention again, the Friends of Wakkerstroom fund accomplishes this aim by establishing educational sponsorships for each young adult. If you are interested to get involved check out:

www.freundeskreis-wakkerstroom.com

Spying the Land

In January, Marco will go to Zambia for two weeks. A Dutch Team,

“At the time, there were violent uprisings in the region...”

whose leaders have been volunteers with Wakkerstroom before, are doing an outreach there which will be facilitated by our good friends Cedrick Kamba and his wife Judith (see pic. above). Although they are from Zambia this will be their first team coordination experience and so the team asked Marco to accompany them too. He will be there to train and assist them for

some of the outreach, as these two are planning to host more teams in Zambia in the future. They are also the ones that we told you about in the last newsletter who are thinking about multiplying the Sibongile model in their home country. So this trip carries double importance. Marco can spy out the possibilities for multiplication and maybe already network with contacts that would be relevant for

the project. At the end of next year Cedrick will have finished his BA of Theology with a focus on Community Development here in Cape Town. After that they are open to go to Zambia. We've been supporting and mentoring these guys for many years now and it would be an honor to help them start a new ministry in Zambia.

Blessings, The 5 Spalkes