

The Stauffers

Serving in France and the French-speaking world



Newsletter -Wedding Edition :-)



Bonjour everyone,

Fall is here, summer is behind us, and I hope this letter finds you all well. First, I want to say thank you once again to all of those who reached out to us about Katy's MS diagnosis. It was quite a shock for all of us, just a couple of weeks before her wedding, but we have seen God provide in this, even though it was a blow to all of us. Katy has had a bit of a tough time of it but is doing reasonably well and we are so grateful for all of your prayers and kind words.

Thanks so much to all of you who continue to stand with us in your prayers, in your giving, in your partnership with us as we minister here in France. As I write this, I can't help thinking of the Apostle Paul, writing as a missionary to one of his supporting churches, when he said, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel" (Phil 1:3-4). We are always so aware that God uses so many of you to be part of a large team that allows us to be here doing this work.

So, here's the news of what's been going on here since August.

The Churches

Cheryl and I got to host the worship team of our church in Trevoux for a time of fellowship, setting the vision for the musical worship in our church, and laying the "how" of we are going to try to do that. Everything is so much different in a small church, but our team is growing. Between the musicians, service leaders, and tech folks, we have about 16-18 people involved in serving in the team. For a church of 50-60, that's consequential. We are so happy God lets us serve in this church in a place where there really are no other churches in the area.

I also was invited to preach at our church in Pont de Cheruy this past Sunday. It is a special church for us because it was the first church our Lyon church planted, and it grew from a home bible study that we helped start nearly 15 years ago. We dearly love these people.

We are now a group of 4 Charis churches in the Lyon area, and we/those churches are preparing the launch of 3 more churches, one of which will have its first service in December. It is so amazing to be a part of what God is doing here and all of you who are partnering with us in some way in our ministry, you need to know that you are part of that.



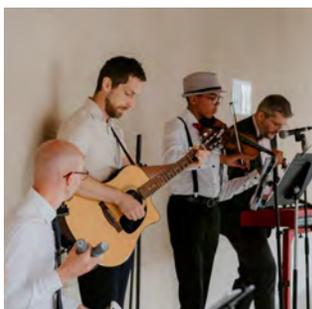
The Wedding



Despite the bad news we received about Katy's MS, we had such a wonderful wedding ceremony for her and Max. It was just such a gift. We had lots of friends and family from the States there and around 250 there for the wedding ceremony. Christian weddings here, because the protestant Christian presence is so small, are always seen as an opportunity to present the gospel, because many people there will have never set a foot inside a protestant church before, and the pastor will use the occasion to talk about what a Christian marriage is, and God's place in the center of that marriage. We sang several worship songs, and it's very much like a mini-church service. The upbeat music and message were quite a surprise to many of our guests. One of my favorite stories from the wedding was a friend of Katy's, who is a practicing Muslim, flagged down the pastor after the ceremony to discuss what she had heard. We try to take every opportunity to share the gospel and you never know how God might make those seeds grow.



The wedding was just amazing, and we are so grateful for Max and love him dearly. We have known him for years and seen God work in his life. I said at the civil ceremony (here we have to do a civil and a religious ceremony), that if the only reason we came to France was for Max to come to know the Lord and he and Katy to find each other, that alone would have been worth it.



All of our friends and family that came were special, but this was especially cool. I had two best friends growing up, since we were 12, and by God's grace we are still in touch. One of them, Terry, was able to come over with his family for the wedding.

Turkey

Our mission sent us to a conference/retreat in Turkey (near Izmir) and we got to spend sometimes with our leadership and our network teammates. It was also a great opportunity for us to get to spend some time with the new incoming director of our mission, Mike Yoder. Dave Guiles and his wife Sue are stepping down after of 20 years of service. Mike has been a missionary and pastor with the Chris fellowship for decades and we will miss Dave but have every confidence in Mike.



Since we were already in Turkey, we were able to take a 3-day tour of the 7 churches mentioned in the book of Revelation, as well as visiting Colossae. To walk around Ephesus, Laodicea, and what was Smyrna, to see the ruins and better understand what life like when the New Testament was written and especially what the churches there were like, was an amazing experience and gave us an understanding I don't think we could have gotten just by reading about it. What a gift!



My Studies

I have resumed classes for my master's in theology with Crosslands. We started the fall semester with Bible Exposition (how to prepare for and preach a sermon). I'm in a different study group this year (but still in close contact with last year's group). The teachers and staff are great, and the courses are challenging, but my favorite part about the program is definitely the positive culture between the students.

There is no sense of competition or rivalry, rather, everyone seems to be continually rooting for everyone else. Although I am in France and everyone else is a Brit, we communicate often by WhatsApp and are encouraging each other week to week. While this takes up a lot of time each week, I can already tell that I will really miss it once my studies are complete. We start each fall with a week-long residential session, out in the country, in a little town called Buxton, England. Really great to get to see each other in person, to learn together, and to worship together.





I have started teaching again in Geneva. We are still trying to figure out what the new normal, post COVID, will look like, but I got to work with this year's students, talking about how to plan and prepare the music part of a worship service, how instruments work together, how to prepare song arrangements, etc. I dearly love getting to teach like this. I especially love how different they sound and how differently they approach singing and playing together after just a few hours together. Seeing them start to "get it" is always so much fun and I know they are learning stuff now that will serve them as they go back to their churches or as they become pastors of churches after their studies.

It's always a big deal for us when a friend from the states come to visit. Not only did we get to have lots of family and friends for the wedding, but my other childhood friend, Paul, came to visit and got to go to Geneva and see what I do there.

Prayer Requests

Lucy has graduated and is leaving to spend the rest of this school year (at least) in the States. She'll be staying with my folks in Florida, working and making a definite plan for the following year. She will probably study music, but since she's not really sure what path she wants to take, she is taking a year to figure it out. She told me yesterday that she is excited and scared all at the same time. That sounds about right. Please pray God would give her guidance this year and that he protects her as she makes this big transition of learning to live in the States.

Max is turning out to be a very attentive husband already and is getting plenty of opportunity to show that because Katy has already had another MS flare up. Please pray for inflammation to go down and for her morale as she and Max learn to negotiate this as they begin their life together.

Our daughter-in-law, Carlie, just got a promotion and is now officially a librarian down in Orange Beach. She and Mark are doing well, but are looking to find a church they can invest in that area, so please pray for that.

Cheryl, who has worked part time for most of our time here in France, didn't get her contract renewed (most of her division didn't). We are trusting God to lead her to her next thing. Prayers for that would be appreciated.

Kev- Through the work I do with Hymnes 21, we will be launching a "Worship Camp" at the end of October. Worship leaders can come with their families and spend a week at the TEENRANCH campgrounds. We will be having sessions on "What does the Bible actually say in regards to worship," "why do we sing in church," "Being intentional about leading and preparing a worship service," and "How to play together instead of just at the same time." Plus, there will be lots of playing and singing together. I would so appreciate your prayers.

Lastly, I need to be honest about our situation with regards to our support. Because of inflation, some churches not really recovering from COVID, some of our older donors retiring, etc, we have gotten to a fairly critical place in terms of our support, after being stable for several years. I totally trust God to see us through this, I have no doubt. But, if I'm honest, it's often the first thing I think about every day when I wake up and the last thing I think about when I go to bed. It has been this way for a bit and frankly, it's become really heavy. I am asking for two things: 1) I really, seriously need your prayers that God would answer our prayers on this. 2) If you feel like God is prompting you to be a partner with us financially in this ministry, please let me know. You can give directly to our ministry [HERE](#). If you haven't seen it, we put together a **3 1/2 minute video** that talks about our ministry and gives you a pretty good idea of what you would be partnering with. If you're not sure, I would just suggest praying about it :-).

Well, that's the news from Tramoyes (our little village) for now. Thanks for taking the time to catch up with us.

Sincerely,

Kev