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Project Zion Podcast

Josh Mangelson

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Carla Long

Hello and welcome to the Project Zion. Podcast. I'm your host, Carla Long. And today we're going to hear an awesome story from a new church member in Brussels, Belgium named Méthode. And I'm not going to say his last name because I'm pretty sure I would mess it up. We're also joined by Elray Henriksen, who lives in Brussels, and Joey Williams, who is the Missions Center President and Western Europe. So welcome, everyone, hello!

Méthode Belanwa

Hello!

Méthode Belanwa

Hi, Carla!

Carla Long

It's so good to see you and talk to you. So I would love for all three of you to introduce yourselves to our listeners. So Méthode why don't you go first and tell us a little bit about yourself?

Méthode Belanwa

Okay. Thank you very much to give me the the opportunity to talk about my self and my story, and about the change to come into Community of Christ. My name is, uh, Méthode and my family name is Belanwa. I am a Congolese from eastern Congo in Africa, central Africa on now I'm living with all my family here in abroad in Brussels. I was refugees in Burundi many years ago. So I'm living here with a part of my family on another part, of my family is everywhere in Tanzania, Burundi and some I don't know where they are now. So I was born in in Congo, in Fizi in Sud-Kivu. 1968. I'm married. I'm now on my father for six Children. Yeah before that I'm married, and I was a teacher in my life again because after my studies, I do my job as a teacher and after that, I was born in a Methodist that is the church off my father. But I didn't like about church dinner because I didn't really understands they didn't understand their doctrines. After that I was a member of the Latter-day Saint, the Mormon Church that is calling The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Mormon. I was billed as a leader there for more than six years, but because I didn't understand many things about their doctrine, I was defiant because I was at the church at the temple listening about it, the temple is a place where God is living, and I didn't understand why we can do wedding marriage, we would go to marriage in the temple and after that's we are going to get a divorce, a separation. Why, when one God is a living in the temple, why our marriage can go to this location and the many others Question that I didn't hear understand very good. My heart and my spirit was not satisfied and

turned me in that looking for another, a good change. Understand? But I took one time. I'm wondering about what is a new church. What did that other church have more than this? Because I was a leader, so I was not a good in my heart. One day I was on my Internet, and I decided now to look a church, I gotta went down looking for a church, and I got many, many, many, many churches names. So after that's I sit on the on the list of church I see a lot off the cCommunity of Christ. Why the Community of Christ? Why don't call it The Church of Jesus Christ. That was my first I element, my better think that make me think many things about the church. So I started with my research on the church. I discovered many things. Goods. The first off it was to answer on my question, why the temple is a God living bless and the woman while, why may I go to the temple to celebrate our marriage and the why divorce? That's when I see one of those churches, the Community of Christ, the church of Community of Christ, they said that the temple is a blessed to teach peace. Understand the difference? That it was the first thing. It's a place to teach peace! The church is called the Community of Peace. You understand? Community of Peace! I was very interested to then change. Thanks. It was to hear that everyone is invited. Everyone is invited. And why even the other church some are as they LGBT some boat is a harlots, how drunkards, cannot approach the church but to hear everyone and the place. That was the element that's called me to need to know more about the church. Another thing, I see a bless of a woman. . Woman can be a pastor. A woman can be an apostle. Woman can baptize. Okay? What a wonderful change!

Carla Long

Oh Méthode! Oh, that was a really good introduction. One second. That was an excellent introduction. I am so excited to hear more of your story, but before we just keep going, um, can we here who else is on the podcast? Elray and Joey. Do you want to say hi and tell us about yourself a little bit?

Elray Henriksen

Yeah. Thank you, Carla. And thank you for having us Elray Henricksen. I live currently in Brussels. I've been a member for the last 10 years. And, ah, of Community Christ. Yeah, it's been a while! It's been a while in the decade almost. And I'm originally from Norway and currently here with my husband was working for the European Free Trade Association here and and I'm therefore volunteering for Community of Christ and I have been doing so full time for the last year, almost so.

Carla Long

And when we hear your voice on the podcast today, you'll be just making sure you're translating for Méthode just in case, right?

Elray Henriksen

Yeah. So I'm just here as a potential translator.

Carla Long

We appreciate you being here, Elray Thank you so much.

Elray Henriksen
My pleasure.

Joey Williams

And I'm Joey Williams and I'm the Mission Center president for the Western Europe Mission Center and for the Eurasia Mission Center. And so that basically means that I get to organize all of the activities of community of Christ in Europe, and that's very exciting job that I have. I get to go around to many different places, and one of those newest places is in Belgium, which really got started with the two people you'll hear on this podcast today, Méthode and Elray. So Elray happened to move to Belgium about the same time that we were receiving some contact information from Méthode. You'll probably hear that in his story today. But between us three, that's how things began to get started, especially in Brussels, Belgium.

Carla Long

Well, I want to keep going, so Méthode could please continue with your story. You found out about Community of Christ on the Internet. You found some things that you liked about Community of Christ. Uh, keep going. How did you find Elray? Or just keep going with your story?

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah. After many information, I'm after finding many informations on the Internet about Community of Christ. I decided to to contact the church. On the list of the church I found the list and the number and address contact address of the President Joey Williams. No. I send a message to him a small letter to him that I'm very interesting to church. And you can tell me, how can I Can I be in in touch on that with you? Some weeks after I've found his answer. He told me that Méthode , I'll pass by there and there is somebody there. A friend of us, the member of the church for them a long time there is called Elray and I will put you in contact with Elray. When the brother to come, we meet and some with the first meeting I invited him to my house. He had no to fear and that assured me This one is the first time to meet him. Why don't you be feared? I cannot go to Méthode's house! I don't know him. I welcome him home. They come to my house and see my family. Oh, it was a very, very, very wonderful day. But asked him to to sleep there but he decided to return back to his hotel and there to continue with our meeting tomorrow. And the during his meeting now, be bring me in touch with my friends, my coordinator. Hey, until now we're still working together, is a good man. We are working now with our missionary, first of missionary. Here is my brother truly is also a very wonderful missionary. A good worker. Now I interested with members as friends and my brother who is living with me in Brussels. And also they were interesting within the church with the Community of Christ. Till now we are working together with them. And after that I decided to be baptized. Before I was baptized I took a lot of time to be taught. And I've got many, many visitors who come from everywhere in the world. From the USA, from UK from Holland, my Apostle Richard was the here and the brother Elray for the first time to meet me, You understand? After that also had a visitor Apostle Robin Linkhart? Yeah, okay? And sister Sandy. Andrew Bolton was here, John Wight and Joey Williams, Elray Henriksen also. And now we are

working with Kahealani. All of them teach us about Community of Christ, the sacraments, the mission over the church, the vision over the church. They teach about um, about the

Elray Henriksen
Enduring Principles.

Méthode Belanwa
Yeah, Enduring Principles.

Carla Long
So it sounds like you've already met a lot of people. They've all come to visit you, which is very exciting. Joey, how do you remember that first meeting with Méthode?

Joey Williams
Yes. So I received this email and it was actually several times that we had talked. That it just wasn't working out because I wasn't going through Brussels very often. But because Elray had just moved to Brussels, I had started to, Tell Elray, hey, I'll stop by Brussels as a way to get to another place in Europe. And so on one of those occasions I said to Méthode. Hey, I could meet you. And so we met at the crowne plaza, which is which is the main centerpiece of, you've been there Carla with me, but is this main beautiful, beautiful location in the center of Brussels. But it's always crowded. There's tons and tons of people. And so I just went to a corner where I told him, I'll be standing at this corner and here's the restaurant and he basically found me and just walked up and said, Are you President Williams? He always calls me President Williams, and I was like, Yeah, yeah, that's me and and that's exactly what he said is what happened? He invited me to his house, just and I, he said I had no fear, but I will say that I did write my sister and tell her the location where we were going in case. Yeah, but I was I was excited, too. He was so excited to talk about Community of Christ. And I did, I got in a taxi and we went to his home, and I was I didn't know what that adventure would bring. But I did have a sense of trust, because in the communication that we had had through emails, he was very sincere in his desire to learn more about this this interesting movement Community of Christ. And when we got to his house, I remember that there was so much food on the table. It was filled with so many delicious things. His, uh his wife is a wonderful, wonderful cook, Christine. And so there was all this food to eat, and so we spent time eating together and sharing together. And then I remember also that his son Dodi, his son Dodi came out and asked me lots of questions. And Dodi I think was 18 at the time, and he just sat down and he just looked me right in the face and just asked me all of these questions that seemed important to him. And I hope I gave good answers. I think I did. Cause Dodi comes to many of our activities now in Community of Christ.

Carla Long
Thanks, Joey. So Méthode how long between first meeting Joey and deciding to get baptized. How long did that take?

Méthode Belanwa

Three. I can say exactly, three years.

Carla Long

Three years. So within that three year time, you're still just learning about Community of Christ. You're talking to Joey via email to Elray. And you're just learning more and more about us.

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah.

Carla Long

Is that right? And, um So you decided to get baptized. And if I'm right, did you get baptized in Germany? Is that right?

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah, yeah, yeah. With President Joey, and it was Elray and then my coordinates here, our missionary. And my wife and my two babies. And another brother, he was escorting me to the UK to be baptized. And I was baptized with President Joey and it was a very, very good day because I found for the first time members of the community and among them have seen, Joey. My president Joey, I found the first members of Community of Christ a unity. They are united among themselves and it was a good testimony for me to see them together. Sitting together, eating together, working together, talking together as someone. That was a nice testimony to me. Yeah.

Carla Long

So you were baptized was it at Pentecost conference? Is that right? During a retreat?

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah, President of Joey who was my baptizer explained it to me before I was baptized, explained it to me before he baptized me I was touched and he explained to me that we will do this, and do this, and after that I was good and prepared to be baptized.

Carla Long

That's really important. We have found here in Salt Lake City that we want people to spend a lot of time with Community of Christ before deciding to be baptized. Make sure that this is the place they want to be. So I think it's wonderful that you spent three years deciding that and making sure that was the right decision for you. I applaud that. That's very good. So now you're acquainted with the greater church in Europe, which is really good. You know, some Germans, you know, some of the Dutch. I'm sure that is That's wonderful. So how often do you get to worship in Brussels? And what do your worships look like in Brussels?

Méthode Belanwa

Oh, okay. Thank you. Here is good because you know we have a system. A mixing system. Brussels and some from Africa now is a home for because we are going to the church two times a week. On Saturday. We are going two times to the church and we are spending many times there. Many hours there. Because we don't want to go out. We want to sit there because of songs are corresponding to our songs excuse in Community of Christ , the song is the word and we are in love with the songs and we sing songs from our country and in our language and it's the first time we see that.

Carla Long

I have to tell you I love hearing that. I think that that is one of the really wonderful parts about our hymnal is that people can sing in the language of their mother tongue. And I have seen some videos that Kahealani has posted on Facebook of your singing, and I love hearing it. So singing is very important to your worship. It sounds like,

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah, because because it is singing we heard a good message in our proper language. We discover what is in the message and we live that. This church loves everyone. Loves every nation and among the nations mine is there. My mother language is and we have a long of hymns in Swahili.

Joey Williams

Carla actually knows one of your Swahili hymns. Kanisa Litajengwa

Méthode Belanwa

(Sings Kanisa Litajengwa)

Carla Long

You know I love it. I love singing in another language is you. Perfect! So you do a lot of singing in your worships and I'm sure when Joey's there and Kahealani 's there, they love to sing with you. Oh, what else happens in your worships? Do you have discussions? Do you preach to you talk? What else happens

Méthode Belanwa

For the first time they were there to teach us about the doctrines. About the belief of the church and the many, many, many affirmations of the church and after that they begin to propose us as leaders to supervise and sometimes I can be there, I do this and this and this. Some ministries and after that we were to do the ministries at home. When we visit a member of the church or friend of the church I can have the opportunity to talk some things now that we are doing what one day they give me. I supervise all the activities of the church of the day and it is a democratic church. Everyone gets to say something there. Everyone your idea is welcome. You can explain your ideas.

Carla Long

I think that's super important. I think that a community is much stronger when everybody shares a part. Joey, what's been your kind of philosophy on the worships in a brand new country? Ah, country we haven't been in for a long time. How does it look from a leadership point of view to start that?

Joey Williams

Yeah. So, Carla, it's from my experience here in Brussels with my Méthode It has been very interesting because it went maybe in a little bit different direction than I would have expected. I would have expected that the first main thing that we would have done was get together and create vibrant worship, people standing up and singing and, you know, major preaching happening. That's what I would have expected at first. But really, what happened was we began meeting in Méthode home and Méthode is a very generous and hospitable person. He is happy to have anywhere from 10 people in his home to maybe 50 people in his home. But we really started by Méthode inviting some key people that were in his life that he had invited into this discussion, or at least just to come and see, come and hear what is Community of Christ? What is this about? And so it began with a least a year, if not a year and 1/2 of the meeting, and Méthode home sometimes in Elray's home, to talk about what is Community of Christ. It was these discussions and really talking about the core of who are we? What does it mean to be a people that come together not only for worship, but what is this mission that we're called to if we are to be followers of Jesus? So that was where that began and when we began to really organize ourselves and formalize what we were doing than these Saturday classes became really important. And that's what method was telling you about was the Saturday encounters where someone would come, whether that was Elray or Kahealani or Sandee Gamet or me or someone else who came and gave a class, and we basically followed the resource of Water and Spirit, which really helps you go through what it is that Community of Christ is all about the faith and beliefs of Community of Christ, and then it you. You touch on many different aspects in that. One of my best memories is I wasn't there when Sandee Gamet taught the class on peace. But I remember I was there the next week. And there was just It was as though I don't know what she did with this group of people, but they were so motivated and so energized by this concept of Shalom. Ah, wider, more full concept of just peace as the absence of war, but much deeper than that much fuller than that. Ah, wholeness, a reconciliation, a restoration of yourself. And they had really grasped onto that concept and continue to this day to ask us how are we going to continue to make Shalom happen in this community?

Carla Long

Oh, that sounds so good. I love hearing the excitement about these different things that we teach. So So you've, so for the last couple of years, you've been having Saturday discussions and Sunday worship in Brussels. Do you still meet in homes for that? Or do you have your own church place? How does that work?

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah, every yeah, we have our church place because the missionary has, and Big House and then we have a good place to meet. We have everything there. There is very, very, very good a place to meet. Yeah, and it's in in the Brussels capital.

Carla Long

I'm so glad to hear that. I think that's important to have a place that you can come and know that it will be a sacred space. I think that's really good. So your worships. What do they look like now? Do we do? Is there preaching? Is there discussion on Sundays? What does that look like?

Méthode Belanwa

Well, we are singing, we are discussing and, uh, we are reading in the Bible. And we have a book here.

Elray Henriksen

We Share.

Méthode Belanwa

We Share in Community of Christ, we have many, many subjects to discuss. Yeah, and we are singing good very, very good hymns in Community of Christ. We are discovering new hymns.

Carla Long

I heard that you sing your theology before you understand it. So that singing part, I think, is just essential for worship. I'm sorry to interrupt. Keep going.

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah. Thank you. And not now. Do you know the church we have here a lot of persons because we are sharing it with another neighbor. But we cannot welcoming many, many, many, many, many persons on site. So we way we have a small numbers that the church is going to be good. Understand?

Joey Williams

It's been hard to be able to do all of the things that the community would like to do in the space that we have. We literally are in an apartment. You can maybe get 25 30 people in a in a circle in that apartment. But just imagine, Methode has six children. And imagine if all of the 10 kind of major leaders that we have brought their 4 or 5 or 6 children it easily gets to full. We can't do all of the things that we'd like to do. And so it's challenging too, have multigenerational worship in one space that is kind of small, and you and you have to be respectful of the people who are living above you so that it's not too loud and things like that that's been challenging.

We've also, one of the things that we've been trying to do is be open to experimenting different forms and ways of getting together and having worship. And so one model that we have been looking at and trying is kind of four different reasons why we gather that one time when we

gather, we would gather for study that the next week when we gather, we would gather for worship, and that might look like a more traditional worship that you'd hear people outline another time. When we get together, it's just for recreation that we get together in a park. We get together and play a game. We get together and sing or do something that's recreational. And then with the last Sunday of the month, if we have it for Sunday's a month than that, last Sunday would be for service. And so often we've prepared meals and taking them to the people in the street or in people's homes. And one of the major things that we do on that Sunday is that we would go out as a group and we I might all go to one person's home, say someone has had a death in the family that we might go visit that home and sing and bring the worships there. Or we might go in small teams, two different people's homes to go and do visits on those Sundays.

Carla Long

What a wonderful way to worship. What a beautiful way to worship.

Méthode Belanwa

You know, the very appreciative. They think I'm a very appreciated the mission or ah, ministry is to bring a bunch food too, they're venerable persons, you know, because here we have many persons without house. They're going to sleep in the gardens, park many things and then they feel a hunger. But the Community of Christ here in Brussels, we are going out to prepare food and a bringing food with them on the water to drink. And, uh, last week, the President Joey brought blankets and we distributed more than the 100 blankets. It's many, many persons asked, What is this? It's a Samaritan action. It's from the first time to say that brewing in any Brussels, but with that food and after food, we are going to to the family so do the family visit to pray for them and then to give them their convictions. We have a lot of to do here. Well, we have a lot of to do.

Carla Long

Well, that's all part of that shalom concept, isn't it? Shalom for yourself as well as shalom for others. And I think that that is just beautiful what you're doing and the acts of service that you're doing for the people of Brussels. Yeah. So we're kind of already moving into this question, but maybe we could get a little bit more specific. What are your dreams for the church in Brussels? What if you could have, what? What would you like to see happen in the future?

Méthode Belanwa

Now you are. You have a church. And then we started with an angel association. It's going to them Go, citizens. And we hope that to the church on the international level, my supports our activities in Brussels. That is the first. The second things is to support our activities over the church. I want the church to help pay to support church with materials and many others needs. Yeah, because we don't do to have a church here. Because our church now is a distance. Yeah, We want change because we are working but the church is not known officially with the Belgium government. That's what. We want to be a church. That is strong in Brussels Belgium. Yeah.

Carla Long

Those sound like some pretty good dreams. Joey, what about you? From a leadership standpoint, what are your dreams for the church in Brussels?

Joey Williams

You know, I think that some of the things that Méthode has talked about this NGO Coast Citizen Project It is a really exciting possibility of especially leading toward leading us forward in the mission initiative. Abolish poverty and suffering. So you we might have another podcast just about this Coast citizen project. But just to lay out just a little bit of it, it's it is literally accompanying families in Europe who might be displaced families but especially focusing on single parent families toe help give them an understanding of their place in the context of Europe and to help give them a voice but to also fill in the gaps. You know, in Europe, there's a lot of programs that are offered for people who are either refugees or people who are suffering people who have needs. There are a lot of things that respond to that. But there are also these gaps that happened where the government just can't see all of the things that need to happen. So how can communities reach out and try to fill some of those gaps? So I think there's a lot of potential in that and as Méthode also said were we would like to be registered and continue to make ourselves as part of an official part of what's happening in the church world, or at least in the charity world, in the church world in Belgium. What Méthode has not shared of his story is that when he was in Burundi, he would work in the refugee camps there and came into contact with hundreds of people. And so if I were to get him in a car which I've done before, and we just begin to go around Belgium, which is a small country, I'll say. But as we go from city to city, he can just contact three or four families that we can go and visit in in a large variety of different cities. And so one of my questions as basically the only full time person working in Europe right now is how can we support these other families? How can we provide or think about our strategies so that the message that's being heard in Brussels and the work that's being done in Brussels might begin to see effects in the different other cities, in all these different little towns that are around Belgium, where we have other people who know method and have when we walk into a home, one of my favorite things, that Méthode does. We walk into a home and he says, Community of Christ is here and I just love that is that he just declares that we've, we have often called some of these these these people are refugees, many of the people that we are working with, but we actually see them a spiritual refugees as well, because some of them were ripped and taken away from their denominations from the church is that they worshipped in in Africa, and so now that they are in Belgium. Where do they go? Which which denomination to they do they go to Or which church do they go to? And so I just love the welcoming spirit at Méthode brings when he walks in and says Community of Christ is here.

Méthode Belanwa

Can I say something to Yeah, you know, now, as the President Joey is told I come with a lot of refugees from Africa from Burundi Camp refugees camp because I was the leader there too. I forgot to tell it. But they are dispatching in many different communities and regions. And all of

them know Community of Christ we have went to them with President Joey, Elray with the missionaries till today I'm talking with you. They invited me and my other my coordinator and the missionary to go there because off this interview we told them That's so we're sorry. We will become that we will go there another day because if they were that they have a meeting there. So the problem that we need here, they thing that we need a young person. We wanted to make the Community of Christ strong church because this church is not in our country in a place in Congo. And this church is a very benefited for us when we'll bring it back to our country. Reason why we wanted the church to with us here in Europe and one day to bring it to our country, to our because all more is a biggest country in a in central Africa.

Carla Long

Well, it sounds like you're doing what you can do in in Brussels and in Belgium and Méthode , it sounds like you're a connector. You connect people together, which is so important when you're starting a brand new something in the country. So we towed. It sounds like you're just the perfect person to work with community of Christ and be a community Christ member in Brussels. And I'm very excited about what I'm hearing about what's happening. Uh, in Brussels and possibly more of Belgium. It's really exciting. Yeah, I have a couple more questions and maybe Joey, This is a question for you. What has it meant for the church in Europe? To have this kind of brand new thing just spring up. What is it meant to the people in Europe?

Joey Williams

Yeah. I think that there is a general excitement when someone who walks in the doors. So when Méthode came to that Pentecost conference in Germany, just him walking in with his beautiful children and he brought two of his kids there to that to that weekend. Wait, Was he ezach born? He was a small, small baby. Yeah, and his other in his other child. So these four people walk in these new faces and people start asking questions. What's going on? Who are these people? Um, this is exciting. I didn't know we had something going on in Belgium. You know, people who have been members of Community Christ in Germany for 60 70 years and are like, I didn't know we were doing something in Belgium. How exciting for to see that there's something new happening and something going on. And one of the best parts of that weekend was we have ah, a member named Chantal and she lives in Munich and Chantal background is that she is from Rwanda, and she came with her mother I think when she was like seven years old, moves to Germany with her mom from Rwanda. Um, as many people were displaced from from Rwanda. What I did not know and realize is how close Rwanda shares a border with Congo. Yeah. When she met Méthode and Christine, she starts speaking in her original language. The language that her mother spoke to her in which happened to be the tribal language of Christine Christine also speak Swahili. But she also speaks this Rwandan language and they begin to share together in that language. It was mind blowing for me and just this beautiful, beautiful encounter Where here are these two people who never would have met if it were not for Community of Christ. Ah, here's Chantal, who has been in Germany her whole life for over 30 years and well integrated into European society. And then you have Christine, who's a little more new to European society. So what a beautiful friendship that was able to be started at that place. So I think it means in very personal ways it is very meaningful that this is happening. I think that also for Community of Christ in Europe. It is an exciting, um, and yet

challenging aspect of who we are as Community of Christ. When we say, abolish poverty and suffering, for example, how are we in real ways responding to that in Europe, we had challenges after the Second World War, which is why the church in Germany grew. They they needed community, they wanted to form community, and those communities were sustained for over 50 years. We now are seeing some decline in those communities. And so I think, this question of what are the challenges, What is Europe facing and how do we get involved in those needs? It gives us a new, yet challenging opportunity to follow the Christ in ways that we haven't done for a long time. We have a congregation in Germany who is looking at possibly selling its building. And one of the first things that they told me was, you know, Joey, we don't want this money to just go anywhere. This this church in Germany was built on immigrants. People who were chased from their lands of Poland toe have to come and live here. And so we would love for some of the monies of the sale of this property to be used towards other projects with immigrants, with refugees, with people who have lost their homes but are looking to form a community. I think I think that's that tells us something. It tells us something about our history. It tells us reasons why the church was successful in Germany and had its growth period, and it also can point us towards what types of ministries do We need to be involved in in the future, to continue to form communities of joy, hope, love and peace.

Carla Long

That is wonderful. That is just beautiful. I love hearing that and I know that I've seen pictures of of people maybe Méthode it's your family or members from Brussels who have gotten to go winter camp who have gone to other places all around and winter camp, which is a camp for youth which happens around the New Year every year, happened in Belgium this year, right, and there was, ah huge amount of people there. They got to come,

Méthode Belanwa

you know, I wanted to up something to that, the president to talk about the minister over there small children because we have many, many many, many small children and all of them need to come to the church. I'm the one of the midst President Joey and Elray and the missionary They are very, very, very happy. They're still very happy. President is preaching and there are you needed. . They think that we want we need some small churches for them or a good place for the youth and they love camp. The youth can but is not the same with the Community of Christ camp. It's a very appreciative by the youth and the one who told it to them way are going to go to the camp. They are very read very great to go there and when they come back you asked them what happened there. Oh, they tell you they are very, very, very nice. And the one who sent the pictures, they are very happy to be there. And they took days, two days, three days, four days and they come. We're happy. I think that I need to tell you it's to support the president's Joe's mission. Also because the company is very, very, very appreciated to think he's doing here. And that is supporting. It's important with others. Elray and the missionary Kahealani is a brother. For that we we need a way needed a strong charge here. And you may have help us because that is our church. We will not attend another church because of that is corresponding with our culture of worship We are dancing in the church. We are praying, we're eating. Everything is good for us is a very wonderful church.

Carla Long

No, that sounds beautiful. I just get so excited hearing about these things that are happening all over that, especially right here in Brussels. So Ah, we're coming close to the end of our podcast. Is there anything that you want to talk about that we haven't gotten to talk about yet? Either from Joey or for Méthode. Anything else that you want to mention before we sign off?

Méthode Belanwa

Your visitors and the apostle visitor visit is a very appreciated. We need you coming here to meet you face to face to appreciate that I'm a job, our way here. And we will have the opportunity to go with you to visit our members in a different regions. Because we will understand what is our ministry here. And the second thing is to support church, to pay our rent because we don't have the possibilities, and to support the activities of youth, as I said and that small children.

Carla Long

Yeah, I was just gonna say, Are you telling everyone who's listening to this podcast? They should come to Brussels and meet you?

Méthode Belanwa

Yeah you are welcome!

Carla Long

Wonderful. Oh, great.

Méthode Belanwa

Because we we needed to see to discover your experiences about the church. Myself, I was introduce on the internet to the church in Tahiti and everything I'm seeing how they are worshiping. You understand? Well, it's during the conference and the national conference with the change we are connected. To see what is happening there to them because we need more experiences over the church is that we are very younger, You know, we are very, very young in the church. We needed to benefit from many experiences. That and you are welcome in Brussels! Thank you.

Carla Long

Thank you. It's good to hear from you. Joey, any closing thoughts?

Joey Williams

I would just add that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, do not think that what you're doing might be in vain. That the smallest action that you are doing might have an effect on something else somewhere in the world that you may not even be aware of. Five years ago we started Ah, hymnal project for the Netherlands. And I asked the World Service Corps person, Sandee Gamet to, head up this project and to take songs from Community of Christ and get

them translated where they've now, I think, translated over 75 songs from Community of Christ that will go into this touch hymnal, as well as other Dutch songs that they're currently singing to create kind of a peace focused hymnal for the Netherlands. We might have 50 active people in the in the small churches that we have up in the Netherlands, and at one point I know that the people working on this project were like, Why are we doing such a big project for a church that seems to continue to get smaller and smaller? Who's going to even be singing out of this that was five years ago. It was three years ago that I met Méthode and one of the things that I just wanted to mention about this this group, this diaspora wreck group from Congo that we're working with, that they're all over. But anything above Brussels basically speaks Dutch and anything below Brussels basically speaks French. And so when we go north to visit these families, that Méthode is in contact with in these these context that we have, they're all speaking, their children all speak Dutch as parents, they speak Swahili or even French because they grew up in Congo, and so they speak French. But all of their children, and when they come to winter camp, they speak in Dutch. And so how interesting that next year we will be publishing this peace hymnal, and we'll have songs, a sufficient amount of songs to be singing with these young people in Dutch and have that to offer them. We have many of them already in French, but now we'll will have this whole Dutch collection and Sandeeand the people that are working in the Netherlands would have never thought that far of where the reach might go of just the small work that they are doing in their own place. So never underestimate what you are doing locally that can have an impact on a different level.

Carla Long

Awesome. So cool. Awesome. Well, thank you so much. Méthode and Elray. We didn't hear much from you. All right, but thank you so much for being available to translate, just in case. And, Joey, thank you so much for being on the podcast and for talking about all these exciting and wonderful things that are happening. Metodo, it was wonderful to meet you. And hopefully someday I will meet you in person. And I appreciated hearing your story.

Méthode Belanwa

You're welcome

Carla Long

All right. Thank you so much.

Josh Mangelson

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