

FEBRUARY 2021



Hello from Cape Town!

Thanks to God for bringing us students at George Whitefield College (GWC) safely through another semester. It was a weekly climb of assignment hills for five months, which became more mountainous as the semester progressed – time got shorter and assignments didn't! I'm particularly grateful for my Thursday classes which were Ethics and Christology, both taken by one zestful and very thought-through lecturer. In Ethics, we considered the engagement of the Church with the world around it and zoomed-in to consider poverty, politics and racism, each pertinent to South Africa. In Christology, a friend and I would often turn around to one another at the end of the lecture and have 'blown away' written across our faces! It was very helpful to talk from all sorts of different angles about the two natures of divinity and humanity in the one person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was excellent to be in-person for the whole semester and enjoy conversations with classmates between lectures – sometimes with a quick walk in the wind to the sea and back (one of the advantages of a bible college at the beach!). Another thing I am thankful for at GWC is the diversity of perspectives heard whilst studying alongside students from across South Africa, Africa and a few beyond. This has been sharpening for all of us as we engage on issues and have our own context's

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Fellowship group

We have now just had three weeks holiday which have been much appreciated for sleep, a couple of hikes, music, life-admin, good food and time with people (many of us stayed on campus due to lockdown measures). However, in the middle of this holiday was a terrible week for South Africa. It included the worst violence I've seen in South Africa in my near fifteen years here. In Durban and it's province KwaZulu Natal (where I used to live) there was unprecedented organised burning/ destruction and looting of shops, whole shopping malls and other sources of supplies. Four of the five

shopping centres I used to go to in my local area have been very badly damaged. Thankfully the violence abated and everyone has been trying to put things in place again for life to go on, especially for those most affected by it – those trying to make a basic living. The political cauldron continues to bubble and this boiling over is only symptomatic of the deep and painful scars of apartheid, anger against all the injustice, very high unemployment rates and unyielding poverty, as well as tribalism, corruption and the sinful pursuit of power for selfish ends. These events have again shaken the whole country economically, politically and emotionally. **Please pray** for the president, Cyril Ramaphosa, who seeks to steadily govern through all these factors to bring about lasting positive change. Please pray for Christians handling the fear, anger and pain to have God’s wisdom from above (James 3:17 – 18) and for us to grow as churches in loving one another and our neighbours around us through this.

Now begins our final semester at GWC – I think our class can’t quite believe it! We have some wonderful courses to end with and certainly wouldn’t want to have missed: Psalms (Hebrew), Hebrews (Greek), The Holy Spirit and Salvation, Missiology, Philosophy, Modern Church History and Preaching. **Please pray** that I’d be able to learn (third-year level is quite a stretch!) and remember what I’ve learnt. My hope continues to be that this degree will enable me to serve the Lord faithfully in evangelism, teaching, prayer and whatever else he would have me do.



Visit to U-Turn

Our fellowship group continues this semester and having been named ‘Oasis’ (with t-shirts... see picture overleaf!), please pray that we will be able to give one another a refreshing time week by week as we chat, reflect on his word and pray together. It was a lovely end to last semester when we had a thanksgiving time and recalled the Lord’s faithfulness. We were all particularly thankful to all those (you very much included) who so generously and prayerfully enable us to be studying here. Nearly all of us would not have been sitting there together were it not for generous Christian family. As a group, some of us spend the morning with a local organisation which works with the many homeless in the Muizenberg area. It is called ‘U-Turn’ and has an excellent holistic approach to rehabilitating those who wish to leave the streets: 1) providing immediate needs of food and clothing, 2) drug or alcohol rehabilitation, 3) helping developing skills and work experience and 4) employment. Throughout this there are bible studies and practical sessions in applying truth – we visited a session where they were talking and role-playing through ‘Respect’.



Tokai Community Church, where I have been placed whilst at college, has mostly had in-person meetings this semester, which has been encouraging. The podcast in James, which I have been working on with friends, has been a fun and creative journey. It is slowly coming together and we hope to finish working our way through the book by the end of the year. **Please join in praying** that it will be useful for others at church and beyond in their Christian lives.

Thank you each very much! With much love and prayers week by week for you,

Nerena ☺