

**Let's Stay Connected!**Email: [morgannash11@gmail.com](mailto:morgannash11@gmail.com)

# *Avanti Italia!*

## *Onward Italy!*

(school address)  
Scuola Biblica di Firenze  
Via Armando Spadini, 24  
50018 Scandicci (Fi)  
Italy

November was marked by the ending of many things, and in an effort to finish the term well much of the month was full of activities. I am so grateful to be in a place in which I am useful. We can feel great satisfaction in approaching the end of a day knowing we worked hard to meet the challenges encountered. Although I find myself satisfied, I also feel just as fatigued. Thank God for His promises that strengthen and restore. Scripture is sprinkled with these. The Lord assures us in Isaiah that He will guide continually, giving water when we thirst and restoration of strength (58:11). "You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring", he assures. May we have the eyes to see the rest He provides, to find peace during hectic times, and to continue doing the good that is before us so we can be reminded time and again that He is faithful to provide in our need.

**November Church Activities**

At the beginning of each month the church in Florence enjoys an 'agape' together. It is an equivalent of a church fellowship or potluck and it takes place after morning worship. Fellowshiping regularly together has been very beneficial for me and the Avanti Workers. Despite the busy schedules that the church members and we keep, it guarantees that we spend time together. There is little overlap between the church in Florence and the Bible School in Scandicci due to distance and scheduling conflicts. Any time that we get to spend together is valued, even if only for a meal once a month.



Some of our classmates from Italian Language School at our Thanksgiving Party

**In this Newsletter:**

- *Greetings* (pg.1)
- *November Church Activities* (pg.1)
- *The End of Italian Language School and a Thanksgiving Party* (pg.2)
- *Departures and the end of a school term* (pgs.2-3)
- *In Closing* (pg.4)
- *Prayers* (pg.4)
- *About Avanti Italia* (pg.4)

The following week, the Church of Christ in Prato organized an area-wide worship. The congregation invited surrounding churches of Christ to worship together and enjoy a fellowship meal afterwards. Like Florence, Prato is another city in the region of Tuscany. The area-wide was the first time I had the opportunity to meet other believers outside of Florence. The encouragement that comes from worshipping in numbers is indescribable and I felt very grateful to share it with new acquaintances.



## ***The End of Italian School and a Thanksgiving Party***



*Thanksgiving Party*



*Miles and Meredith Thompson- They are currently in the States waiting for their visas to be approved.*

*To make a donation, please send cash or check payable to Britton Road Church of Christ (sponsoring congregation)*

Britton Road Church of Christ  
2520 W Britton Rd  
Oklahoma City, OK 73120

After three sessions of Italian Language School, I completed my school commitment shortly before Thanksgiving. Finishing language school was bittersweet. Attending school made up a large part of my first memories and experiences in Italy. I am so thankful for the time my teachers invested in me and my classmates and for my peers who become friends along the way. Though challenging, it provided me with enough language knowledge and confidence to spring-board me into future cultural interactions in which my Italian skills will be tested. Wish me luck!

While wrapping up our time at school we were simultaneously planning our Thanksgiving Party with our students at the Bible School. Due to our school schedule, we decided to host our dinner the week before we would normally celebrate Thanksgiving Day. In order to host all of our students (close to one hundred), the shopping, meal prep, and cooking began many days in advance. Never have I cooked for so many people before in my life, but with enough coordination and hard-work, we hosted around one hundred students and guests! Needless to say, we were exhausted and spent the following days (the actual week of Thanksgiving) recovering from this big event.

### ***Departures and the end of a school term***

Only a few days after our Thanksgiving Party at the school we started saying our goodbyes to some of our Avanti Co-workers. Miles and Meredith Thompson, who joined the program this fall, returned to the States to reapply for visas to live in Italy. Some may remember the difficulty I had in receiving a visa. Without a visa, they will not be allowed to stay in Italy for longer than a three month period. They are becoming like family to me and are encouraging to work with. They desire and have a willingness to work not only in Florence but within Italy in general. Please keep them in your thoughts and close in prayer when you think on them.



Most recently Jodi Luke, another new Avanti Worker and my current roommate, departed for Vicenza for a short survey trip. Vicenza is in northern Italy at the base of the Alps near the Austrian border. She is hoping to work with the congregation there and will spend the next two weeks meeting with the church members and leaders to learn how she may be most useful in that congregation. While many Avanti Workers stay in Scandicci while in Italy, some go out and work with other congregations. I am excited and eager for her to begin the work there that she already feels drawn to.

The school term at the Bible School will come to an end the second week of December. As we wrap up, I think back on the meetings and classes spent with my students. Each has a story and a life that I look forward to knowing more about when classes resume in the New Year. I wish I could share all the memories created with my students, but for now there is only enough room for one.

I started meeting with Esther shortly after our term started. She is the granddaughter of Rosa, a woman who has worked for the school for 20+ years as a cook. Due to a challenging English course, Rosa asked if I would take Esther on as an extra student for more focused grammar practice. In the beginning, we would meet and only review school lessons and assignments. Much of our time has also been spent with us just talking. I am learning more about her that exceeds hobbies and daily activities. She is a 14-year-old dealing with teenage issues and figuring out what she believes. I had been wondering for some time how our meetings would shift towards the Bible. In our most recent meeting, she did not bring anything to work on, and as we started talking I learned that she did not know the significance in her name. A door of opportunity had been opened and we began to read from the book of Esther. I am so thankful for the family that Rosa and Esther are quickly becoming to me, and I am very encouraged and hopeful that we will continue to explore the Word of God.



*Jodi and I with some of our students from our Thursday evening English class at the church*



*Lunch with Rosa and Esther's Family (left to right) Esther, Felice (Rosa's husband), Angela and Carlo (Esther's parents), Peter Bell (Avanti worker), and Rosa*



*Clara and I taking a break from our study. Clara has been coming to the Bible School for over 7 years and brings a lot of enthusiasm to our meetings.*



*To you, my family and friends,*

*I have so much love and thankfulness for you. Your prayers are uplifting and your messages of encouragement strengthen me. How faithful the Lord has been to provide for me a beautiful family in Christ! Enjoy each other's company this holiday season and every time of year. May you be as encouraged as I am that we serve a God who provides for us in our need. You are remembered and valued.*

### Prayers

- \* For the departures and transitions of the housemates moving back to the states in December: Megan Lawson, Lindsey Sullivan, and Peter Bell
- \* For the arrivals of our new housemate, David Ezell, in January
- \* For Miles and Meredith Thompson's visa status
- \* For Jodi Luke's transition in moving to another city and working with a new group of believers
- \* For the Lord's faithfulness in working to make us a cohesive group
- \* For the Lord's faithfulness in providing friendships and constructing relationships with readers, coworkers, and the believers in Italy

### *About Avanti Italia*

The missions program I am a part of is called Avanti Italia (A.I.). This mission program has three primary goals: 1. to use our individual talents in sharing the Good News of Jesus the Christ with those who are seeking to have a more perfect relationship with Him, 2. to learn to share Christ with others more effectively, and 3. to participate in mutual encouragement and edification with the Italian churches of Christ. Their method for achieving these goals is mainly through outreach in teaching private Bible lessons in English. As a part of A.I., I would be expected to teach an average of 10-15 Bible lessons a week. Much of the work A.I. encourages would be described as friendship evangelism, making relationships with people and sharing God's saving message with them. Each team member is not only expected to fulfill their obligations, but also to find ways of using his or her individual talents to make more contacts with people. Most of the work is centered at the Florence Bible School in Scandicci, a suburb on the southwest side of Florence. A.I. has had an extensive outreach since its beginning in 1986. Every year, A.I. forms teams of 3-7 members to send to work at the school for a two-year commitment. Team members are required to fundraise, acquire a student visa, and go through intensive training before leaving the United States. Once arriving in Florence, team members live together at the Florence Bible School and immediately begin Italian language studies while teaching English using the Bible. Teachers generally work in one-to-one or small group sessions.