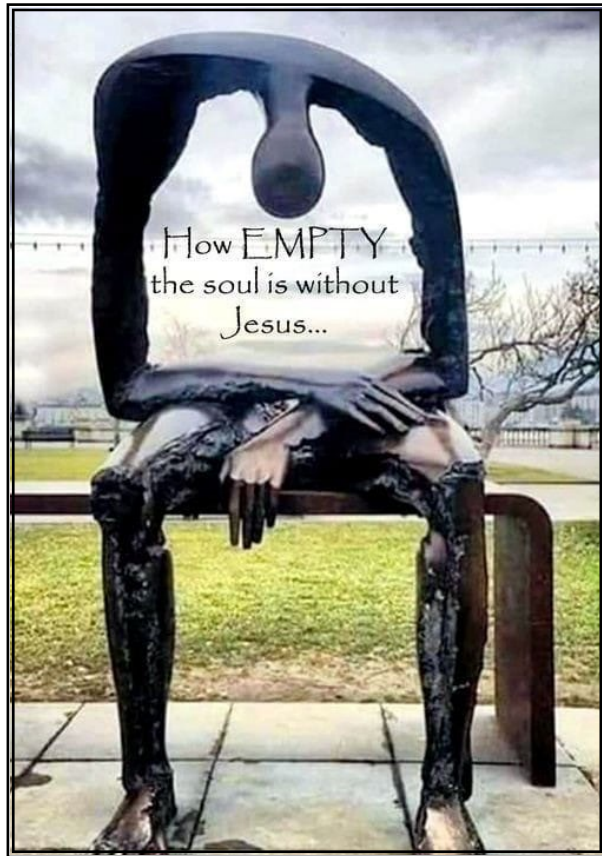


NEWS

March 2024 All Services, Christ Church, Kenilworth 021-797-6332



Melancholy
created by
Albert
Gyorgy.
Found at
Lake Geneva,
Switzerland
(Text added)

celebration and mourning. I was very intrigued by this when I first came across the description last year. We face our humanity during Lent, our sinfulness, and our failure in so many areas of life. Gloriously we also celebrate the amazing truth of the Lord's death, resurrection and ascension on our behalf.

Psalm 23

- Tony Westwood (photograph below)

In an attempt to memorise Psalm 23, I extracted the verbs from each verse to give myself a skeleton to work with. I wondered what would happen if I got the verbs mixed up. The result is the following:

A Young Lamb Recites Psalm 23

The Lord is my Shepherd
all the days of my life.
He makes me run over green pastures.
He bathes me in quiet waters.
He follows the life within me.
And for his namesake,
he leads me along the right path.
Even though I lie down in the deep dark
valley, I shall want nothing
because goodness and
unfailing love are with me.
You are with me at your table,
in the sight of my enemies.
Like sacred oil, you dwell in my head,
and my cup is constantly refilled.
I shall be housed on your spread
my whole life long.

Ash Wednesday 2024

- Jeanette Harris (photograph below)

The numbers at our Wednesday morning communion service have been gradually growing but on Wednesday 14 February they increased dramatically. This was because it was Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the forty days of Lent. It was lovely seeing so many people coming into the church sanctuary on a weekday morning. Mike Keggie is currently preaching from the book of Genesis. Appropriately, the chapter we were due to look at was chapter three, where Eve yields to temptation by the serpent, she and Adam disobey God, and the Garden of Eden is no longer the paradise it was. Relationship with God was broken.

After the sermon people came forward to have the sign of the cross marked on their foreheads with ashes made from palm crosses from the previous year. This is to signify our mortality. From dust we came, to dust we return. For me there is always something very meaningful about going up to the front together to share in this experience.

Lent is the season which leads us up to Easter. It represents Jesus's forty days of temptation in the wilderness. For believers it is a time of reflection and special concentration on our walk with the Lord, and also with one another. It is far more than merely giving up eating chocolate or some other pleasure in life! During this time we also look towards Easter, where we remember our Lord's death and his glorious resurrection.

The weekdays of Lent are penitential, a time when we examine ourselves and our walk with the Lord. Sundays are celebratory in that we worship in the knowledge of the resurrection. The Orthodox Church refers to Lent as the 'bright sad season', because it is a time of both



The Love of God

– Michelle Naude

Have you ever heard someone say something like this? “I love chocolate!” All the person really means is that they really, really like and enjoy the taste of chocolate. They are using the word love in a rather tame way, to put it mildly. But if I say “God loves you”, I am conveying a huge truth with deep implications. The way we use a word, in its context, can convey a great deal.

But how can we know that the God who created the universe, who is eternal and glorious and awesome, loves us, who are sinful and guilty in His sight? Read on.

There are four Greek words for love. *Storgee* means family love – the love between father and mother, parents and children. *Eros* refers to sexual love and desire, hence the English word “erotic” which has come to mean something that evokes strong sexual desires. Neither of these words occurs in the New Testament, though they do occur in the Old Testament.

There are two types of love referred to in the New Testament. The first is the verb *phile-oo* which could best be described as “friend-love”. The Greek word for a friend is *philos*. This word is often combined with another noun to create a compound word such as *philadelphia* – love for brothers. There are 15 such compounds in the New Testament. It is the word generally used for a wide variety of different human loves and attachments.

But the supreme and greatest form of love is the love that only God has. It is *agape*-love. It is the love with which God loves us supremely.

The verb occurs 143 times and the noun 116 times in the New Testament. The apostle John is especially fond of this word – he uses either the noun or the verb over 90 times in his writings. No wonder he is sometimes called the apostle of love.

Agape is a self-sacrificing love. And we see this love most clearly of all in the Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down His life for us. John MacArthur says “the death of Christ was the purest act of love ever carried out.”

John 15:13 “Greater agape has no man than this that he *lays down his life* for his friends.”

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates his agape for us that while we were still sinners Christ *died for us*.”

Galatians 2:20 “The Son of God loved me and *gave Himself for me*.”

Ephesians 2:3-5 “We were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great agape with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.”

Ephesians 5:2 “Christ loved us and *gave Himself up for us*.”

1 John 4:9-10 “In this the agape of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is agape, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be *the propitiation (wrath-absorbing sacrifice) for our sins*.”

1 John 3:16 “By this we know agape—that *He laid down*

His life for us.”

The death of Christ on the cross is the greatest demonstration of love there has ever been or will ever be. And God always loves us with the intensity of the love shown at Calvary, where Jesus died. It is a wonderful thing to know that you are loved by God in this way, totally and unconditionally.

To think that the Son of God loved me so much that he took all of my sin and all of God’s wrath onto Himself and was separated from His Father, crying “My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?” should evoke in us a sense of awe and amazement.

To quote two songs:

“I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene; and wonder how He could love me, a sinner, condemned, unclean”.

“Amazing love, O what sacrifice, the Son of God given for me.”

As we move into Easter, let us meditate on the agape of God for us and stand amazed that Jesus loved us so much that He laid down His life for us.

God Delights in us

- Louis Giglio

The more we delight in God, the more we discover that He delights in us. While God is fully content in and of Himself, and while He doesn’t need anything, He chooses to lavish us with His love and to rejoice over us.

That’s what Zephaniah 3:17 says: ‘The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in His love He will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.’

God takes great delight in you. And just in case you are ever tempted to listen to the sound of the world and be pulled back into fear, God says that He rejoices over you with **singing**. **His voice** is all you need. His delight is your life. His love is your victory.

Encouragement for Seniors

A Personal Anecdote*

- Gill Young

Did you know that there is a small island in our brain for the purpose of encouraging us when we’re old? When we were very small there were a few young penguins living on this island. As time went on and the years passed, so the penguin colony increased. By the time we reached our twilight years the island became overpopulated and the occasional penguin fell off, causing a memory lapse.

Do not despair—as the penguin swims around for a while, he finds a space and hops back on. Hence when you can’t remember something, be sure to say, ‘there goes another penguin...’

Take heart—he’ll jump back on again.

* If you have an amusing anecdote that you would like to share, please submit it to the Editor (address on p8)

South African Sign Language

– June Bothma

My story begins in 1991 when I was looking for a church. Christ Church Kenilworth was the third church I visited with a friend who came with me to help interpret the service. We sat in the middle row and Duncan McLea was preaching and my friend interpreted. At the end of the service, Duncan was waiting at the front door to greet everyone as they left, and when he saw us, he asked, moving his hands as if signing, “What is this?” I explained to him that I was Deaf and that my friend was interpreting his service in sign language. I received such a warm response from Duncan: he said to me, “Welcome! Please teach us how to accommodate you.” I was surprised as I hadn't received that kind of response from the other churches that I had visited. So from then the Deaf always sat in the front row and we organised volunteers to point at the words on the screen. In 1992, I started teaching church members South African Sign Language (SASL) after hours. When I was little I always wanted to be a teacher. When I finished Matric, I wanted to study teaching, but in the 1980s, Deaf people were not allowed to be teachers. I got a lot of “No’s” and was very disappointed. I studied pattern-making and clothing design instead and worked in the clothing industry for 28 years. So, during the day, I would work at the clothing factory, and some week nights and Saturday mornings, I taught Sign Language at the church.

In the beginning, the Deaf attendees relied on my friend to interpret every service. As more and more people at CCK learned Sign Language, the opportunity for more interpreters opened up. Di Hewitson, Cathy Miller, Jean Knaggs, and Di Meillon were keen to interpret for the services and took turns each week. I felt so included because I could have conversations with people at church in Sign Language.

Some of my work colleagues from the clothing factory came to my evening classes to learn Sign Language, and they said they could see I was a different person when teaching. They said I should teach full-time, but I laughed it off.

Over the years, I started teaching people from other churches, and then opened the classes to the general public. At that time, the Sign Language book that I made was just a list of words! Then I used photocopies of the American Sign Language (ASL) sketches and manually edited the hands and fingers to make it correctly SASL. I rearranged and edited the book many times over the years.

In 2009, I stopped teaching for two years as I had my youngest son, Jonathan and resumed in 2011 at CCK. It was a big year for me as I got an email from the University of Cape Town to say that they would like to meet me. So I went and found out that they wanted me to teach Sign Language to their 3rd-year Audiology and Speech Therapy students. I initially said I couldn't because I didn't have any qualifications to teach, but they assured me that my experience and passion were enough. The students responded very well to my lessons and so I have been teaching at UCT since then, once a week on a part-time basis.

In 2013, my daughter, Jessica and my husband, Chris started helping me to redesign my Sign Language book. Since then, we have gradually worked our way towards a completed book where all the pictures are

mine, and not taken from other sources. Today, I am excited that SASL is finally an official language, as it is a beautiful and visually expressive language. At CCK, there used to be



twelve Sign Language interpreters, but over the years they have naturally moved away as part of life, so we now have two left. My son, Jonathan (now 14 years old) sometimes helps to interpret. Both Guy and MJ have expressed their desire to support the Deaf community and rebuild our team of interpreters. My heart is at CCK and Jonathan loves being part of Ambies, so we would love to include the Deaf community here at this church.

I am grateful that CCK allowed me to discover my passion for teaching. If it wasn't for Duncan's warm invitation and request to teach, I wouldn't have taught for all these years. I love teaching and meeting new people and it's a wonderful part of my life.

South African SIGN LANGUAGE Free Introductory Talk

12th Official Language!

Everyone Welcome!

DATE: Saturday, 24 Feb '24

TIME: 10h00 - 12h00

VENUE: Callow House

(Christ Church)

3a Richmond Rd

Kenilworth, Cape Town

Please book your spot.

For more details about the Free Talk or SASL classes:

WhatsApp 083 448 1837, or email signlanguagebyjune@gmail.com.

Share this invite!

SASL Classes Information

- **VENUE:** Mornings: 'I love Coffee' Shop, Claremont. Evenings: DeafSA, Newlands. To be confirmed as it depends on class size. Directions will be provided.
 - **DURATION:** Beginners, Intermediate & Advanced Classes: 1½ hours **ONCE** a week for 13 weeks - R1 400. Classes are either twice or three times a week, depending on numbers.
 - **INFORMATION** about the courses will be shared at the Free Talk, and I will inform those who can't attend.
- ➔ **INTERESTED IN JOINING THE CLASSES?**
Contact me to be added to an info-only WhatsApp group.



BEGINNER Classes

Learn to communicate with the Deaf at a basic level.

- ➔ Starts first week of March -
- ♦ Tuesday evening - 6.30pm
 - ♦ Wednesday morning - 10am
 - ♦ Saturday morning - 10am
- You can choose to come **ONCE** a week.

INTERMEDIATE + ADVANCED Classes

Completed the Beginners/ Intermediate classes? Expand your vocabulary and hone your SASL knowledge and skills.

- ➔ WhatsApp me if you want to join, to discuss over the WhatsApp group chat.

The Privilege of Presenting at The Good Portion

— Debbie Longmore

[The Good Portion (TGP) is a deep and life-giving Bible Study that is conducted every Thursday evening, online, using Zoom. In 2024, the programme is devoted to the revelation of Jesus in the final book in the Bible: Revelation. Learning is by means of a 25-minute presentation followed by facilitated discussions in small groups. TGP provides opportunities for participants to grow even more by offering to prepare and deliver a presentation on a small portion of scripture. Debbie Longmore is one of more than thirty participants who have accepted that challenge over the last three years— and this is her story. Gerry Adlard.]

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and He will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6) These words from Proverbs have always been a source of encouragement for me and when I realized what I had committed to by accepting Gerry’s invitation to present at TGP Bible Study (having only joined TGP a few months earlier, I knew that it was only by trusting in the Lord that I would be able to do it.

All I could see ahead of me were the metaphorical crooked paths and I was deeply unsettled! I had no formal theological training, I had never used PowerPoint before; let alone prepare a full presentation! I feared I would get tongue-tied and sound nervous.

The doubts began to accumulate and the list of reasons why I was just not able to do this grew, but then the Lord reminded me it wasn’t about me and my ability, it was all about Him!

A change in mindset settled my nerves and the Holy Spirit reminded me about the online Theology Course I had done during the Covid pandemic—what a wonderful opportunity this would be to share some of what I had learnt through that course. He also brought to mind my daughter’s computer skills—she could show me how to use PowerPoint and prepare a presentation.

As for my nervousness, the prayers of the saints continue to be a source of strength! With that, my journey of presenting for TGP began and it has been the most incredible experience—challenging, humbling and deeply spiritually and mentally gratifying as the Lord has walked this path with me.

For me, TGP is so much more than a weekly online Bible Study. It is a community of like-minded people who learn from, support, pray for, inspire, encourage, motivate and challenge one another to be salt and light in a world that desperately needs it.

I have gained more than I could ever have imagined by being a part of TGP. I will be forever grateful to Gerry Adlard for his nudge to present and John Hewitson for his gracious guidance and direction when reviewing my presentations.



All praise and glory to the Lord who we most definitely can trust with all our heart. He will never leave or forsake us and if we allow Him He will equip us and take us to the most unimaginable places as we journey with Him by our side!

Newcomers are always welcome in TGP. Here is the link to The Good Portion website and resources:
<https://jphevitson.wixsite.com/tgportion>.

The I Don't Know Prayer

Did you know there’s a prayer called, ‘I don’t know’? It’s very spiritual. You just go off somewhere quiet and hidden and you walk right up to the heart of God and you say, ‘I don’t know’.

I don’t know where to go from here.

I don’t know what is happening.

I don’t know how to process this.

I don’t know what to do with these emotions.

I don’t know how to handle this situation.

It covers a lot of I don’t knows.

Then with whatever dusty little sand grain of faith you have, you say, ‘But You know’...

The Singer
A Play
creatively retelling
the Easter Story

Based on the allegorical poem
by Calvin Miller
Directed by Lauren Bates

Easter Weekend
Saturday 30th March 12pm and 3pm
Monday 1 April 12pm and 3pm

The Children's Library
Jim se Bos Philippi

Donations at the door towards
The Children's Library

The song of life is a song of love

Directions to Venue
For info and to book
WhatsApp
Lauren Bates
0793453673

Introducing CCK'S Families Pastor Rachel Fourie

I'm so grateful for the influences I have had throughout my life. Looking back, the Lord has been so faithful to me in this regard and I realize how important it is to have the voices of wise and loving people in your life!

My mom is one of those people—she is a faithful and Godly woman—and I remember asking Jesus into my heart at a young age with her one night before bed. Of course every person has to ask the harder questions at some point and so during my high school years I went through this process and found once again the love of Jesus too hard to resist.

After I finished my degree in History, Philosophy and English at Stellenbosch University, I took a year off to do some work in Malawi and Zimbabwe. I worked on a farm and children's village with some incredible people and learnt so much. It was then that I came across LIV* Village Lanseria, an incredible community project just outside of Johannesburg. Working in the informal settlements in and around Joburg was one of the most humbling experiences I have had. My love for South Africa and desire to be part of the solution was fueled during this time and I knew God had me here for a purpose. It was during this time that I married my amazing husband, Dylan, in 2020. Another two years later and we would welcome our beautiful son, Samuel Michael Fourie. Fairly



new to Cape Town, we came across CCK just before Sam was born. As I walked through the doors for the first time, I found CCK so refreshing—so much life, joy and a tangible desire to seek God—we felt this was where we wanted to be.

I could never have scripted coming on to staff and having the opportunity to work alongside such an incredible team. I have so much to learn and am excited to serve at CCK this year. The Lord is doing a great work here and what a privilege to be part of it in some small way!

*LIV—Lungisisa Indlela Village, meaning 'The Right Way'.

Introducing CCK'S Children's Pastor Ashley Gradidge

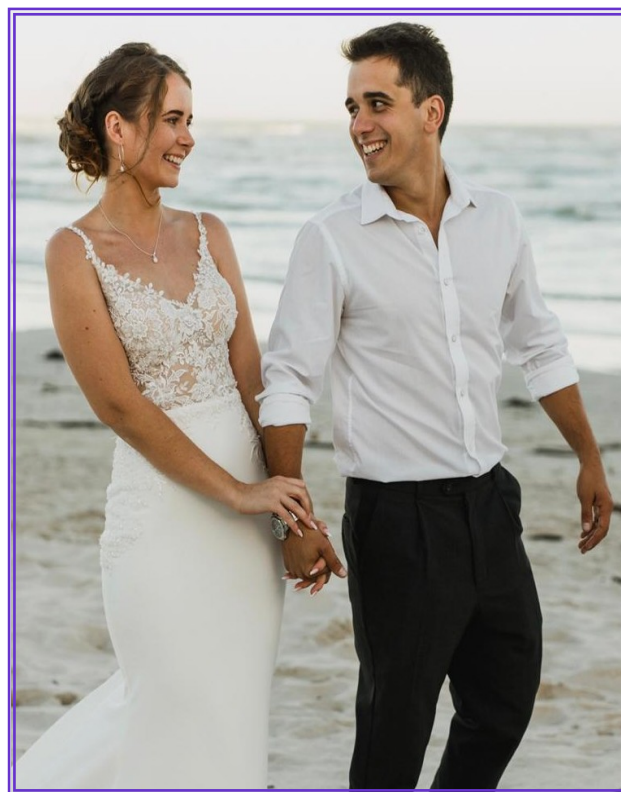
Ashley was born in Knysna and lived in Sedgefield with her dad, stepmom, brother and stepbrothers. In late primary school she moved to live in Cape Town with her mom.

Her parents and grandparents were very influential in her spiritual growth. While she grew up in a Christian home and her grandparents were pastors, it didn't mean that she was a Christian. But while on a youth camp in Grade 11 she came to know Christ personally.

After matriculating from Reddam, Constantia, she decided not to pursue Architecture as previously planned, but went into an apprenticeship at Tokai Community Church for two years. In 2020 she started her degree at George Whitefield College and was an intern, working in children's ministry at Common Ground Church throughout her three years of study. While it hasn't always been easy, she feels God has definitely grown her throughout the years. She is learning to trust in knowing that what God has in store for her is way better than what she could plan. In 2017, Ashley met Luke and they got married in 2022.

Ashley heard about the Children's Pastor position at CCK through Mike Hampton, under whose leadership she worked at Common Ground. She has felt very welcomed

and has felt like she has "clicked" with the people and community of CCK. Joining CCK has, of course, been a bit of a culture shock, but Ashley is adjusting to the differences and change of pace. She is really excited to see how God is going to grow her in her new position, and how He will lead her to grow the children's ministry space at CCK.



Grief and Grace

Facing the Future I Didn't Choose

- Theresa Keay

Tim's story is one of a universal struggle and is echoed in George Matheson's hymn, *O Love that will not let me go*. These words are one of my favourite quotes and I always find hope and comfort in them. They are beautiful and resonate with authenticity. Tim quotes them in an appropriate chapter during the process of working through his grief. I quote them here perhaps simply because the words are echoed in everyone's struggle with loss:

"O joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be."

Tim loses his wife tragically and is left to raise his three young children in his new situation. Creativity is one method he employs with both his own grief and the grief his children go through. Their new normal can never be normal—so much has been lost and is different—so he uses the term 'new (ab)normal'.

The first few chapters describe in wretched detail the events leading up to Laura's death culminating in the withdrawal of life-support. The details are draining and can be off-putting. In chapter 4 Tim refers to the detailed initial chapters and, with no apology, gives his reasons for including them. I am not convinced that I agree with the reasons—I nearly abandoned the book in chapter 2 as I thought it a display of one individual's confrontation with death and not very helpful to the reader. Perhaps I am mistaken here as when I discussed this point with a friend she said that a grieving person benefits from reading exact details of another's loss.

The following chapters are more interesting. I have mentioned the creative aspect of Tim's journey. The text includes a vast number of quotes from his journal. He extends this to his children and purchases a journal for each of them, encouraging them to express their emotions and thoughts, perhaps drawing pictures, anything that strikes them as they come to terms with the loss of their mother. Sometimes Tim will write things in their journals to encourage, support or affirm them.

Tim's main focus is on survival. God is his companion through this. In his journal he writes: "*I hear him cry, his screams at death, his anger at sin, his tears mingled with mine.*" (page 127)

The battle is not a silent one for Tim and he cannot identify with C.S. Lewis's account in his book *A Grief Observed*. This contrast in dealing with grief shows clearly that there are many paths through grief and that no one path is 'better' than any other. There are as many paths as there are grieving individuals.

I enjoy the frequent quotes from literature and Tim's poetry interspersed through the narrative. Many quotes I recognize and am glad to remember them again.

Grief and Grace is as much about Laura's life as her death. Tim describes her as an amazing lady; she is after all his beloved. But even though this is the case I think the reader can replace her portrait with that of their own spouse, or substitute whatever element the reader has lost and is in the process of grieving.

Tim and his wife Laura did important work in Observatory, Cape Town where Tim worked for *The Message Trust*. The proceeds from *Grief and Grace* go toward *The Laura Tucker Legacy Trust* which supports children who are unable to follow their dreams of pursuing education. Tim and his three children personally decide which young child will benefit from this Trust.

Dave Meldrum, an ordained Anglican priest, was the rector of a church in Cape Town from 2010 to 2022. He is now devoting his time to writing. Dave has formulated questions which appear at the end of each chapter in *Grief and Grace*, meant to take the reader further, in groups or alone, as they work through difficult areas of loss in their lives. I recommend using the book as study material in groups where participants are working through grief. Dave Meldrum's input and questions provide an easy structure for such a group.

Dancing with God

- Source unknown

When I meditated on the word, **Guidance**,
I kept seeing **dance** at the end of the word.

I remember reading that doing God's will
is a lot like dancing.

When two people try to lead, nothing feels right.

The movement doesn't flow with the music,
And everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky.

When one person realises that and lets the other lead,
Both bodies begin to flow with the music.
One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back
Or by pressing lightly in one direction or another.
It's as if two become one body, moving beautifully.

The dance takes surrender, willingness and attentiveness
From one person and gentle guidance
and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word **GUIDANCE**.
When I saw **G** I thought of God,
Followed by **U** and **I**
God, You and I dance.

As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust
That I would get guidance about my life.
Once again, I became willing to let God lead.

My prayer for you today is that God's blessings
And mercies are upon you on this and every day.
May you abide in God as God abides in you.

Dance together with God, trusting God to lead
And to guide you through each season of your life.

And I Hope You Dance

False Bay Crossing Swim

—Cris Dillon—with daughter Anna before the race

At 5.30am on Thursday 8th February 2024, I met my friend Justin Hardcastle at Millers Point to prepare to swim non-stop and in speedos across False Bay to Rooi-Els, a crossing of approximately 33 km, successfully made by only 18 people.

Justin had been training longer than I had but after two long training swims, I believed I was ready for the challenge, especially as the weather forecast was ideal. We put on large amounts of sunscreen to protect from the sunny day ahead and Vaseline to protect against chafing, and waved farewell to our family and friends at 6am, as we swam off under the watchful eyes of our support boats from Derrick Frazier's Big Bay Events. Derrick had a 100% success rate in aiding 15 swimmers make the crossing, and we knew we were in the best possible hands. Joining us was a Croatian swimmer, Dina, who was attempting the challenge after a worldwide series of big swims known as Oceans Seven. I swam to what I thought was halfway (16.5 km) in 6h13min, feeling a stronger than expected head current, and stopping every 30 minutes to feed on carbohydrate drinks and the odd banana, being careful not to touch the boat as per the rules. I was by then a little behind my target finish time of 11 hours but was not too perturbed.

However, at about 1pm, the wind started to pick up in a south-easterly direction and the sea quickly turned into a washing machine. Justin and Dina were now well ahead of me, and I was a bit worried about swimming the rest of the way in such hostile conditions. I asked my support crew what they thought, but they were struggling to keep the small boat on course. I put my head down and swam at a steady pace, despite being pushed back by the sea, wind and currents. When I made it to 33 km, the sun was beginning to set but I could finally see Rooi-Els in the distance and thought it would not be far now. However, I was absolutely gutted when the skipper on my boat said I still had 8 km to make it to shore. Justin had by then completed his swim (of 36 km) in 12 hours, and Dina just ahead of him. For the first time I was worried about finishing, but I prayed for calm seas and dug deep.

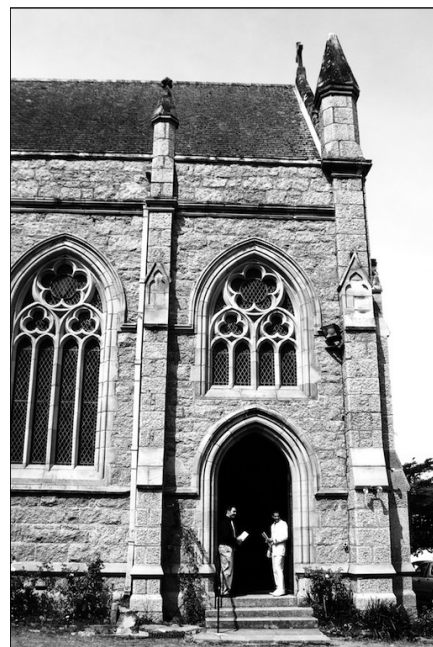
It started to become dark and very rough, and I began to worry about whether I would be allowed to finish, and about my wife, Emma, waiting for me on Rooi-Els beach. With about five km to go, Derrick himself took over in his bigger boat, to guide me on the final stretch. He had a night light and told me to just swim from feed to feed. He refused to tell me how far I still had to go. Derrick has done lots of guiding of night swims, especially the English Channel crossing, and I felt safe with him. He called my wife and friends on the beach with instructions to light up the beach so that he could line up with the slipway at Rooi-Els and guide me through the kelp and rocks.



On the beach, Emma and the others had nothing other than cars to provide lights, but the slipway entrance boom was closed and locked. A local resident arrived, saying that he felt God telling him to come down to the beach, and asked what was happening. When told, he immediately located the key-holder for the locked boom, and by 9pm they were able to line up their cars with engines running and lights shining, for us to head towards.

At 9:45pm, I was feeling ok and making steady progress. I could not see my watch but Derrick said we had only 1 km to go. By then, I was surrounded by the most beautiful bioluminescence. When I got to about 200m the boat could not go any further but four of my swimming friends, who had been on the beach with my wife for five hours, swam out to me. They weren't allowed to touch me but seeing their friendly faces in the dark was heartwarming. I staggered up a very slippery slipway and onto the sand to hug Emma and my friends, feeling extremely blessed by God to have finished the swim in 16h15min and 41 km - nearly a whole marathon. The supporters' WhatsApp group of over 200 people from all over the world (including CCK members) had been on tenterhooks for news of my safe arrival, sending prayers and encouragement.

It now blew up in celebration! What an amazing journey! Other than a bit of chafe and sunburn, Justin and I were in good health and very happy.



St John's
Wynberg
is 190 yrs
old this year
and is
launching a
Heritage
Appeal to
prepare for its
200th
Birthday
[More in April]

Surprised by Hope : NT Wright

– Kim Fowler

I have now read two books by John Mark Comer (*Garden City* and *Loveology*) in which he recommended the book *Surprised by Hope* by NT Wright. In the notes at the back of *Loveology*, he says, “Please, please, PLEASE go read NT Wright’s *Surprised by Hope*. It wrecked my life years ago, in the best way.” I was intrigued.

I grew up in a Christian family (thank you, Dad and Mom) and don’t remember a time before going to church and learning about Jesus. But if you had asked me to tell you, in detail, about what happens after I die, I would not have been able to give you an accurate or confident answer. In fact, I would have mumbled something vague about “going to heaven” or “going to be with Jesus”. In his book, Tom Wright (that confused me as I thought his name would have started with an N!) works through the various myths, philosophies and ways of thinking through the different cultures of the ages, that brought us to our various understandings of what happens to Christians beyond death. And so many of them are not based on what the bible says. The work is rather dry and sometimes academic, and I found it quite hard to read at times, not least because I seldom read more than a few pages at each sitting (such is the stage of life I am in!). I found it difficult to get stuck into, but that is possibly not the author’s fault! I doggedly stayed my course and read the whole book, although by the time I handed it back to the Resource Centre it was shamefully overdue. (My apologies to Theresa and any readers who may have been waiting to borrow it!)

The title is absolutely correct—and I too was surprised by hope. It turns out that what I vaguely thought would happen to me and my loved ones pales in comparison with what God actually has in store for us. And to be more confident of what the bible says about “paradise” and the New Earth has been so encouraging and affirming for me in my faith. It changes the way we interact with people, the way we approach work, service, the environment, and most of all, the way we approach God. We are not just hanging around in this world until God “takes us to our real home”. The way we live now has meaning and purpose—eternal purpose! So even if, like me, you find this more of a wade than an easy read, I would really urge you to read this book. It might change both your life on earth now, and in the future.

Here is a link to a useful introductory video, presented by the Bible Project:

<https://youtu.be/Zy2AQIK6C5k?si=76ahTzgx2vnLMYWP>.

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Anzio Olivari

– Janet de Jager

Congratulations to Anzio Olivari who joined the Cellars-Hohenort Hotel on the 27th March 2023 and last week was awarded **Employee of the Year!**

Cellars-Hohenort Hotel employed Anzio after he had completed a 2-year programme through U-turn.

Anzio prays every day for God’s strength, guidance and encouragement. He says, “At times it has not been easy, but you need to have faith and keep pushing yourself.” He wants to give special thanks to his mother Elizabeth Olivari, for always being there for him, and to his friends and family.

Pictured below: Naco Rautenbach (assistant GM), Anzio and Tanya Johnson (GM)



HAPPY
SPECIAL [DECADE]
BIRTHDAYS
MARCH 2024

3rd Barbie LeCrocq
5th Di Stuart Findlay—94
6th Dawn Jager
7th Fiona Angus
8th Ann Margaret Geerdts
14th Pamela Harker
20th Yvonne Gsell—90
25th Thomas Fehrsen
26th Marais Coetzee

‘Now may the Lord direct your hearts
into the love of God and
into the patience of Christ.’
– 2 Thessalonians 3:5

Jean Westwood's 70th Birthday

On Saturday 3 February, 135+ people (40 family members) met in CCK to celebrate a very special friend, mother, grandmother, aunt, sister, musician, cook and baker *par excellence*. She has cared and shared her life and her substantial skills and quirky sense of humour with so many of us over decades of discipleship, walking with Jesus and alongside others.

Tony W wrote a song set to the music of *What a Friend we have in Jesus*. Jean joined the members of Vox, a wonderful a capella group who entertained us with their beautiful voices.

We ate lots of scrumptious sweet/savoury offerings and enjoyed the company of other special friends. We were richly blessed.

Thank you, Jean for contributing so much to our lives and CCK.



Millers Galore

Quentin Miller (second left) sent in two photographs—this one with his siblings: Jamie, Charlie, Anne and Don. Quentin is an architect, Anne is a teacher, and the other three are doctors. Anne lives in Howick with her teacher husband, Don lives in England. He and Jamie are anaesthetists and Charlie is a GP and live in CT. The second photograph showed all Q's siblings and several of their cousins (17), all of whom were in Cape Town a few weeks ago.



Banksy's Observation

“How strange that the grass is all that remains standing after the storm,” said the Boy.

“Sometimes being soft is strong,” said the Rabbit.



Asbury Revival

8/2/23-24/2/23

– Sarah Breuel is the executive director of Revive Europe and serves on the board of directors of the Lausanne Movement.

We often only realize that we are living through historic events by looking back on them. Consider the Moravians. In 1727, this group of Christians fleeing persecution in the modern-day Czech Republic began a 24-7 prayer vigil. They couldn't foresee that their non-stop prayer session would ultimately last for 100 years and launch a global missions movement.

Or take the example of John Wesley and George Whitefield. In 1738, in a New Year's prayer meeting, where the men and others were gathered, at "about three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy" later wrote Wesley in his diary. The preachers likely had little idea that in the ensuing months, they would start travelling across the UK teaching the word of God, a campaign that would mark the beginning of the Wesleyan revival and the First Great Awakening in the US.

Church history has taught us to never underestimate the long-term impact when God's tangible presence comes upon a group of people; this understanding has led me to closely track the aftermath of the 2023 outpouring at Asbury University.

For those who need a refresher: One year ago this week, as a seemingly ordinary Wednesday morning chapel ended, 18 or 19 students lingered to worship and pray. Though the school in rural Kentucky has a history of revivals, few likely believed that this meeting would continue for the following 16 days, drawing over 60,000 people, including students from 300 university campuses and Christians from almost every continent.

While we have yet to see a global revival since Asbury's concluded, there is more going on than our eyes can see. I believe that we have entered a season of spiritual preparation. I've observed parallels between this event and a biblical preacher who also hailed from the countryside and who also drew a crowd: John the Baptist.

Prophesied by Isaiah as "the voice of one calling in the wilderness" (John 1:23; Is 40:3), John called the people to repentance and consecration. He was the embodiment of answered prayer and devoted his ministry to proclaiming that something greater would soon be following him. Seeing evidence of these elements all around the world provokes me to wonder what next global move Asbury might have heralded.

A call to repentance and consecration

From the wilderness, John the Baptist earned his nickname by "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4). Crowds followed him into the desert to confess their sins, get baptized, and reconcile themselves to God.

In a similar way, crowds entering Hughes Auditorium were confronted with the state of their own hearts. Here is how David Thomas, who was in the core leadership team stewarding the outpouring, described it to me in an email interview:

'For the first few days of the Outpouring, it seemed that repentance and forgiveness were almost all we could do. All over the room, people were making their way to another, tumbling over one another to make the first move of offering apologies, owning mistakes, forgiving grievances, and explaining misunderstandings. The front steps of Hughes were populated by people on their phones sending texts of reconciliation and restoration.'

Thomas's remarks were echoed by one of the transatlantic

visitors. Al Gordon, a London pastor, reported feeling a weight in the air even in the parking lot. 'I was met with an overwhelming sense that I have to get right with Jesus,' he recounted. 'Before I stepped into the chapel, I was crying out in repentance, confessing my pride, humbling myself before God.' Asbury students led the way in modelling this wave of repentance. From the stage, hundreds shared their testimonies. Their stories would vary from simple things like, 'I sensed Jesus inviting me to text a friend asking forgiveness for something in our relationship that was not quite right,' to dramatic transformations such as, 'Three days ago I renounced witchcraft and gave my life to Jesus.'

Student leaders would also not allow anyone to lead worship who was not 'authentically right with Jesus,' said Thomas. Instead of offering them and the guest speakers who came a standard green room, they created a 'consecration room' where they were asked to receive prayer and ask for God's forgiveness for any sins, prior to sharing anything from the platform.

A call to prayer

John the Baptist was born out of prayer, specifically those of his elderly parents. When the angel appeared to his father, Zechariah, his first words were, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard' (Luke 1:13). In the same way, there was an unwavering conviction among the Asbury leadership that 'everything that happened in Hughes Auditorium those 16 days was the fruit of prayer,' said Thomas. When people entered the space in small-town Kentucky from other cities or continents, he would thank them for coming. But they would correct him. 'Don't thank me. I *had* to come. I had to get here and put my eyes on what I have been praying for all these years!'

'People from all over had been praying, and this story was theirs,' Thomas shared.

The prayer temperature globally has increased significantly this last year. The Asbury outpouring 'released fresh hunger and fresh hope' in the life of Pete Greig, the founder of 24-7 Prayer, as well as among the ministry itself, which has 25,000 prayer rooms in 78 nations. 'There's a rise in prayer,' Grieg said. 'There's a deeper expectancy.'

In New York City, Church of the City is organizing prayer events every morning, afternoon, and evening, Monday through Friday. Its pastor, Jon Tyson, visited the outpouring himself and was deeply impacted by it. 'It was extraordinary,' he said. 'Having studied revivals extensively, I witnessed what I only had read about.'

This hunger for awakening has also been felt across the ocean. Three London churches have organized all-night prayer evenings held every other month, where around 1,000 students and young adults have shown up and called out to God for revival. The atmosphere is so dense with the presence of God, 'you could light the air with a match,' said Al Gordon, one of their pastors. Another pastor, Pete Hughes, remarked, 'And we've committed to keep going until we see an awakening in our city.'

A similar longing is seen on other continents. 'Here in Australia, Asbury has caught many people's attention,' said Mark Sayers, a writer and the pastor of Red Church in Melbourne. As a response to Asbury, the congregation opened a prayer room. After several months, one evening 'the room filled with the most tangible sense of God's presence,' he said. 'No one wanted to leave. Quiet, peaceful, unlike anything I have experienced in a prayer meeting or service. That moment radically changed [P12]

Intercessory Prayers 4/2/2024

- Jessica McCarter

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews says this:

*You, Master, started it all;
laid earth's foundations; then crafted the stars in
far flung constellations in the sky;
You count and name those stars and
Your sky jewellery is on tour in the heavens.
You are a mountain maker, a hill shaper;
You wake up the world each morning and put it to bed
each night turning night into dawn and dusk into
darkness; You ride on the wings of the wind...*
We pause now with the writer of Psalm 2
to worship You in adoring embrace.

As we come before You this morning, our own Abba Father through Jesus Christ, and yet also find that You are a Friend of *field mice*, help us to answer the question You ask: "What do You want, name it and ask for it." (Psalm 2)

1. CHURCH

And so, we name Your **church** before You today, bringing to You all the aspects of life and leadership at CCK. But today most especially, we thank You for all the caring, the expressions of *fileo* and *agape* loves at CCK. This very coming Thursday, a 4-week course in managing depression will start; at the end of each 8am service, there are pray-ers on hand to help and care for anyone in need; special meals are shared with newcomers and families of newborns; WOTS reaches out to women and men on the street; a pastoral care team meets monthly to care in different ways for those unable to come to church; and a SOZO group offers special healing prayer for those in deep need.

Paul writes to the church at Rome: 'Love from the centre of who you are; don't fake it. Be good friends who love deeply; practise playing second fiddle.' (Romans 12:9-10, MSG.)

2. WORLD

Our Father, it's difficult indeed to know how to pray for Your hurting world.

You **SPOKE** it into being and it is damaged in so many ways; we trust in Your extravagant and immense love to *rebuild the wreckage* (Isaiah 60) and *to fill the empty spaces* (Ezekiel 35-38).

In Genesis, we are told to '*care for our earth*'. Help us, even if only in tiny ways, to make little differences towards restoring **Your creation**.

And what of the wreckage in the **holy land of three faiths**: Islam, Judaism and Christianity?

We pray,
Christ, have mercy. Jesus, walk amongst Your people in the great divide happening right now.
May Peace fall upon the heads of each person in that land. We cling to the tiny signs of a way forward.
'O God, bear them as Your burden; give the commands and act FOR them in Your God like power' (Ps 68) Amen.
Amen—Make it so, LORD.

Asbury (ctd) a number of people who were there and significantly deepened our church's spiritual life.'

Pointing to something bigger yet to come

John the Baptist was always clear that his role was to point to the one coming after him: 'He must become greater; I must become less' (John 3:30). He was also keenly aware that his ministry was a preparation for a movement that would follow. In the same way, Asbury kept Jesus at the forefront with a countercultural message of 'no celebrity except Jesus.' Asbury leadership hopes that their experience will one day be part of a plethora of chapters about how many met God. 'We look forward to a day soon when there will be another outpouring story that will eclipse this one at Asbury,' said Thomas. 'I hope that story will come from where you are—your city, your campus, your church and family, your own life.'

From Asbury to the world

The crowds who visited John the Baptist in the wilderness foreshadowed multitudes listening to Jesus in Galilee and the church taking the gospel to the ends of the earth. Only a year has passed since Asbury, but already Christians across the globe, particularly university students, are hungry to learn from those central to Asbury's outpouring.

At the most recent Passion Conference, which drew 55,000 young people earlier this year, Louie Giglio shared openly about the impact of Asbury in his life, and the conference had various times of lingering in worship, with students spontaneously singing the chorus of 'Agnus Dei' *a cappella* for more than 15 minutes. After Zach Meerkreebs, the preacher at that first Wednesday Asbury chapel service, shared about the outpouring from the stage, students gathered in small groups asking God for an awakening on their own campuses.

A similar longing can be seen across the pond in Europe. At the most recent Revive Europe conference, which gathers about 3,000 university students from 87 nations across the continent, students spontaneously sang 'Agnus Dei' for 40 minutes.

The hunger in this generation is palpable. Jennie Allen, the founder of the IF:Gathering, who herself was deeply impacted by Asbury, says, 'I could weep right now for an hour about what God is doing in and with Gen Z.'

Allen goes on to share that she had been preaching at Auburn University on a Tuesday night some months ago. 'At the end, one girl wanted to be baptized. I said, 'Would anybody else like to be baptized?' We baptized over 200 students! It was crazy! We finally had to stop at midnight.'

No more business as usual

It is easier to recognize the beginnings of a movement of God when we are centuries removed. But what if we are in the midst of a new beginning? If God sends a global revival in our generation, surely you and I don't want to miss it?

This is not a time for business as usual. It is an invitation to wherever God placed us, to prepare the way for the King. It is a call for repentance and to get straight with God in our personal lives, our ministries, and our vocations. How are we preparing the way in the places where God has placed us? How are our university campuses, local churches, and mission organizations preparing the way? For those of us in the marketplace... what are we doing to be sensitive to a work of God?

'God is closer than we think and more ready to move than our faith would often allow for, wrote Gordon, the London pastor who attended the outpouring. 'The ceiling is thinner than our eyes can see, and at some point it's going to break open.'

One year has passed. And it is only just beginning. Will the global church be ready to make way for the King?