



September 2016

Dear Friends,

It has been a busy few months and I realise that I missed my last prayer letter. So there are a number of things to catch you up on.

Ordination

As I hope most of you know by now, on 28 February I was ordained as a presbyter in the Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of South Africa. This was a huge answer to prayer, and such a



wonderful day. The bishop was there, the Christ Church Hillbrow family, some friends and my brother and his family. Alan Purser, from Crosslinks, preached and it was a wonderful day. It was a wonderful occasion as it showed the denomination's confidence and commission of me. Although I am not really used to being called Rev Ben, which some people insist on calling me, it has helped me feel more settled in my ministry, and given some clarity on the position at Christ Church Hillbrow.

Revelation

Last time I wrote, I was about to begin a series on the book of Revelation, which I am now nearing the end of. It has been so wonderful to see the big picture of how God is working revealed in the book. To see how God is keeping his church and working in this world to bring glory to his Son. It has been wonderful as a church to have our eyes lifted to the future day when Christ will return and will usher in the new creation.

In the context in which I preach, and in my own life, it has been particularly challenging to see that the reason that we have this book is so that we would keep going and not compromise with sin. As we have seen in the book what God has done, is doing and will do, we have been encouraged to keep going and not compromise. Pray that this would stick with us in the years to come.

Reach, Grow, Serve

After I returned from holiday, we took a short break from Revelation and we spent some time looking at what we are about as a church, and what we are trying to do. We've summed it up by saying that we are seeking to glorify God by reaching out with Christ, growing deeper in Christ and serving others for Christ. It was helpful to understand what we were called to do as a church. We also spent a week thinking about what it means to belong to the Church. It was helpful to see how

we play our part by belonging to the Church that Christ is building. Please pray that the vision would not be just something we think about, but it would be what we do.

Growing friendship and support with one sad goodbye.

For a while now I have been writing about the need to find more support and encouragement here. I am very grateful for a number of friends here who have been a real encouragement. Over the past year I have been particularly grateful for Bishop Martin Morrison's support. He has been wise counsel and a warm encouragement. It has been great to know of his support. I have also been able to befriend another ReachSA minister in the area, Farai, who seems to share my outlook on life and has become a great encouragement.

Sadly, earlier this month, Sam, Leanna, Ella, Susannah, Zeph and Zeke (my brother and his family) have, after two years in South Africa, returned to the UK. They were such a great encouragement and I will miss them. Although we did go to the trampoline park the day before they flew.



The Future

Many of you know that we have been trying to raise funds for a curate, and it looks like the curate will shortly become a reality. Godfrey Penduka, who has been working at a church in Port Elizabeth, is now coming to join us at Christ Church Hillbrow. God willing, he will start later this year. Please pray for all the practicalities, particularly funding and housing, that they would be sorted out quickly. Also please pray that Godfrey and I would work well together to the glory of God to grow God's work in Hillbrow.

Partnership

In the final sermon in my series on what we were about as a church, we looked at the whole issue of gospel partnership from Philippians 4. We were reminded that what we need is not donors but partners in gospel ministry. Over the last six years it has been a wonderful privilege to partner with so many of you. I am so thankful for so much more than just financial giving - the love and prayers that I receive so often. Thank you.

I am also thankful for financial giving which allows me to be here and serve. It may be that you are able to help more, or know someone else who is able to help in this area. There is still some need for the gospel workers fund, which is to support Godfrey, and my own fund, which supports me. If you are able to help, then please do get in touch with Crosslinks.

Thank you again for all your partnership, as I say it is a privilege and joy to be partner in the gospel with you.

God Bless, Ben

PRAYER POINTS

Praise:

- For my ordination.
- Growing friendships and support.
- Good response to our understanding of our vision and mission as a church.

Pray:

- The curate as he begins work at Christ Church Hillbrow.
- That we would be a church that reaches, grows and serves.

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