



## CAROL BRITTON | BELGIUM

STRENGTHENING BELIEVERS TO TAKE THEIR PLACE IN SOCIETY



10 March 2023

Dear Family and Friends,

Here it is the beginning of March, and I'm just now writing my first newsletter of 2023. **What year it has been!** It's been so cold here; it warmed up a bit; and then it has been below freezing again. A friend and I were driving across Brussels a week or so ago and rejoiced when we saw purple and white crocuses poking out of the soil. What a beautiful sign of Spring. We are all looking forward to Spring!

I joined a Bible study that meets via Zoom each Friday morning, but had trouble getting logged onto their site and even joining them in the beginning. I'm enjoying getting into the word in a different way, but haven't yet gotten to know people in the group. It's a little more difficult via ZOOM. It's just not the same as a Home Group, where you take time to chat, get to know one another and pray for one another.

We continue to pray weekly for the church, Brussels, Belgium... via ZOOM or WhatsApp due to the extra cold weather this winter. We will soon start meeting to pray together in person again.

I'm also mentoring people via the phone, ZOOM or over lunch. It's a pleasure to be able to encourage my brothers and sisters in Christ.

In some ways, I feel like I've not gotten much done so far this year, but I already finished filing my US Income Taxes and my refund arrived on my bank account last week. So, **that's progress!**

I had my yearly blood test and checkup with my endocrinologist mid-February and he prescribed iron as mine was low. It has not been fun getting used to taking it as there are some unpleasant side-effects. I need to take iron that is absorbed in the intestines as my stomach doesn't have enough acid in it to absorb iron from food.

While working on my income taxes, I noticed that last year's income was \$3,000 (3,000 Euros) less than the previous year. That's a lot. I already don't have as much income as a normal employee or retiree. As we all know, there are cost-of-living increases/indexes each year. We've seen rent increases, along with utilities, food, gasoline... Missionaries rarely receive any kind of cost-of-living increase (one church who supports me used to increase their giving to each missionary by the cost-of-living-index each year.) I've not been hard-hit by the increase in gas and electricity as I signed a three-year contract for a fixed price. So, my gas and electricity costs can not increase until the end of June 2024.

As you may remember, last November, I shared that my monthly rent had increased by \$50 (50 Euros), due to the yearly cost-of-living index. One group

has been providing \$50/month for six months. **Praise God!** That **"extra" will end in May. Will you pray about providing that "extra" \$50 (50 Euros) per month?**

Maybe not all of you know that I am not employed by one church or organization. My income comes from several different churches, with whom I have relationship, and friends. My income is not the same each month. FIRE International, my missions-sending organization in North Carolina, raises funds for each of us missionaries each year during the missions conference, whether we are there or not. **What a blessing!** At the missions conference, people make commitments to give a certain amount monthly. But, sometimes, people drop off and aren't able to continue their giving. Sometimes, people say they will give \$50/month, but give only \$25/month. That hurts us missionaries. We count on the money that is given monthly. **Please pray that all that's promised, is given.**

Also, I am hoping to be able to travel to the USA to itinerate, speak in churches, visit with friends, supporters, family, and attend the FIRE Int'l Missions Conference in September and October. Right now, I can't even save anything towards travel as my income is so low. **Will you help provide for that travel as well?** I also have to renew my American passport before traveling anywhere this year. The cost will be \$130, and photo 13 Euros (\$14).

So, **will you please pray about financially supporting me each month**, and if so, how much? And if you are already supporting me, please verify your commitment. **Giving is easy, safe and secure via FIRE International's website** (at the bottom of my newsletter) **or via my Belgian bank account.** If you don't feel comfortable giving via the Internet with your credit or debit card, call the FIRE Int'l office below and ask for Michelle to help you. **You can also download the FIRE Int'l app to your phone and set up automatic giving using the app.**

You may be asking when will Carol retire? I have been asking the Lord that too, but also remembering what my previous pastor and his wife said, **"Do we ever really retire from Christian work?"** I have submitted my will (and continue to do so) to the Lord and have told Him I will continue to work here in Belgium, until He says my time here is over. Now, who can question that?

**May God's Kingdom come here on earth as it is in Heaven!**

Love in Christ,

*Carol*



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