

Hot off The Press

News from Peter and Kay Goodchild at
Emmanuel Press in South Africa

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Hello from a dazed director and his wonderful but wearied wife. No, it's not all negative but it has been a frantic and fraught month. This newsletter will be different and I'm asking you to let your imagination paint the pictures for you... come with us... and feel the "Phew!" It seems there have been few days when the unexpected did not happen; we are hanging in there and holding tight to the promises of heaven's "New Things".

We installed new electric meters in the residential flats but that revealed necessary wall repairs, then had to wait 9 days to replace a faulty meter. The water supply has been erratic and heating intermittent. The painter employed for two weeks had his stay extended as extra work and complications unfolded. Configuring new electric-gate remote controls proved challenging, but they're working at last. After one long day we fell into bed, with night-time temperatures well over 22 degrees, and were woken at 1.00am by the burglar alarm blasting and my phone ringing with a call from the armed security firm. They never arrived. Thankfully, neither did the burglars.

I learnt that our photocopiers needed to be replaced at big costs... but, after official visits and discussions, we managed to renew service contracts for another year at a fraction of the costs (phew). For reasons unconnected to EP we've had three tenants give notice of leaving, so if you'd like a place to stay we have 3 one-bed flats for rental. Any takers? That being said, recently we have agreed to let a spare room here for use by a Christian counsellor. I had to organise a repair to a veranda roof, but calamity struck with a young man being sent to hospital when a steel pole fell on his head. My aversion to fresh blood had to be forgotten. Repairs to our rusty perimeter fence were needed when we discovered a hole had been cut in the razor wire one night. The other Saturday I had to climb a long ladder, with Kay on the bottom rung, as our gardener hates heights. The gutters close to trees needed to be cleared of several years of debris; there were even small trees growing up there.

To contrast with sermon preparations, which have been full on, we spent many hours counselling a couple struggling in their relationship, then with

another couple over Sunday lunch pastoring them as they are so tired in church-leading responsibilities. Two couples came to see us, concerned about their church and what to do. I was asked to chat with a former friend of EP who wants to use our materials, which sound hopeful, and another good friend who is looking to get involved in taking our courses into schools. AMEN! A further pressure which crept upon us was the emotions around one of our tenants becoming ill over weeks, admitted to hospital and then sadly he died last week leaving his wife of 50yrs. We attended the small funeral, there was lots of family emotions, but slowly they are moving forwards. Generally our EP Team are a blessing and life flows well, but recently a little attention has been required to keep a younger one 'on course'. With patience, prayer and gentle guidelines I think we'll get there.

It's been a challenge sourcing translators for EP lessons, but slowly we are winning. I needed to organise printing of Tsonga hymn books, an EP exclusive, and eventually secured this at reasonable costs, though getting the 4000 of them to White River is another logistical challenge. It's exciting as developments continue with WIN (World in Need) in other countries, and keeping the EP Board members up to date is necessary of course.

We're keen to develop links with church leaders, so I am factoring in time for this; sometimes over a meal, or just a coffee. Follow-through can be disappointing with everyone's busyness pushing boundaries. Keeping healthy is a challenge but I'm married to a great and resourceful chef, so that helps. Growing friendships and relating with other friends often means visits. Recently, we were asked to arrive as near 4pm as possible. We closed the office and dashed off 3.45pm, driving 30mins to arrive at our destination at 4.15pm. It seems we still need to learn that, "this is Africa"; the hosts arrived at 5pm and then the guests trickled in... we eventually sat to eat after 7pm. Why hurry when you can take it easy?!

This past week we have seen big orders for hymn books; new Bibles purchased; tracts ordered, new courses signed up for; regular students bring in lessons for marking; our temporary painter excited about doing the Discipleship Course daily (in Zulu) and been supporting our dear cleaner whose grandchild died suddenly last Monday. Today I was asked to be the speaker at an "EP Course Graduation" 120 miles north connected with Kruger For Jesus. It will be another long Saturday engagement, but full of promise.

The weeks this year have tumbled from the unexpected and unplanned to disappointment, surprise and sheer exhausting. We are walking the walk of faith through it all. Thank you for your praying, your loving and your believing. When we feel alone by faith we know we're surrounded. If you're feeling exhausted now... Great! You'll know how to pray for us. Thank you again for standing with us. We are grateful for you helping us.

With our love and may God bless you,
Peter & Kay