

AUGUST 2019



Dear Friends,

'Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?'
Isaiah 58:6-7

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I thought I had finally nailed this whole trusting in the Lord thing.

I have really struggled over the first few weeks of this new term. During a cancer scare whilst in the UK I was able to pray sincerely for me to accept God's will rather than for him to heal me! I thought I had finally nailed this whole trusting in the Lord thing. However, just one month into the third term at Trinity Children's Centre I am emotionally wrung out.... My job is to listen to people's stories....



The Bo-Kaap area of Cape Town

The stories on the Cape Flats are full of sadness and they are lived out daily by each and every person that stays here. The nights are filled with gunfire... every night! The days are filled with survival, trying to find enough money to feed a family which includes adult children addicted to heroin that are selling your furniture and possessions beneath you. Grandma dresses the kids for school and then goes out to work in an attempt to sustain the entire family. There are things I have experienced these past weeks that have broken my heart and I can't share them.

The healthcare system is inefficient and overrun and social workers know what needs to be done, but do nothing. The police that are not corrupt are inept. The army (SANDF) arrived two weeks ago, but the shooting has not abated. Where do we on the Cape Flats look for help? *'I lift my eyes to the hills... my help comes from the Lord.'* (Psalm 121).

I was reminded of Trinity's vision. It is to reach into the lives of individual children for a period of nine years in order to equip them for a future which will give them not just skills and education to escape the Cape Flats, but to know Jesus in such a way that they will remain in the Cape Flats with a view to transforming their communities through the Gospel of Christ.



Me and Yolanda (it's still very much winter!)

As Christians we are taught to walk as Christ did, to enter into the suffering of others and to pour ourselves out for them (Matt. 10:38, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23 and John 8:31). How does this look right now? It is the school principal reminding the staff team of Isaiah 58, it is T going for her second detox (with confidence to win), it is safety parents calling the police to help a child who is bent on self-destruction, it is V keeping an eye on B at the Frail-Care even though she is older than most people in there! It is my Life Group, diverse colours, ages and nationalities reading the Bible together and laughing despite the chaos that surrounds them.

This has been a difficult prayer letter to write – when I returned from the UK it was as if somebody had pressed a 'reverse everything' switch. Trust and faith is not fixed; it moves with our responses to experiences, events and emotions. The Bible is full of verses telling the Christian to persevere and to encourage one another but it has never been an easy walk. Thank you for being a part of my story and for praying with me.

Prayer

- Pray for T to continue in faith as she enters the second week of a second detox.
- Pray for M who has voluntarily left the U-turn program and returned home.
- Pray for C to step out of the darkness, and towards the light.
- Pray for the church to pour themselves out for B and others amongst the congregation.

Praise

- Give thanks for the privilege to give a talk on Women's Day on Psalm 45, and the 'happy ever after' that God promises those who belong to him.
- Give thanks for an 'army' of Christians seeking the good of communities around them, financially, prayerfully and in action.
- Give thanks for Jesus who suffered the most, so that we can lift our eyes up to the Father, rather than avert our gaze.



The Helderberg Mountains