

SOUTH AFRICA LINK

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Dear Friends,

Sandra's proofreading work with students continues with things getting a bit hectic towards the submission dates in the year: at the end of April, August and November for submitting doctoral theses and, of course, everyone needs their work done right away. She has been learning theological terms she didn't even know existed! Interestingly, this has led to some interesting relationships, particularly with Students from all over Africa and from many denominations.

Apart from that she holds the household together and is normally always preparing to have someone coming to stay. Recently, we hosted Prof Patrick Hornbeck, Chair of Theology at Fordham University, where Graham visited last year. He was here to develop relationships between our two faculties and he and Graham are working together. Over Christmas, we will have Prof Mark Hill with us. He is an extraordinary professor in Graham's department and specialises in church law and international human rights. He is well known for his successful role in the case in the European Court for Human Rights representing the BA stewardess who was not allowed to wear a cross while on duty. Occasionally we host our post-doctoral fellow when he has to stay over in Pretoria.

Life at the university continues to be hectic. Dr Klan did not come due to visa problems so the department remained the same. We think Graham's successor from the Uniting Presbyterian Church has been appointed but we await the final confirmation. That leaves the appointment of Head of Department to be done next year. In the meantime, Graham was awarded a rating by the National Research Foundation. This is becoming necessary for academics who wish to advance their careers. Six Theology staff members were rated which makes us the best performing faculty with half of our staff now rated.

We can't remember if we said, but Graham has also been appointed to the Senate of the Roman Catholic St Augustine's College. They have gone through a very difficult time this year and have had to cut out all of their undergraduate programmes and will possibly have to move from Johannesburg to Pretoria. In addition, the President's term of office came to an end. He has been replaced by a friend and colleague of Graham, Dr Madge Karecki.

Work continues as stated supply at our Highveld congregation in Irene and they have asked that we continue ministering to them next year. We await the Presbytery's decision. Recently we had a very moving Remembrance Day service. Remembrance is never far from our minds as, just outside our chapel is a concentration camp built by the British during the South African War (1899-1902). In South Africa, the concept of Remembrance Sunday has been expanded according to our local circumstances. Life at St Andrew's also continues with the continuing transformation of the congregation. On 1st December, instead of having our normal communion service we are having a congregational lunch, during which communion will be celebrated.

On 4th December, Graham will be going to Cameroon if his visa arrives in time. Our faculty has a link with the Presbyterian Theological College at Kumba and each year we send someone from a different department to teach. They, in turn, send us postgraduate students. Graham is going to teach twentieth century African and South African Church History. By the time he returns, we will be in the final approach to Christmas. As always, the year is too quickly coming to its end.

We hope this finds you all well as we look forward in anticipation to what 2014 will bring for us here in South Africa.

Best Wishes!

Graham & Sandra