



Dear friends,

September 2016

It is strange to be back. The dust and the sneezing, the bright light and cold nights, the clear blue sky above and the predominant colour of brown below... The baboons at the side of the road, the smell of bushfire and braai (BBQ) in the air, the thick thorns pushing their way through my trainers during a walk... The group of men standing at the crossroads waiting to be offered at least a few hours of work, the traffic rules being generally ignored by everyone as soon as the sun sets, the quick look over the shoulder to see whether you are being followed...



We are getting used again to power failures and using the dishwasher to flush the toilets. It is good to be back. Seeing how God is at work in the life of current and former students of NETS, observing positive changes within NETS following the change of leadership, celebrating the calling of brothers into church leadership positions, sharing in the pain and praying with those who suffer, catching up with friends from so many different cultural backgrounds.

Goodbyes and welcomes

Rashidi from DR Congo has lived in Namibia as a refugee for 16 years. He was a faithful servant in his church and earned a regular income as a driver for schoolchildren and football teams. Last year he graduated from NETS with a Diploma in Ministry. During our first week back in Windhoek we attended a surprise birthday party for Rashidi. Within that same week he received sudden notice from the government that he was to leave the country four days later. They had arranged for his repatriation to Australia as a UNHCR refugee. We had an emotional farewell as we fellowshiped, prayed and laid hands on him.



Shortly after that we learnt that the mother of one of our students had committed suicide. No words can describe the pain of such trauma. Once again the NETS community drew closer together to provide support and encouragement. We also said goodbye to good friends who were denied a work permit despite having invested much into the country and having lived here for three and a half years. On the other hand, we had the joy of welcoming three new missionary couples for much needed ministries of trauma counselling and training, missionary member care, psychotherapy, teaching at a local school and lecturing at NETS.



From science and rugby to theology

In August Thorsten had the privilege to do a preaching workshop with the students of the Bachelor and Bachelor Honours class. These students only have few months left before they will go into full-time ministry. One of them is a science lecturer at a local university. Having a Phd in his field he has a good income and could make a great career. But the Lord has laid it on his heart to return to his neighbouring home

country to open up a Bible School. Another student was a rugby coach for the Namibian youth team – until the Lord called him to get trained so that he could teach theology. Over the past three years he applied the discipline one needs to become a professional rugby player to his theological studies and has been a great role model to other NETS students. Please pray for these two and others in their class as they seek to finish well at NETS and follow the Lord's leading into full-time ministry.

Looking back and looking ahead

When you go on home assignment it is difficult to resist the temptation not to fill every slot of the day with meeting people. Once again the desire to catch up with friends and share our life and ministry in Namibia with you was stronger than common sense. As a result, for the length of three and a half months we ended up doing thousands of miles of travelling, visited a different church almost every Sunday, slept in 20 different beds and often had more than one or two meetings/visits every day. We caught up with several friends and supporters who we last saw over 10 years ago and spent some time considering various future ministry offers.

Sadly, this process has been frustrating. So far we considered and had discussions with people about opportunities in Finland, Sweden, Poland, Latvia, Austria, Netherlands and also Germany. However, none of the positions that were offered to Thorsten seem to fit his or our calling and gifting. Most want to recruit him as Academic Dean with a 90 % administrative role when his passion and gifting lies in teaching, preaching and mentoring. Some colleges have compromised their theology for the sake of government accreditation and put pressure on lecturers to conform. As a result, we have turned down all these possibilities. We would appreciate your prayers as we continue searching and seeking the Lord's will for our future.

With much thankfulness
and love in Christ

Thorsten & Kerstin

What a privilege it was to catch up with dear friends in England, Germany and the Netherlands! This is our old home group in Nottingham that we joined almost 18 years ago and who are still faithfully praying for us!



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