

Dear Family & Friends

December 2016

Prayer Letter 1



*Luke 2:10 Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.*



### Introduction ♥

Our last letter was our *final* letter to you as *full time* missionaries in South Africa. Today, we write to you as Unpaid/Voluntary Christian Workers based in the UK. However, having served for over a decade in South Africa, our hearts still long for the continent of Africa, and especially so for the advancement of the gospel there. We remain connected through local people who serve in South Africa, and through the SWYM Trustees, the SWYM Bible Correspondence Course and the SWYM Resource Books. In this, our **first** letter in our *first* months of our evolving phase, we send you Christmas & New Year Blessings.

### "New" Beginnings in Chippenham, UK ♥

We commenced organising our accommodation/flat. We needed to make it look and feel more like a home and less like a temporary "tent". As Christians, we know that this earthly dwelling place is not our permanent home and we must keep our eyes fixed above. We had established **transport** already, though at some point we will have to consider changing from a *manual* vehicle to an *automatic* vehicle to compensate for Sheila's foot splint and ease of driving.

We had to find *bookcases* for our many books, shipped back from South Africa. Being in a smaller flat, this remains a challenge to store and to successfully retrieve books and other resources. This is definitely a "work in progress".

We are also **adjusting** back into UK Church life, and it is a delight for us to *reconnect* with our brothers & sisters in Christ, at both Emmanuel and Ladyfield Church.

### Emmanuel Church Family ♥

We are truly thankful to the Missionary Committee and Ps. Spencer Shaw, who all gave us time and space to settle in, before formally meeting with us. By the time we met with Ps. Spencer in November some areas of work had begun to become clearer, and some other ministry needs were put forward for our consideration.

### Ladyfield Church Family ♥

Like Emmanuel, the Ladyfield Elders also gave us settling in time, before formally meeting with us. Our position as full time Unpaid/Voluntary Christian Workers was clarified. The meeting was altogether fruitful, with strong possibilities of working across the two churches mentioned. Nick & I could not have asked for more, and we were excited when Ps. Spencer Shaw supported this way forward, having wisely covered responsibility and accountability issues with us.

### SWYM South Africa

We are **helped** by the RSA SWYM Trustees, by way of prayer, practical help and news updates. The SWYM Bible Correspondence Course, administered by Anita, and the SWYM Resource Books promoted through African Pastors' Conferences, are on-going ministries.

We are praying that a *designated* Post Office Box will become available soon for use with the Correspondence Course Books. Do **pray** about this matter as it will help *Anita* enormously.

The SWYM Resource Books are being **distributed** through the African Pastors' Conferences, at cost of production only, and we are **thankful** to Ps Irving Steggles and Gayle Staegemann for their interest & assistance. With the sale of the SWYM Resource Books, more books can be printed for continued distribution.

We look forward to a **return visit to South Africa** to engage in short term ministry.

Pray for *wisdom* as we plan ministry in advance of travel, for about 3 months in 2017.

### New Areas of Ministry

Through **Emmanuel**, we obtained our Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to legally work within the Churches and in particular with Children & Young People. It was agreed that we will take the role of Deputy Child Protection Officers, and to set up some training in 2017, in conjunction with the other named Child Protection Officers, (couple) @ Emmanuel. In 2017, we will also join the Leadership Team to teach Sunday School, and also assist in the teaching programme for the Christianity Explored Course at Emmanuel.

At **Ladyfield** Church, Nick has launched "City Gates" a men's monthly, daytime meeting, with oversight from Elder, Douglas Shedden. It is envisaged that as this group gets established, it would move to being held, fortnightly. This will have a social element, but with definite Bible teaching included.

At **Ivyfield Court**, where we live, Nick has established a fortnightly Bible Study Group. **Colin** Spurway, a **Deacon** at Ladyfield, is part of the teaching duo. So far, we have studied the Book of Ruth, and we *are currently working through* the Book of James. We have a wonderful opportunity to be salt & light within our own complex.

I, Sheila, have spoken at two Ladies Groups, with plans to help in this way wherever needed. Nick is also open to Preaching Engagements, with some advanced bookings for 2017 already in place.

Our **Biblical Counselling** assignments are moving on, but at a slower pace, as in between work, we are spending time, or are catching up, with family & friends. Not unlike what we are doing right now in the company of family. Through **Emmanuel**, we are linked in to a local Biblical Counselling support group. The next meeting is scheduled for February 2017.

### Praise/Prayer items

#### Praise God for the following:

For Sheila's on-going recovery and improved walking abilities  
The warmth of welcome back into the UK, and settling in time with family & friends  
For clarity, as needed, to our changing ministry roles  
For on-going opportunities for Christian service



#### Pray for the following:

For godly wisdom as we plan a 3 months return trip to RSA, for ministry in 2017  
That Sheila & I will know the Lord's favour in our current developing ministries, and the proposed ministries for 2017 at Emmanuel and at Ladyfield  
The distribution of SWYM books in South Africa; Anita and the much needed P.O. Box



*With every blessing for Christmas and the New Year*

*Nick & Sheila*

*Be encouraged - God is at work*

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**NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS:** [www.swym2016.org](http://www.swym2016.org)

#### FINANCIAL DETAILS:-

UK - Lloyds TSB Bank, Chippenham Branch, Account Name: Step Wise Youth Ministry, Account Number: 03217242, Branch Code: 30-91-99