



March 2018

Dear Friends,

Many thanks for your continued prayers for us. Rachel and I had a great time in Papua New Guinea in December, celebrating the life of my academic cohort as we came to the end of our programme. It was a privilege to enjoy the welcome and hospitality of our PNG peers. They have faced extraordinary challenges as they have studied at this level, with unreliable electricity and internet being huge frustrations. On top of all this, each of them has continued to exercise a high-level ministry leadership role. It has been wonderful to study cross-cultural mission as part of a diverse group – their perspectives have enriched my own learning immensely. It has also been a privilege to learn under Professor Dan Shaw from Fuller Theological Seminary, who has led the programme. Dan's anthropological insights have been a highlight.



With Professor Dan Shaw in Papua New Guinea

A new life-stage beckons!

Jonathan flew out to Australia for just over two weeks in December, so we had the great joy of being with Tom and Mia, Sam and Melanie and Jonathan for Christmas. We had the even greater joy of learning about a new member of the Williams family – Tom and Mia are expecting a baby in July. Christmas Day was a very special day for us all to share in that news. We are thrilled at impending grand-parenthood. It was lovely to spend some time together with Jonathan, who jumped from an English winter into an Australian summer and back again.

House hunting on the other side of the world

Rachel and I have started looking into buying a house in Australia. This has often prompted the question "Does that mean you are staying in Australia forever?" It's a question that we don't know the answer to and that leaves us feeling confused and conflicted. We love the ministry in Melbourne that we are involved in. We certainly believe that we are where God wants us to be. For a number of reasons, we are not open to moving on from our current roles at the moment, especially because of the ill-health of our colleague and because of the St Andrew's Hall building redevelopment. However, we are a long, long way away from family and friends in the UK. We feel that distance especially when loved ones face ill health. There continues to be a deep costliness to us of being in this ministry – a cost borne by many, not only ourselves. It's a cost that continues to be painful. At the same time, our sense of dislocation enables us to empathise with those we are

training, as they embark on a life that involves many transitions. And it points us to a great future hope, with no more goodbyes. Come, Lord Jesus!

St Andrew's Hall

At the end of March, we expect to move into a more active phase of working towards a major redevelopment of St Andrew's Hall. We hope that our application for planning permission will be approved very soon – current signs are positive. We will then move into a design and development stage in which the more intricate details of the new building will be in view. Alongside all of this, CMS around Australia is working hard to raise the funds that we need to make the dream a reality. The next six months will be a crunch time as we reach the point of pushing the “go” button on the whole project. We covet your prayers for us and our team as face a mountain of decisions.

Family News

Jonathan continues to enjoy his CARE internship and is loving working in the Palace of Westminster. He is prayerfully considering what might come next for him once the internship is over at the end of July. We are attending the GAFCON conference in Jerusalem in late June and are looking forward to a brief trip to the UK after that. A longer CMS pastoral visit beckons in the second half of the year, that will take us to Tanzania, Namibia and South Africa.



Christmas in Australia!

With our love and best wishes,

David and Rachel

PRAYER POINTS

Thank God for:

- Tom and Mia's baby, due in July. Pray for their safekeeping and that this little one will grow up always knowing Jesus.
- A wonderful family time together over Christmas and for Jonathan's visit back to Australia.
- The progress that's been made on the St Andrew's Hall redevelopment.

Please pray:

- That we would receive planning permission for the new building. Pray for wisdom for the team that is planning the fine detail on the design of the building. And pray that the Lord will supply all that we need to make this redevelopment happen. Our vision is to resource the next 50 years of missionary training!
- For wisdom for Rachel and me as we consider buying a house. For God's grace and kindness as we sometimes struggle with being far away from family
- For Jonathan as he prayerfully considers what the Lord has in store for him after the CARE internship.

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