

Pastors Training in Soweto



John & Jenny Miller, new Christ Church mission partners, reflect on the opportunities and challenges they face.



Most aspects of teaching at a Bible college are very similar in any country: The desire to see students grow, not just in knowledge of God's word, but also in faith and love and hope and joy. Helping students see how every part of Scripture points us to Jesus Christ. Encouraging students in their preaching and helping them to grow in confidence in proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. Prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit to change lives and ministries through his word.

There are also different opportunities and challenges faced by each Bible college. John teaches at Johannesburg Bible College (JBC). Challenges for JBC would include the principal and college manager being held up at gunpoint recently; cars and tyres set alight in protests near college last term; no electricity in Soweto for days at a time (though we have some solar back-up); many students arriving at college heavily influenced by prosperity teaching that promises health and wealth to all believers; and many students with limited education and facing real poverty. Youth unemployment in Soweto is well over 50% and students will often be short of food.



Most families have lost multiple relatives through Covid and unemployment has risen still higher due to lockdowns and businesses failing. We are very grateful to Christ Church for helping to provide bursaries for our poorer students in 2021.



However, there are also wonderful opportunities. It is estimated that by 2050, 40% of all Christian believers in the world will live in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa's impact on global Christianity over the next century will be enormous. There are many who are eager to grow in knowing God's Word and to be equipped to plant and lead churches. There are many who are marked by great

evangelistic zeal and prayerful devotion to the Lord. There is also enormous hunger for education and training, and JBC is one of a few government-accredited colleges who can offer training for an accredited practical qualification. We currently have two campuses, in central Johannesburg and Soweto, a nearby township. We are also hoping to start a third campus in Alexandra, another Johannesburg township where a million people live within an area about half the size of Bedford.

John's four main areas of responsibility are leading the Soweto campus, teaching a variety of classes on understanding and teaching the Bible, helping to train staff at JBC and our sister colleges across Africa, and oversight of the course. Jenny home-schools our three boys, David, Matthew and Samuel (aged 9,7 and 6) in the mornings and drives them to a local school for their afternoon sports programme. She is also helping JBC with a new database.

We are very aware that we can only serve in South Africa because of the wonderful team of partners the Lord has provided in the UK. Thank you so much for your prayers, encouragement and generosity.

If you would like to receive monthly or quarterly prayer updates, please email john@jbc.org.za