



## May 2017

Dear Friends,

Once again I must apologise for not writing sooner, I think I missed my last letter and so this is the first of 2017! Please accept my apologies.



### **Looking Back**

As we look back, I will try to work backwards with regard to the goings on here and elsewhere.

### **Trip to the UK**

It was wonderful to spend just over a month in the UK during April and May. I was able to meet up with many people and again can only apologize if I was not able to see you. It was a joy to celebrate a close friend's wedding, to see my whole family, to visit Emmanuel Wimbledon, Moulton Parish Church and St Peter's Harold Wood. I was able to see a number of people I have not seen for a long time and to spend some time on a Proclamation Trust Younger Minister's Conference. The time was truly refreshing and encouraging. It was particularly good to meet with fellow workers in the gospel, to hear of their work and help one another to gain perspective and offer encouragement. Praise God for family and friends who were able to host me and who helped me to have some proper rest.

### **A Difficult few Months**

One of the questions that I find hard to answer when I am in the UK is 'How are things going?' It is often hard to see how God is working and how hard times serve to build his kingdom, but we go on by faith not by sight, his word promising that he is always faithful and working in all things for our good.



There were some difficult pastoral issues at the church before I left for England, which put me under a great deal of pressure and impacted my health a little. In such a time I was grateful for God's sustaining hand on me and the encouragement individuals both within and outside the church gave me. It was also very good to have a break in the UK.

I'm grateful for the encouragement of my curate and those in the UK who gave so as to make the break in the UK possible. I was thankful that my curate was able to be here while I was away and

that things have gone well. Please continue to pray that I would get good rest and relief now I am back. Give thanks for a good return and pray that the Lord would continue to work amongst us.

### **Encounter Jesus!**

In the month of March we had a series on Sundays with a few extra events entitled 'Encounter Jesus'. We were focusing on Luke 7, in which there are four accounts of different people Encountering Jesus. We had an international food evening, where different members of the congregation brought dishes from their countries - I cooked Cottage Pie! We had a few visitors and the gospel was preached so praise God for that. Please pray that inviting people to church would become a normal part of what we do and we would grow as a result.



### **Looking Forward**

#### **Ephesians**

Having been apprehensive about returning to Johannesburg, I am rejoicing to be back. Particularly exciting is beginning a series working through the book of Ephesians. As I get to grips with the book I am rejoicing over all the blessings that we have in Christ and praying that I and the congregation at Christ Church Hillbrow might live now as those blessed in Christ. Please pray for us as we work through the book - that it would challenge us and bring us together as a community of God's people.

#### **Support Structure**

As I wrote previously, last year my brother and his family returned to the UK after being in South Africa for two years. They were a big support to me and now another family, who are good friends to me, are also returning to the UK. Please pray that the Lord would raise up a good network of support for me both within and outside of the church over the coming few months. Also pray that I would have opportunities to have fun and relax, to help avoid stress building up.

#### **Visa!**

Give thanks that I was able to apply for the renewal of my visa in good time. Although I did do it in plenty of time, the process often takes a lot longer than they say, so please pray for speedy processing so that I do not have to worry.

#### **Financial Concerns**

I am extremely grateful for those who give towards my ministry here, without you it really would not be possible. As I am sure that you are aware Brexit has had a huge impact on the exchange rate which adds to the burden of funding. Please do pray that the funding would still be enough and that I would not worry about it. If you are able to help please do let Crosslinks know. I'm grateful for every bit of support I get. Thanks to you all, Ben

### **PRAYER POINTS**

#### **Praise:**

- Refreshing and encouraging trip to the UK.
- God's kind hand on the church while I have been away (and now I am back) and a good return to things here.

#### **Pray:**

- A good support structure in my ministry.
- God to provide for the needs of the ministry here.

**Please contact your local Crosslinks office to change your contact details**

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