

DECEMBER 2019



Dear friends,

One of the privileges of having our Crosslinks prayer letter due now means that we are amongst the first to say:

Happy Christmas!

We are looking forward very much to celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus together as a family.

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It is wonderful to be able to tell you that your prayers have been answered.

St Andrew's Hall

We have mentioned the St Andrew's Hall redevelopment project many times over the last few years. Thank you for praying for us and for CMS's plans to rebuild the college. It is wonderful to be able to tell you that your prayers have been answered. Last Friday the CMS board approved the building contractors to go ahead with the redevelopment. Construction is scheduled to begin in January and we hope to be back on site in a new building by the end of 2020.

In the meantime, we are just about to move our whole training ministry to a different location so that we can keep equipping missionaries next year. A local church has kindly given us one of their buildings, which will give us enough office and teaching space to keep St Andrew's Hall going. We won't have accommodation for our students, so we will have to rent apartments in the local area.



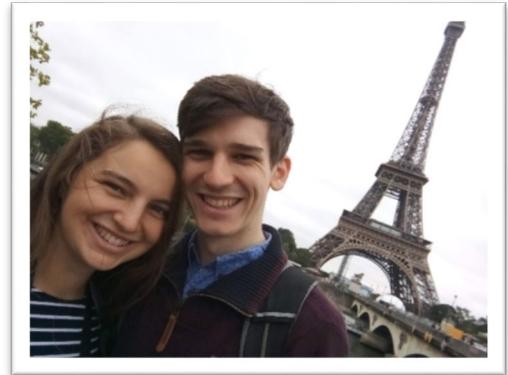
Signing the documents to ensure the future of St Andrew's Hall.

St Andrew's Hall belongs to a trust that leases the property to CMS – a relationship that has been in place for 100 years and dates back to an earlier training college. The trust has a very long-term perspective – the only 'winding up' clause in its trust document is to say that if Jesus comes back, the property reverts to the Chief Rabbi of London. We have been on the current site since 1964. So, you can imagine that we have accumulated a fair amount of junk. We have been working hard at downsizing. A significant part of the relocation

involves moving our whole library of around 10,000 books. Some of the older titles will go into storage for a year. But we will take the majority of the main library collection with us so that it is available to our students.

Family news

We are thrilled that Jono and Lizzie are now engaged. They are planning to get married in June next year. Lizzie surprised Jono with a trip to Paris to stay with Rachel's cousins for his birthday. Jono surprised Lizzie by proposing at the top of the Eiffel Tower.



Jono and Lizzie

Sam and Melanie are moving 3,750 kilometres away from Melbourne – a longer distance than London to Istanbul. But they will still be in Australia! They will be in Darwin from January, where Sam has a job as an anthropologist with the Northern Land Council (NLC). The NLC is responsible for assisting Aboriginal peoples in the Top End of the Northern Territory to acquire and manage their traditional lands and seas. Sam's job will involve working with Aboriginal communities as they engage with other parties around land's rights issues. Melanie has applied for a community development role with the NLC. Melanie's application for permanent residency in Australia has just been approved, which is great news.

Tom and Mia are well, and Ziggy is growing up very quickly. Rachel has been looking after him on Wednesdays most weeks, which they have both loved.

Please continue to pray for our colleague Isabel, who has had stage four lung cancer for the last three years. Her cancer has spread significantly over the last few months and her prognosis is now poor. She retired from her role at St Andrew's Hall at the end of November but will continue to serve here in a voluntary capacity while she is able to.

Amidst all this, Rachel and I continue to live in temporary housing, while we look for a house to buy. Please pray for our resilience in the face of all that is happening, for grace to persevere, and for patience and kindness with each other and with the people we are serving.

With our love and best wishes,
David and Rachel

Thank God for:

- The building redevelopment at St Andrew's Hall and for the generosity of God's people that has enabled us to go ahead.

Please pray:

- That the building project would be completed safely, on time and within budget.
- For wisdom as we look for a house, that God would provide us with somewhere that will be a good home for us and a great base for ministry.
- That we would be able to offer excellent training throughout 2020 despite being offsite.
- For Sam and Melanie as they move to Darwin; for Jono and Lizzie as they prepare to get married, that they would keep trusting and depending on Jesus each day.