



February 2018

Dear Friends and Family,

'Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord of God'. Psalms 20:7

This week marks 12 years since we arrived in South Africa. Over this time we have made you aware of events not only effecting Heideveld and the ministries that we are involved in, but also those of our city and the nation. This month we would like to make you aware of a serious water shortage: Cape Town is experiencing its worst drought in over a century, having had exceptionally little rainfall over the last three years. The city has been working hard to



prevent what has become known as **'Day Zero'**, the day when the taps will be turned off in 75% of the city. With a population that has doubled from two million to four million since 2000, we are facing the prospect of becoming the first major city to run out of water.



Should this happen, we will have to start queuing for water from one of the city's earmarked collection points. This date is currently set at 16 April and from 1 February we were restricted to 50 litres of water per day. Theewaterskloof dam – the largest dam feeding Cape Town, currently only 13:1% full. It was sobering to drive past in December. St Thomas is busy working on plans for if and when we run dry – primarily to ensure toilets for the pre-school. Arise's plan is to run for as long as they can – uncertain how groups and staff will be affected if we have to queue for water. At home, we have closed off our shower and redirected our pipes so that all water is reused. We are aware of every drop we use. The amount of plastic containers and bottles being sold is frightening – the long term environmental effects are awful to contemplate. The whole situation is such a reminder that God is God and we are not. We are equally aware that creation groans awaiting its Saviour.

As St. Thomas' congregation were urged this morning to pray, so too we ask you to pray for rain in the Western Cape. Please pray that people will be careful with water usage and that Christians will love their neighbours, resist selfishness and be generous. Pray that we would be slow to complain – so many in our city live without running water at home every year.

Alun is currently minister in charge at St. Thomas, for a period of at least six months whilst Gary and his family have been called upon to lead another large church in our denomination through a period of uncertainty. This means a significant increase in the preaching and management load, but Alun feels well supported by the congregation. As a church we are studying the book of Ephesians and it is thrilling to see evidence of the Lord growing members of the church through their deeper commitment to bible reading. We have taken over the leadership of Gary's bible study group for now, with Katleho looking after our old group. Having run young adults for eight years, it is a change to lead a more mature study, but we are enjoying it.

We have a few new parents/guardians of some of our particularly vulnerable children that have visited a handful of times since Christmas. It would be fantastic to see them commit to coming regularly. We need wisdom to think through the best way of loving these families and supporting them spiritually, but also physically and emotionally too. Our Sundays are more often than not filled with several children/teens in our home after church – one thing we have definitely learnt over the years is how to stretch a pot of food! We would love to see more of our adults become involved in reaching out to these young ones that are so desperate to be part of a Christian family. The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

Youth has started well with a new crop of teens (including Likhona!). We are blessed with a great leadership team this year and are excited to see the opportunities for discipling these teens. Ramon Williams (student at GWC) is doing a fantastic job of developing our music ministry at the moment. He is introducing new songs with great theological depth and working hard at increasing the repertoire of Afrikaans and Xhosa songs that we sing. Debbie is enjoying being back at the piano after several years off and is thrilled to begin teaching Ilana.

Here are some upcoming events we would love you to pray for:

- 24 February - Women's Tea and Bible Study
- 4 March – Church Potjiekos Social at Zandvlei
- End of March – Men's Breakfast and Bible Study
- 9 March - Youth Cutting Edge Rally
- Easter Holiday - Kids Holiday Bible Club

Arise's year started with a lot of cases to manage and groups to run. Our director Steven has had to help with a couple of particularly heart wrenching situations recently – such is the community of Heideveld. Our family centre manager, Robyn, is currently pregnant with her second child and will be off on maternity leave later in the year – this will stretch the staff, though of course we rejoice in God growing families! We have two more adoption conferences planned for September (including a second in Pretoria) and a large number of parents signed up for our adoption family forums. This year's topics vary from practical workshops on hair braiding to more serious questions relating to contact with birth families and being school savvy. Do continue to pray for finances to run this vital work – the board are working hard but there is a lot of competition for grants in our context.

As a family we will be able to enjoy 10 days camping in Ceres and the Cederberg. Alun had done some renovations on our combi allowing the kids to sleep in the van which was great fun. The scenery was breath-taking and we really appreciated the time for the six of us to spend time reading, swimming and hiking together. The kids returned in January to begin new school years – Likhona beginning Grade 7, Ilana Grade 4 and Malachi Grade R. Ilana loved slotting back into Grace Primary and the boys have equally enjoyed refinding the rhythm of homeschooling. Likhona's old school continues to allow him to partake in art, sport and outings with his old class which is a tremendous blessing. Timothy loves getting involved in his brother's projects and loves to bake them tasty mid-morning snacks!

Thanks for your continued prayers for us. We value them so much.

Every blessing,

Alun, Debbie, Likhona (13), Ilana (9), Malachi (5) and Timothy (1)



Please contact your local Crosslinks office to change your contact details

Crosslinks, 251 Lewisham Way, London SE4 1XF Tel: 020 8691 6111 pletters@crosslinks.org
Crosslinks, 32 Montgomery Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim BT6 9HL Northern Ireland Tel: +44 (0) 28 9079 6028