



May 2017

Dear friends,

'When are you leaving?' is becoming one of the most dreaded and frequently asked questions lately. The other one, which is more difficult to answer, is 'Are you looking forward to going home?' Home, what does that even mean? Is it the country where we were born and where we will spend a few months later this year, but that we hardly recognise because we have not lived there for 18 years? It certainly isn't going to be Scotland as we have never lived there before. Transitions are hard, but they also provide an opportunity to look back and be grateful for many blessings, lessons and relationships. The next two months will be full of those opportunities, individual goodbyes and big farewell gatherings with many friends.

"At NETS I met Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. ...

this is what I received and this is what I'm ready to give". This is a quote from Kwatouta, one of the graduates who gave a testimony at last month's graduation ceremony. He shared how he thought he was a Christian when he started at NETS four years ago. In his testimony, he emphasised three points that he learnt at NETS and that he encouraged everyone to focus on: to love the word of God and take it seriously, to love the Lord Jesus more and to love and take care of one another. Kwatouta now serves as a full-time pastor in a young church plant in Windhoek. You can listen to Kwatouta's testimony here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNL72cUX2zs&feature=youtu.be>



The search for Barnabas at NETS

Namibia suffered many years under Apartheid. Only 27 years ago it achieved independence from South Africa and became the last African country to shake off colonial rule. However, to shake off the influence of Apartheid with all its heresies and hurts would take much longer. One beautiful example of a positive development in this regard is this year's Barnabas Award. It is given at each graduation ceremony and recognises the student who has been judged by the NETS students to have made the most significant contribution to the NETS community. This year our students voted for Willem Steenkamp to receive this award. One of the things that all students testify to as being a special positive aspect at NETS is that our diversity in terms of colour of skin, age and church background teaches us much and forges friendships for life.



Student Dean Paul Makai with
Willem Steenkamp (l.)

“Dr Prill always tells us that ‘you must preach the Word with umpf’”

...another quote from Kwatouta's testimony at graduation. One danger when a theological student leaves college is that he begins to lecture at his church rather than preach. As we train theological students to become church leaders it has always been very important to us that academic studies will not take priority over personal devotion. When deadlines are around the corner and pressure to deliver good assignments increases, it becomes a challenge to engage with the Bible not only with the brain, but also with your heart. Please pray for theological students that their studies will never only be a pure academic exercise and that when they graduate they will be able to preach with 'umpf' addressing not only the brain, but also people's hearts.



Unrealistic dream or reachable goal?

The search and longing for financial sustainability is high on the agenda of every bible college, but is it realistic? Good quality education costs money which most theological students do not have.

Your help is still needed!
Thanks to some generous one-off donations we have received clearance from Crosslinks to move to Scotland for at least two years. We are very grateful indeed and praise God for his provision. However, the regular donations only cover about 80% of our budget. If you had planned to start partnering with us financially, but have not had the chance yet to sort things out with Crosslinks, it would be great if you could email Peter Tibbott at ptibbott@crosslinks.org as this will really help us with our planning.

NETS has never been financially sustainable without external support, but the Lord has been gracious for 27 years in providing in often unexpected and amazing ways. And the Lord has used you by enabling us to serve at NETS for nine years. In recent weeks financial challenges have forced the NETS leadership to cut back on expenses. Please pray for God's provision and for the leadership to have wisdom as they seek to increase fundraising efforts and make other important decisions.

The painful process of having to think through financial challenges shortly before we leave NETS has once again highlighted to us the vital importance of investing in theological education – by praying for bible colleges, making donations or helping support missionaries to teach at a college. We are grateful for your partnership with us.

So, what about Edinburgh Bible College (EBC)? EBC only has one full-time staff member so far. All other lecturers are local pastors, which keeps expenses low. The college is doing ok financially because the budget is low. But to grow any theological college, additional staff are needed and this is where we come in.

Just as we have seen and experienced God's faithfulness in the history of NETS, it is our prayer that He will use you, us and hopefully other missionaries and donors to develop and prosper theological education in Scotland through EBC as well as in Namibia through NETS. Let's pray to this end so that God may be glorified.

With much love in Christ,

Thorsten and Kerstin



*If you know anyone in Edinburgh who would be willing to assist us with finding suitable **accommodation** as of December 2017, both in the short- and long-term, we would be very grateful if you could let us know.*

Please contact your local Crosslinks office to change your contact details

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