

GOING SOUTH

Supporting people in South Africa

EXCITING NEWS

We're on the move! As you know, I'm not one to do things by half. It therefore seems fitting that Josiah and I are moving, not just across the country, but overseas. We have made a big decision to leave you lovely people for a bunch of equally wonderful people at the southernmost tip of South Africa, initially for the next year, but hopefully for longer.

Life has been fun here in Brighton & Hove, enjoying the usual partying – sorry I meant studying – while at university, before going on to work on magazines and craft books – everything from 'Knitted dinosaurs' to the 'Japanese art of netsuke'. Don't ask. It's been lots of *fun but not, let's say, fulfilling.*



ANSWER TO PRAYERS

Africa has always held a special place in my heart. Some of you will know that way back yonder I lived in Uganda and Kenya for a year, working on a HIV/AIDS and malaria project. For a long time now I've been praying that God would give me other opportunities to use my writing/photography skills to help meet the needs of people less fortunate than myself.

As I prayed with friends, the country of South Africa kept coming up. "OK God, if this is the place you want us to go to, then we need a sign, a really big sign, to confirm it." Walking home that day, we noticed a huge picture of South Africa had gone up on the billboard outside our home. The slogan read; 'It is possible.' I could almost hear God saying, "*Big enough?!*"

YWAM I contacted various organizations in South Africa and soon received a very enthusiastic email from the Christian organization Youth With A Mission saying that they had been praying specifically for an editor or journalist who could teach and who had a heart for mission to join the team. The job fitted my skills and experiences ideally. *It's fantastic to see how God answers prayers and incredibly exciting to be part of his plan.*

PLANS So here we are, very excited and slightly apprehensive about moving. From October, we will be based in Muizenberg, a coastal town in close proximity to Cape Town and the local townships.

I will be working for **AfriCom**, a communications network set up across Africa to support the many YWAM projects working to provide health services, education, and jobs in areas stricken with poverty, ill health and an abysmal quality of life. I also will be involved with the HIV/AIDS prevention work in the townships where poverty and crime have led to high prevalence rates.

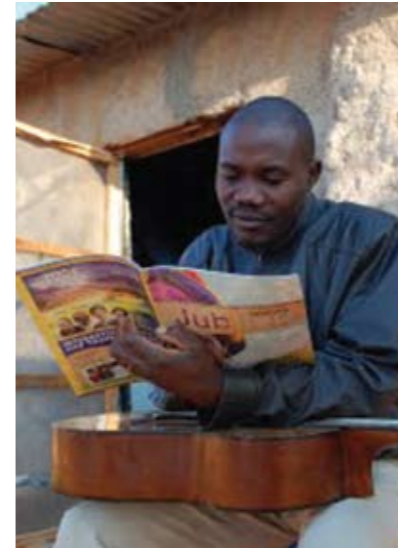


AFRICOM YWAM AfriCom **CONNECTS** those in mission with one another; **CHAMPIONS** what they are doing, inspiring more great work; and trains local people to **CHANGE** communication for the better.

CONNECT All too often missionaries feel isolated and overwhelmed by the work they are doing. Connecting them with one another, lets them know that they are **valued** and that they are part of a wider community. This **encourages them** to keep going, where previously they felt despondent and ready to give up and leave.

It also gives missionaries within YWAM and from other organizations the opportunity to connect and **share valuable knowledge**. This ensures that skills and resources are utilised **effectively**, so the work is shared rather than being duplicated unnecessarily.

CHAMPION AfriCom staff visit projects in far-flung areas of Africa to collect encouraging stories and testimonies, sharing them in publications, websites, brochures and videos. These publications are distributed across Africa (no mean feat) to champion the work done across the continent through the **power of God**.



Access to these publications via the internet also gives supporters from overseas the opportunity to see that their financial contributions are being **well-spent** and that their prayers are being **answered**, in addition to where more prayer and finances are needed.

CHANGE It's not enough to communicate on behalf of other people, we also need to train them to be better communicators. In local communities, **communication skills are vital** to spread the message of the gospel, to deliver important health messages and to ensure the sustainability of projects. It also ensures that local people, especially isolated groups, can communicate their real practical, financial and spiritual needs rather than relying on other's well-meant interpretations.

AfriCom does this by producing teaching materials and by running communication workshops in different locations across Africa.

SUPPORT Through these continued answers to prayers, I am confident that God wants us to go to South Africa. However, as the job is completely, yes **100% voluntary**, I have the daunting task of raising money to cover our flights, visas, passport renewals, rent, living expenses, food, medical insurance, school fees etc etc. Deep intake of breath needed.

I appreciate that money is tight for everyone at the moment, but without your support, we're not going anywhere. I have taken on additional freelance writing work, sold many of my belongings and have made large amounts of candles and natural beauty products to raise money, but this is simply not enough.

If you don't think we're mad and you can spare **just a tanner a month** – the cost of a couple of beers or cappuccinos, but with more enduring effects – or even more if you are feeling particularly **generous**, then please drop us a line.



PRAYERS

Although your support is much-needed, your prayers are equally valuable, if not more so. Here are just a few things that it would be great if you could keep in mind when talking to the one upstairs.

- The planning and organization prior to the trip. Please pray big time that those niggling worries and ever-growing to do lists will get done, as well as for bountiful energy reserves.
- I would love you to pray that Josiah would have peace about moving, that God would prepare a school and friends. I would very much appreciate your on-going prayers for him.
- Please pray that God would increase our love for the country and the people of South Africa. And that love will be the centre of everything we do.
- For financial support without which none of this is possible. That I will be able to explain to our non-Christian friends that living by faith is not as crazy as it first appears.
- Please also pray that God will continue to guide us over in South Africa, specifically in the search for accommodation, a car and a lively church. That we will fit in well and that our health will not suffer.
- Finally, that God would help me in the new job. That I will be up to the challenge.

We would love to keep in touch with you and hear all your news.

Ongoing communication is so important, especially for Josiah who is eager that his friends won't forget him. Sykpe is free and is great for speaking to people overseas; my skype name is beth.wicks. Should you want to drop us a message, my email address is beth.wicks@gmail.com Or find us on Facebook.