

On the Road Again South Africa

April 2018

“Go where you’re sent, bloom where you’re planted”... is heavy on our mind!

After a hiccup in our mission due to health issues, we’re now back on track in South Africa. Last fall we took a three-month sabbatical. Gay was exhausted with chronic fatigue from six years of global mission, and insomnia.

By December, she was almost tip-top, sleeping better and well rested after a time of relaxation and rejuvenation.

December 4th, Ray woke in excruciating pain. He had been plagued with occasional bouts of back pain the last couple of years. But, nothing like this. It went from bad to worse, and we left South Africa heading to Canada for Christmas, with Ray in a wheelchair.

After ten days in bed with debilitating pain, we flew from Toronto to Seattle on Christmas day. Ray received immediate attention from fabulous health care professionals. January 8th back surgery gave immediate relief. He has been recovering well back in South Africa since February, and on mission!



“Happy Days are here again!”



Gay was delighted to have Beryl, special Canadian friend, visit South Africa in March.

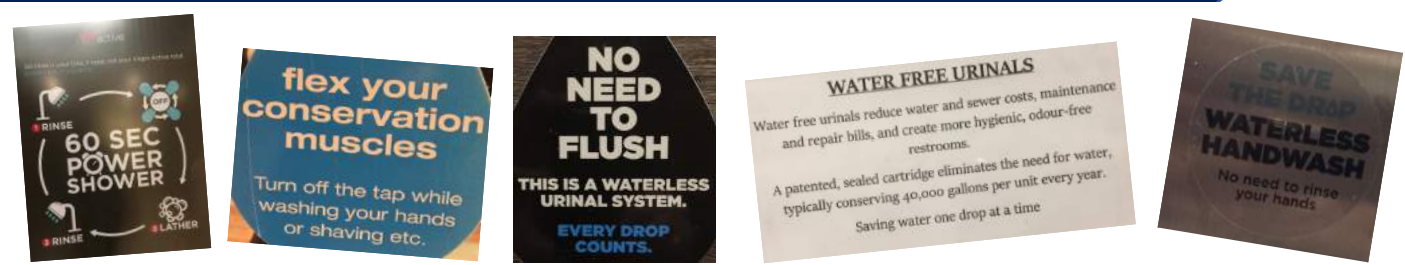
They couldn’t wait to head off in their chariot to explore the Klein Karoo, navigating mountain passes, soaking up the culture, visiting game reserves, olive estate, ostrich farm and exploring the amazing diversity of Cape Town and surrounding area.

Ray willingly offered his chauffer (DD) services for a spectacular day of breath taking scenery, warm hospitality and stellar tasting in the Stellenbosch wine region.

BRAYDEN, JOSEPH AND TIM, ARE FRIENDS FROM OUR HOME CHURCH IN SEATTLE, WHO CAME TO VISIT AFTER THEIR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MISSION TRIP IN LESOTHO. RAY ENJOYED GIVING THEM A FOUR-DAY TOUR OF CAPE TOWN HIGHLIGHTS.



Every Drop counts!



A three year draught led to a water crisis, where everyone in Cape Town is limited to 50 liters of water per day. While an extreme hardship for most, we are grateful for our proactive guesthouse landlord. He had a bore-hole drilled last year and has giant rain water storage tanks. He even began recycling grey water for use in the gardens and flushing toilets. Like most people, we purchase bottled drinking water. Our prayers continue for ending the draught, with an abundant rainy season in the Western Cape.

iam WATER WISE

CHECK, REPAIR/REPORT ALL POSSIBLE LEAKS OF TAPS & PIPES

DON'T TAKE LONG SHOWERS

DON'T KEEP WATER RUNNING WHILE BRUSHING TEETH & SHAVING

DON'T WASH DISHES UNDER RUNNING WATER

PATHWAY FOR LIFE AND BEYOND

PATHWAY FOR LIFE

We love to present “Pathway for Life” at the University of the Western Cape. Once again, students did not disappoint. They rose to the occasion in a unique forum with vulnerability & transparency, transforming relationships through communication skills.



Beryl presented a thought provoking talk and workshop on the importance of the choices in our lives, considering the positive and negative consequences and how those choices shape our lives.



BEYOND THE PATH

Graduates of “Pathway for Life” were invited to join “Beyond the Path”, the next level in their leadership journey. Students focused on public speaking and leadership skills, gaining practical experience by interviewing students and making class presentations.

Many from this dynamic group wish training to become “Pathway for Life” facilitators in order to empower youth in their home communities.



EXPANDING HORIZONS

We were thrilled to facilitate a leadership workshop with student representatives at Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute, partnered with Stellenbosch University. Students actively engaged as we focused on leadership skills that had them interacting with their peers. We were invited to return for ongoing student leadership training.



LIFE IN South Africa - Engaging the Culture

Thursday night is all you can eat at Village Sushi. We have a standing reservation! Urita welcomed us upon our very first experience and is a special reason we keep going back!



(A blurry photo because) ... we are dancing at a Passover celebration hosted by dear friends Brian and Minah!



It is always a joy for us to have students reach out for help and share their story. We were impressed with Sonwa's journey and goals to help others in his home community.



People come into your life for a reason, and the women you hold dear, are the ones who help shape your life. I love these Godly women and always look forward to spending time sharing together over lunch on "Terrific Tuesday's"



Last year we hosted Chris & Susie for a week of their amazing adventure, six ultra marathons on six continents! They loved their time here so much, they returned this year, giving a Western Cape tour to a group, including family and friends from Cincinnati. It is a joy to share life with them.



Seven years, our home in Noordhoek (Cape Town) South Africa is Ocean Golf Guesthouse. The view from our two-room apartment is stunning, but, the real reason for our return each year is our host John and his wife Hazel, who have become special friends.



Ray has enjoyed regular fellowship, prayer and Bible study with men from the church, as well as a group from many churches around the city, which meets weekly for breakfast.

It is called ROTOP, which stands for Round Tables of Prayer. It includes a 30 minute program, 30 minutes of prayers, and 30 minutes of spontaneous sharing. This has resulted in expanding friendships, ministry networking and mentoring.

We have a wonderful church family, called Common Ground, with nine locations. Ours is surrounded by vineyards and sits on the slope of a mountain. We worship in a large white tent, with great preaching and a growing congregation.



Our hearts resonate with others in Common Ground Church, and Common Good (a separate non-profit sponsored by the church). Their mission is to make a positive and lasting impact in the areas of Early Life, Education and Employment... so that, individuals and communities across Cape Town can build brighter futures for themselves.

We are inspired by the work of The Zanakonya Network, which executes the goal of providing job readiness training to the unemployed and unemployable in the city.

We can see opportunities to use much of what we have learned with “Pathway for Life” with new applications.

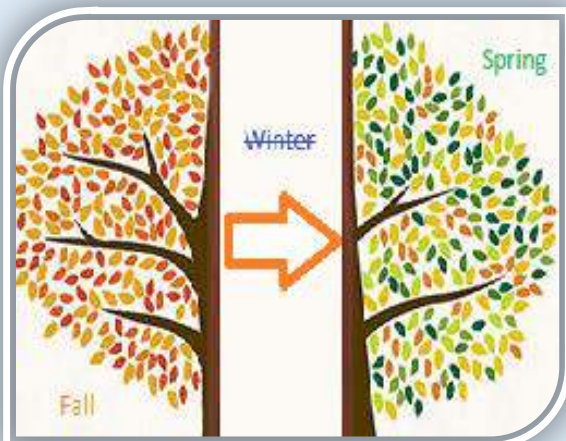
Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly
We were thrilled to participate in “The Justice Journey”, another piece of the work of Common Good. It’s mission is to challenge, inspire and equip people to celebrate diversity and engage the culture in social justice issues. This five week small group workshop, inspired us to become part of the solution, by becoming more involved with our time, talents and treasures.

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every purpose under heaven” Ecclesiastes 3:1

Seven years ago, we felt the call to go where we were sent ... to Asia, and wherever God might use us, which included Africa. The markers in our life this past year have signaled this may be a year of transition to more time in South Africa.

Henry Cloud, in his book “Necessary Endings” says; “Getting to the next level always requires ending something, leaving it behind, and moving on ...”

Although change is inevitable, it isn’t always easy.
We feel a spiritual call to spend more time... in South Africa.
Perhaps this is a new season in our life. Stay tuned ...



Homeward bound ...

Autumn has arrived in South Africa and we will soon have our feet on North American soil in time to enjoy spring and summer visiting family and friends.

I guess we will have to jump and skip winter.

Blessings to all,

Ray & Gay