

Levendal Family News



March 2023



Hello from Jbay, South Africa...

This is our first update of 2023, it feels like this year is flying by already! We are in Autumn here, we are almost at the end of term 1 and heading into the Easter holidays. Thanks so much for being a part of what we do here, it's such a privilege we get to build the Kingdom together.

Iziko Church

This year began quite stop & start for church, with some of our regulars not coming as consistently as they were last year. It's not easy when we don't see the transformation, we hope to see in people lives. Working in a disadvantaged

community like Pellsrus, where there is so much hopelessness & despair, can take a toll, but we try to guard our hearts so we don't become disillusioned. We keep fixing our eyes on Jesus, because He is always worthy of the cost of pouring our lives out! We've pressed into God for strategy in how to move forward, as it has felt like we were a bit stuck, and we know God has more for us. We feel the next step is to move our Sunday gatherings into a hall (a more neutral/central place) that people can come to. The vision remains the same, it's still church planting and not mega church, and we believe gathering in our homes is still important, so we will continue to gather for worship and prayer at our home during the week. We plan to make this change after we come from our overseas trips (more about that later), so it gives us time to find the right place and prepare.

Jbay Surfhouse

We are excited to share about this new initiative that we are helping to get off the ground. Jimeal (in the left on the photo here) is the founder & Dillen (on the right is helping him). They are local boys, from Pellsrus community, and we have been walking a journey with them both for a while now. The programme teaches young people from the community how to surf. It has been Jimeal's



dream to start something like this for years. Somebody donated 14 brand new wetsuits and 14 surfboards at the start of the year, there has been so much incredible favour and provision over this initiative! They are using our garden to run it from, until they are able to get a more permanent spot of their own in the future. So 3 afternoons we have 3 different groups coming (2 boys & 1 girl), with over 30 young people (ages 8-18) in total. We are in supportive role, we give the guys advice, input and encouragement. We've helped with some of the admin/organisation of the practical logistics of the programme (but we don't get in the water).

We recently had an incident where our Monday & Wednesday boys group were chasing each other in the community (some with weapons). It's then we found out that they come from different areas in the community run by 2 warring gangs. Our Monday boys live in the "Scotlanders" territory & our Wednesday boys live in the "Rough clowns" territory. Sadly this is what they

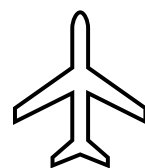
see and have modelled to them (the 2 gangs chasing one another with weapons regularly) so this is the behaviour they copy. Many have witnessed or been affected by horrendous acts of violence by the gangs. Just a few weeks ago one of the boy's cousins was killed in gang violence. There is much work to be done here, but we believe its times these cycles stop. We really God has connected us with these young people and we feel there are so many more ways we can impact their lives. This first term we focused mainly on building relationships with them and creating a safe space for them, as they really want belonging. Next term Fiona (who works with us) is going to start a homework club with as many of them struggle in school. We have always been talking about starting a youth group with them later in the year.



Family

We are visiting Ireland & England from May - June!

It's been 5 years since we last came over to the UK. Since then my family (Katie) have moved to Southern Ireland. Our flights are booked from Joburg to Dublin, we come mid-May. We are so



excited to reconnect with family and very much looking forward to building new relationships too! If it works out we plan to visit Northern Ireland also.

From the 7th-14th June we will visit England. We will be spending a week in Buxton, so if you want to see us please get in touch so we can try and make it happen! As a South African Vernel can get into Ireland without a visa but he must have one to visit the UK, so we are busy with that. We want get our domestic flights soon (our return tickets to Joburg). We have been checking prices for a while and they are stable at 600 pounds. If you want to donate something towards them, our bank details will be at the bottom. We are all so excited for this upcoming trip!

In other news...

Judah broke his arm skateboarding a few weeks ago. It is healing nicely, but he is struggling not being able to surf. It will be a relief for all of us when his cast comes off and he can get back in the water! Zach is quite content, he



played cricket this term and next term it will be rugby. He has a newly discovered passion for watching sport. Pretty much

any sport, but right now his favourite is basketball and supporting Arsenal with his dad. Flo is settled back into nursery school, and she is excitedly planning her birthday party as she turns 4 on the 1st April.



Below are a few pictures from our family holiday in December to Coffee Bay, in the rural Transkei...





That's all for now but thanks for reading. We look forward to hearing from you!

Lots of love

Vernel, Katie, Judah, Zach & Flo

If you want to make a donation towards our overseas trip or towards ministry here are our banking details:

Nationwide Building society

Katie Levendal

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Sort code: 07 01 16

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