



October 2014

Dear Family and Friends,

Nehemiah was a man faced with adversity, concerned for God's honour and committed to prayer. We can learn a lot for his example – his love for the poor, his focus on God's work, his reaction when faced with threats, mockery and persecution. Yet his grand project ultimately failed. The magnificent walls of Jerusalem completed in record time and the law read by Ezra so dramatically when the people returned to populate the city, simply couldn't keep God's people holy. Our Sunday School kids has been learning through the book of Nehemiah, how sin lives in the heart. We have all learnt afresh how wonderful it is that God in his mercy sent Jesus into the world to forgive sin.



St Thomas teens go on short-term mission

The October school holiday brings an exciting opportunity for us as a family as we travel five hours outside of Cape Town to help run a holiday club in another church. Alun will be leading the first St. Thomas short-term mission team and the rest of us will be accompanying him. Six of our most mature teens have been asked to come, along with Elanza (an Arise employee and member of our bible study group) to teach the bible to children in a cross-cultural situation. It is thrilling that we have a bunch of teenagers from Heideveld who love the Lord and who are ready to serve in this way. The team completed their training yesterday and they are so very, very excited! Five of the teens we started working with eight years ago, when they were in Grade 3 and 4 are were part of the Sunday school and Arise kids clubs – God is gracious in keeping them and growing them. Three of them are being baptised the day before we leave and the others are giving testimonies and confirming their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! We would covet your prayers for safety, no hassles with transport (our two cars are both pretty old now), children to be receptive to the gospel message, teens to lead servant heartedly and grow in their own faith.



Adoption Advocacy

Today the UK headlines reported that adoptions in England at an all-time high. The governments' adoption reforms are working, at least in the placement of younger children. Sadly this is not so in South Africa. A meagre 1699 adoptions were registered here last year. This is a deep tragedy. Sadly the system is overloaded with children who have been moved to children's homes or into foster care, but who have got stuck there. Research abounds with the benefits of placing children into

permanent families, but today rarely are children's cases given the attention they need to make such a move possible. This reality and the belief that God desires children to be brought up in godly families is what drive Arise's permanency programme and Adoption advocacy work. Please pray for the annual Arise Adoption Conference taking place on 18 October. Pray also for desperately needed funding for the Arise permanency programme – Arise has significant stakeholders ready to work with them, but is lacking the financial resources to push forward as hoped.

Family:

Likhona performed seven times last week in his school play and loved the face paint that glowed under the stage lights. God definitely created our eldest son with gifts of music and movement! Loom bands have hit South Africa and are one of Likhona's favourite hobbies at the moment. 'Fireman Sam' books rock Malachi's world currently and Winnie the Pooh likes to go venturing round Cape Town strapped to Malachi's back ☺ The littlest man is now potty trained and sleeping in a big bed. Ilana has mastered backstroke this term and is now working hard on her breaststroke. It is a new experience for us to have her pop up to the computer and try reading aloud what we are busy typing! She asked the other day 'how many sleeps until I wear a uniform'? – needless to say she can't wait to join Likhona at primary school in January! Having her hair braided into a long ponytail was another highlight for Ilana this term. Alun has now built the first half of the chicken coop (entirely from odd materials found around the house) and the children are looking forward eagerly to the arrival of two chickens and two rabbits coming at Christmas. Debbie can't quite believe the Burt household is going to extend to have pets – she definitely lost the family vote on animals 4-1, so concedes graciously!

As ever we are grateful for your prayers and support. Thanks also for the emails you send and photos some of you put on facebook. Several of our close SA friends are now serving overseas and we realise again and again, how blessed we are with means to communicate and stay in touch with family and friends around the globe. When our children ask us 'why do people have to move?' or 'why does England have to be so far?' – we remind them that heaven is coming and we look forward to spending eternity together with all our Christian family.

With every blessing,

Alun, Debbie, Likhona (9), Ilana (6), and Malachi (2)

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