



The Burt Family

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Back in the UK

It's a pleasure to write to you all again after our month in England, where we were able to see so many of you. Thank you for your warm welcome - it was great to catch up with everyone, be rested, encouraged, and spurred on to continue serving our God and King. Reading Luke fourteen yesterday, it was great to see that all people everywhere are invited to the feast in the Kingdom of God - us, you in England, the rich and poor in South Africa. We pray together that many might accept this incredible invitation. We thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity we had to visit you, the churches that partner with us, and to share about God's faithfulness to us, U-turn and Arise. We were very encouraged by your interest, prayerfulness and support - thank you very much!

Crosslinks

Whilst in the UK, we also spent a lot of time with the mission agency Crosslinks, where we were interviewed and then accepted as full-time mission partners. We are thrilled about this, as it gives us the security of being looked after long-term. Crosslinks will do a lot of our administration for us, continue our training, provide short-term missionaries to aid us in our work in Cape Town and lots more. Crosslinks shares our heart in its focus on the spreading the Gospel through evangelism and training leaders; we are very happy to serve under their guidance. We will be continuing our work here in Cape Town for the next three years, after which time we will review our assignment together with the Crosslinks staff. A few things will change for us, however, as they work to make our work sustainable for the long term - a pension, more comprehensive insurance, and raised living costs.

- Thank God for a good time at home, encouragement from friends, family and churches.
- Thank God for his provision of Crosslinks to help us continue our work here.

Likhona

Many of you we know have been praying about Likhona for many years now - the three and a half year old son of a lady who herself has lived on the streets for 27 years. After two years of trying to assist Maria (his mother), Likhona was removed by police in November last year and has since been in various places of safety and children's homes. The last time Maria went to visit him was seven months ago on Christmas Day, so Likhona is now legally an abandoned child in need of care. Back in February, after much thinking, praying and consulting with mentors and family, we decided to try and foster him. We were advised to first host Likhona at weekends from the children's home as it would benefit him enormously as he prepared for another move (move number 16 for him). These were precious times in which we were able to bond with him and to settle him into our routine. In May we were officially screened by social workers and a foster care report was drawn up recommending that Likhona be placed with us. The good news is that on Tuesday the 15th of July, the final hearing came up at the children's court and the magistrate signed him over as our foster son! So many prayers were answered that day and more. We prayed Likhona would be in a happy mood - when we picked him up from the children's home at 8:00 in the

morning, he was laughing and singing. This continued through a trip to the social workers office, a two hour delay at court and through the hearing itself. We prayed for favour with the magistrate – she was tremendously positive of the placement and against normal procedure, gave us the foster care grant even though we are British.

Likhona is now living with us and is settling in very well. He has started at a lovely crèche every morning, with a superb teacher Andrea, where the staff speak four languages between them – Afrikaans, English, Xhosa and French (many French speaking African refugees in Cape Town). Five things about Likhona, by way of introduction this newsletter – (1) he is mad on spiderman and very proud of his new spiderman school bag, (2) loves to sing at the top of his voice anywhere and everywhere, (3) is crazy about animals (especially dogs, monkeys and zebras), (4) can speak Afrikaans and English very capably and (5) is fearless when it comes to climbing frames!

We praise God for this addition to *our* family, and that he is now *in* a family.

- Thank God for the fact that we were able to foster Likhona and provide a home for him
- Thank God for the provision he has given us as we enlarge our family
- Pray for us as we seek to bring Likhona up knowing that Jesus loves him
- Pray for Likhona as he lives with the knowledge that his birth mother has abandoned him
- Pray for us as a family as we make this massive change together and especially for Debbie who makes the transition to work part-time and be 'mom' at home every afternoon
- Pray that we will, in time, be able to adopt Likhona (the magistrate advised us to begin this process in the next few months, but we know it will be a lengthy process).

Arise and U-turn

In the midst of this excitement, we have begun working again! Although we have been somewhat distracted, things continue here. Arise is now officially a Non-Profit Organisation independent of U-turn and is growing with the addition of a full time social worker, Kirsty, whose experience is invaluable. She is able to act on behalf of children at risk in more decisive ways. Just as we write, Kirsty is busy organising with other social workers for a baby she found this afternoon in a dreadful state, to be placed in a place of safety. To this end, we are delighted that two members of St. Stephen's have been trained as emergency safety moms to care short-term for babies such as these. Debbie continues to promote fostering and adoption in the churches as a way that Christians can respond to the orphan crisis in South Africa. The kids club started again last week, and the team of leaders from Heideveld have benefited greatly from Brigette's input over the school holidays. It is encouraging to see them maturing in faith, as they learn to teach the kids.

U-turn has now moved into its temporary accommodation. The heavy winter rain has tested the new roof and shown some of the work to be wanting! However it was only a minor mishap as we continue to serve some homeless men. Alun is also in his new office in the centre of Claremont and little by little it is becoming a workable drop-in centre for the homeless. We can see up to fifty people in one day, and are looking to increase our services to the homeless now that we have a solid base to work from.

- Thank God for His continuing work here, as people grow in their faith and discipleship, and others come to know Jesus
- Thank him for the capable staff that are on board
- Please pray for Kirsty as she intervenes in children's lives, that she may be wise, and may help some to safer situations.
- Pray for Debbie as she moves into a more managerial role at Arise
- Please pray for Alun as he looks to expand the work reaching out to homeless people

Thanks again for your prayers. With our love,

Alun, Debbie and Likhona



(pronounced Lee-corn-a for those of you who aren't native Xhosa speakers!)

