



**October 2017**

Dear Friends,



For the last few weeks I have been saying to myself, in my mind, a simple but important truth: 'I am not God'. A comforting truth to you all I hope! But one which I keep needing to remember. I can't see into people's hearts and I cannot control everything that happens. I am not God. My job is to faithfully serve God who, thankfully, is God. Trusting that he is working and that as he promised he is building his Church. There have been some encouraging and some hard things over the last few months and I have been helped by remembering that God is God and that I am not.

I have been reminded to look to him as the one who holds all things in his hand and to trust that he is at work.

### **Visa**

Thank you for all who have been praying for my visa situation. There was a problem with my application and I have submitted further information and an appeal and I should hear the outcome soon. I will let you know as soon as I do. Please pray that a positive outcome would come through soon.

### **Belonging month**

You may remember that last year we did a belonging course, to help people think through what it means to belong to the church. Although we had a good number of people who had done the course, a number in the congregation had not. Following on from our sermon series in Ephesians, which is all about belonging, we have spent the last few weeks looking at who we are and what we are doing as a church. After the service, we have had a short seminar covering some of the issues that we covered in the belonging course. The attendance has been excellent, with almost everybody staying on for these sessions.



Over the last few months we have also had a number of new people, and it has been great for them to get to know the church better. Please pray that we continue to grow closer to God and to

one another as a church. Give thanks for the enthusiasm of those who attended the belonging months.

### **Church conference**

Weekends away don't really work here so, two years ago, we tried doing a church conference with a guest speaker for the weekend, which was a great success. Unfortunately, we were not able to do it last year but this September as part of our belonging month we had a friend of mine from Cape Town come to speak to us. Phumezo Msanga is a minister in a township in Cape Town and he spoke on the topic of 'Family, Marriage, Sex and the African Christian'. Phumezo has lots of pastoral experience and wisdom and he was able to address sensitive issues with compassion and sensitivity. He preached on the Sunday on 'growing in Christ'. Many people attended and you can see the pictures, and the church was encouraged. Please pray that the weekend we lead to greater openness on these issues and that will help us to minister to the congregation more effectively.

Phumezo stayed with me for the weekend, we had long chats about ministry, he was a great encouragement to me personally. He loved Christ Church Hillbrow and encouraged me to keep going.



### **Looking forward**

As we look forward to the end of the year, we have our vestry meeting in November. Particularly pray for godly men and women willing to serve on council. Pray as we look at parts of Luke's gospel and Malachi, that God would be speaking to us as a church.

Thank you so much for praying, and for those who have been praying and have been in touch with encouragements and prayers.

God bless,

Ben Williamson

## **PRAYER POINTS**

- Give thanks for the belonging month and the conference with Phumezo.
- Pray that we would grow closer to God and to one another as a church.
- Pray for the upcoming vestry meeting.

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