

2010 was a year of transitions ~ I relocated to the US after 4½ years in Europe and started fundraising for missionary work in France. During this process I've connected with so many amazing people—and traveled both in the US & Europe! If you don't know some background, in 2009 I had hoped to get a work visa to teach English in Paris & work as a missionary with *The Bridge*, a new international church in the multicultural community of greater Paris. Being granted a work visa as a non-EU citizen is currently impossible. So I'm pursuing a long-stay visitor visa for which I must have the finances to cover my living expenses. Read on for an update of my time in Europe from September to November 2010.

Paris ~ I first spent time near Paris where it was great to re-connect with my colleagues at *The Bridge*. I loved getting my "feet wet" for the work I'll be doing once I move back to France! Among other things, I joined an international gathering with about 12 women from the US, the UK, Columbia & Indonesia. I also helped hand out flyers inviting people to a special event, and I met several people new to *The Bridge* who are interested in pursuing the things of God in an international setting. There are currently around 100 people attending *The Bridge* each week, and many French nationals & internationals are connecting through weekly Life Groups. Once I qualify for my visa, I can't wait to get "completely immersed" in pursuing my passion to work with internationals & refugees in France!!! You can read more about my plans to work with *The Bridge* in on my website at lorawiggans.wordpress.com.



The main market square in Delft

Delft ~ I then returned to the Netherlands and stayed in Delft - the city where I lived for 4 1/2 years until September 2009. I was right at home - it was as though I'd never left! I loved riding my bike again to go visit friends and for quick shopping trips into the city center. It was surprisingly easy to tap into my Dutch language skills after a year - and as always, I understood better than I could speak :)

Delft was my home-base for the next 2 months, and I made some short trips nearby. I visited friends in Amsterdam and enjoyed some autumn colors in the eastern part of the Netherlands. The timing of my trip meant a change of season from summer to autumn, and therefore a need for warmer clothes and, little by little, a decrease in the amount of daylight!



Autumn colors in Baak, in the Achterhoek region of the Netherlands

Travels ~ I also joined my friend Uta during her autumn vacation for a week in the Normandy region of France. A highlight of that trip included a day trip to Le Mont Saint-Michel, a place I've wanted to visit ever since seeing a picture of it in my first French text book in high school. It's a monastery and small town built on a tiny tidal island about a half-mile off the Atlantic coast of France - if you're ever in the region, I highly recommend seeing it!!



Landscape in southern Normandy—also known as Swiss Normandy

Le Mont Saint-Michel



Re-connecting ~ An even greater highlight, of course, was re-connecting with friends and colleagues. I loved hearing their latest news, and I appreciated how everyone was so interested in my plans to return to Europe and work with *The Bridge* in France. Several people have joined my team as financial and/or prayer partners - something I'm very thankful for and excited about! I also have new friends that I met during my time in Europe. I look forward to staying in touch - building both old & new relationships!



With friends in Delft



High tea with some colleagues from the International School of The Hague

I also got to see a few of the children I worked with in speech-language therapy ~ it's always fun to see how they've grown and progressed!!!



Sean & his mom

International Friends ~ A very special time included a "reunion" with my international friends from the woman's small group that I helped co-lead while living in Delft. All of these women are pursuing a relationship with Jesus and following the dreams and destiny He has for them! Some are still students, some have graduated and are now

working in the Netherlands, and a few are now married! Being with these dear friends really ignited an excitement for working with international students in Paris. I envision building special relationships with many students through small groups or through English tutoring, etc.



Enjoying Belgian chocolates!



Friends from China & the Netherlands



Asian friends eating with chopsticks, of course!

Reunion ~ I also hosted a "reunion" with the women from the English classes I taught in Delft. It was so wonderful to see how our relationships were not just teacher-to-student, but friend-to-friend! We had fun sharing our latest news - in a combination of English and Dutch, and even some French now and then. Many of them asked & hoped that I would return to Delft to teach English again - that was special to hear, but unfortunately it's not possible in terms of a visa to live & work in the Netherlands. Once all the steps come together to move to France, however, I do plan to make visits to the Netherlands and continue to get together with these special friends!

I had the opportunity to spend some extra time with one of these former students, and she was interested in learning more about Jesus. She was excited when I offered her a small book to read in Dutch - John's gospel from the New Testament. I look forward to keeping in touch and hearing what she thinks as she reads it! It's very exciting to me that teaching English classes and offering English conversation groups through *The Bridge* means I will meet many more women just like these special friends! And just as I've continued to be friends with these former students, I know my relationships with future students will grow beyond the classroom...



With English class students—from the Netherlands, Iran, Iraq, Indonesia, and Belgium. I'm so glad to call them friends!

Denver ~ I've been back in the States since Thanksgiving. I first spent 3 weeks in Denver, Colorado where I grew up. Almost all of my immediate family lives there, so it was great spending time with them! I also caught up with friends while I was there, some of whom I hadn't seen for 10 years or more! It really means a lot to me how everyone has been so interested in the work I'll be doing with *The Bridge*. My team of partners continues to grow one person at a time!



Morgan, my great-niece, with Beau



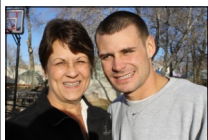
Van, my great-nephew



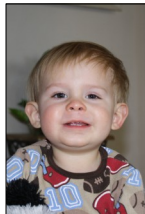
Skylor, my great-nephew, preparing to carve the Thanksgiving turkey!



My sisters & brother-in-law—really carving the turkey!



My sister Natalie & my nephew Drew



Rome, my 18-month-old great-nephew, Drew's son

3 nephews & 3 brothers...



Joe, Ryan, & Alex

Tucson ~ As of mid-December my home-base is Tucson, Arizona. It's a perfect place to spend the winter with sunny & beautiful weather! :) Enjoying the Christmas and New Years holidays with friends was great. I'm continuing to focus on meeting with potential partners who want to join with me in my work with *The Bridge*.



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What's next? ~ Once I reach my financial goals I can apply for my visa and make the move to France. Of course, the sooner I reach those goals, the sooner I can begin working with *The Bridge*!

I'm currently at 28% of my goal for monthly support, and 69% for one-time gifts. I'm so grateful to all my partners who are giving toward this missionary work. It's only because of you that reaching my goals will become reality! If you're interested in joining my team through a one-time donation or monthly contributions, both of which are tax-deductible in the US or in the Netherlands, you can check out the "Partnering - Giving & Support" page of my website or contact me directly. You can also partner with me through prayer* - an essential foundation both during this preparation time & when I'm actually in France working with *The Bridge*. Thanks for following along on this exciting adventure! May you be abundantly blessed in 2011 in every way!!!



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