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Dear Friends,

At Christ Church Hillbrow, where I pastor, we have been working through the Sermon on the Mount in our Sunday sermons. Recently we have come to the Lord's Prayer, and we have been sitting at the feet of Jesus as he has been teaching us to pray. As our Lord teaches us, he teaches us to come to "Our Father who is in heaven..." It is a great reminder that in prayer we come as needy children to our loving heavenly Father. And as we are reminded in the verse before the Lord's Prayer, our Father "knows what we need before we ask him." It is a great comfort that as I continue the work at Christ Church Hillbrow, "Our Father in Heaven" loves and cares for me and the congregation that I serve, and indeed all of our partners in the UK, and our Father delights in showing his love to his children.



Joy

There has been much to give thanks for and cause for joy over the last few months. One of the highlights was a few weeks back when we had a church weekend at CCH with Alan Purser, from Crosslinks. Alan's becoming a real friend of CCH and we love his visits. Alan led a study day on the Saturday on Christian Joy from 1 Peter and then preached at the Mothering Sunday service. The Saturday was a huge encouragement, with around 25 people joining us for the day. It was great to see them all eagerly listening to God's word and over lunch asking great and engaging questions about what Alan had taught on. It was also a good time to get to know more in the congregation. Sunday was well attended

too and after the morning service Alan was the guest of honour at the young adults lunch, where again he was grilled with lots more questions. The young adult's lunch has become a real feature as 10-20 students and young workers come to my flat for pizza after the Sunday service. It has been a great way for me to get to know them and to get alongside them as they live seek to live out their Christian lives. Please pray for this as, like in the UK, Johannesburg is not an easy place to be a Christian, so pray that this group might continue in their service of the Lord.



Baptism

The following week was another big occasion as I had the privilege of baptizing nine children. We had many visitors and great time of

celebration afterwards. Preparation for the baptism was a good opportunity to meet parents and teach the Bible to them. Every opportunity for the word to be taught is an opportunity for God's kingdom to be built. Please do pray that God would work in these children as they grow, and that they will grow in knowledge and love of the Lord and live the rest of their lives in his service.



Co-ordinators Forum

Last prayer letter I wrote about the plan for Co-ordinators Forum where we had identified a number of areas in the church, and asked people to serve in those areas. It has been slower to get going than we might have hoped, but we did have our first co-ordinators meeting two weeks ago. We had good discussions and it is a joy to see people who want to serve in different ways. Please pray for the progress, there are still a few areas where we need to find the right people to serve so do pray for this. Pray also for Nathi, who is the member of council who is running the forum. He is a huge encouragement and godly example to me. I am very thankful for him and would ask that you would pray that he might be sustained in all that he does in the church.

Future

2015 has been a year of God's grace as God has continued to give me strength to lead Christ Church Hillbrow. As the work grows I increasingly feel the need for someone to work alongside me as an assistant minister. I had a very positive meeting with the bishop in which I discussed this with him and he was very supportive and keen to see this happen. When I met with the council they were also supportive about this, and it seems that exploring this option has broad support. In order for this to happen we need to find a suitable candidate and raise the funds to employ him. We would need to raise around £1,300 a month in order to cover his salary and the employment costs. Although some of that cost will come from Christ Church Hillbrow and from the denomination, I am looking to raise some of it from my partners in the UK. Crosslinks have set up a separate fund called "The Hillbrow Gospel Worker Fund" which will be used to fund the extra worker. If you would like to donate to help us to employ this extra worker then you can do so through Crosslinks. You may also know others who would be keen to help who are not already partnering with me, but would consider partnering with CCH to increase the ministry here. If you or anyone you know would like to contribute towards this worker then please do so through Crosslinks, specifying in a covering letter or email that you would like your gift to go to the "The Hillbrow Gospel Worker Fund". This will ensure that the money goes directly to the fund for the new gospel worker rather than to my own fund. Please also pray for the right person to be found so that the work here in CCH can continue to grow.



In Christ,
Ben Williamson

(Pictures: From the church conference)

PRAYER POINTS

Praise:

- The church conference.
- Many attending the Baptism service.

Pray:

- For preparation and funds for an assistant minister.
- That the coordinator forum would work well and help us to build the church.

Please contact your local Crosslinks office to change your contact details

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