

DECEMBER 2018



Dear friends

One of the privileges of having our Crosslinks prayer letter due in December 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, made more vivid after our visit to the shepherds' fields in Bethlehem earlier this year.

Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania

In late September Rachel and I spent two weeks in southern and eastern Africa visiting CMS mission partners. It was a huge encouragement to spend time with our mission partners, all of whom had trained during our time at St Andrew's Hall. The context of mission in southern Africa is especially challenging, with continued tensions around land ownership. Mission in post-colonial contexts is not easy. We were encouraged to see how wisely and vulnerably our colleagues were engaging in mission in the face of these issues.

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The context of mission in southern Africa is especially challenging

One of CMS colleagues is working at Johannesburg Bible College, a ministry which is led by Crosslinks partners Nat and Helen Schluter. We used to help them with a CYFA camp for teenagers in the 1990s. And in Tanzania, we had the privilege of meeting Bishop Mathayo Kasagara, from Lake Rukwa Diocese, where our old friend Paul Hunter is serving.



Nat and Helen Schluter



Bishop Mathayo Kasagara

Mission teaching

I have enjoyed teaching a mission class at Ridley College this semester. It was a rich experience because of the cultural diversity of the students in the class, including a number from Muslim and Buddhist backgrounds. Thank you for your prayers as I prepared and taught the class. I enjoyed myself enormously and learned lots – hopefully the students did too. I am also supervising two students who are doing thesis work for their Masters degrees. And I've been asked to assist in supervising a doctoral student. All of these are new challenges and help me to keep growing and learning in mission. I have a number of teaching and preaching opportunities lined up for the next 12 months.

Rachel and I continue to love our roles teaching and mentoring at St Andrew's Hall. This semester we have been privileged to walk alongside nine new long-term missionaries who have just finished their time with us. Every group starts as new students and ends as friends. It is always sad to say goodbye.

Family news

Thank you for praying for Jonathan. He has started work as a Family Policy Officer for CARE, the same organisation that he worked for as an intern. He has moved into a house share in Tooting and has enjoyed getting involved at St Nicholas's Church.

Rachel has loved spending time with Tom, Mia and Ziggy, going down most Wednesdays to spend time with Mia and play with Ziggy. He is undoubtedly the cutest baby in human history. Tom and Mia are excited that their church has just appointed a new Senior Pastor.

Sam and Melanie are thriving in new jobs. Melanie has started work for TEAR (the same as TEAR Fund in England except Australians abbreviate everything). Sam is working in the Vice Chancellor's office at the University of Melbourne. They continue to be very involved in their local church.

With our love and best wishes,

David and Rachel

Thank God for:

- **New job roles for Jonathan, and for Sam and Melanie.**
- **A new group of missionaries who have just finished training at St Andrew's Hall.**
- **For God's protection and timing during our visit to colleagues in Africa.**

Please pray:

- **That God would provide the funding we need to redevelop St Andrew's Hall. We urgently need to reach some financial milestones very soon!**
- **For a good break over Christmas and the New Year and the chance for some much needed downtime.**
- **For the new group of 13 trainees preparing to join us at St Andrew's Hall early next year – that their time with us would thoroughly equip them for the good works God has prepared for them in mission.**