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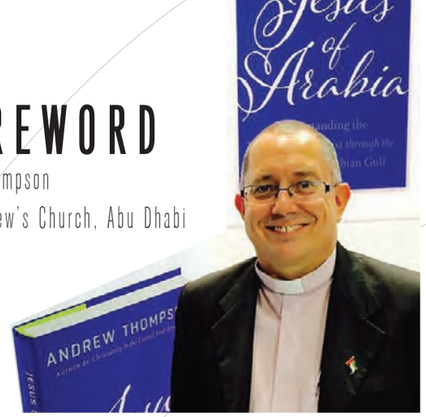
Cornerstone
INTERNATIONAL

FOREWORD

Andy Thompson
St. Andrew's Church, Abu Dhabi



One of the great privileges of living in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) is experiencing the diversity of the global church within our neighbourhood. As the Anglican chaplain of St Andrew's Church, I rub shoulders every week with Christians from the Pentecostal tradition, the ancient Orthodox churches, the massive Roman Catholic Church, Methodists, Baptists, and Evangelical Independents from all over the world. All these churches and traditions have distinctive flavours which appeal to different kinds of people. For those who like their tradition there are plenty of liturgical rites to choose from. For those who like to worship intensely with their hearts, there are plenty of lively churches around.

So how would I describe Cornerstone Church in Abu Dhabi?

"CORNERSTONE SEEKS TO BE CHURCH FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT DO 'CHURCH'... AN EXCITING AND VISIONARY GROUP OF CHRISTIANS"

Its leaders are educated and thoughtful men and women who seek to relate their faith to the complicated world we live in. I discern that the Cornerstone fellowship seeks to be church for those who do not do 'church'. They are creative, contemporary and seek to glorify God through doing things well. The people are warm, friendly and hospitable. They have an appetite to learn and grow in their understanding of what it means to be an authentic follower of Jesus Christ.

Cornerstone attracts that significant demographic of professionals and skilled workers in Abu Dhabi who are young, educated, upwardly mobile and globally connected. It wants to communicate the relevance of the Christian faith to those in the work place here.

The Cornerstone fellowship is an exciting and visionary group of Christians and I pray that God will continue to bless them, so that they in turn, will be a blessing to the city of Abu Dhabi and beyond.

Reverend Canon Andy Thompson M.B.E. is Senior Anglican Chaplain in Abu Dhabi and the leader of one of the oldest Christian churches in the city, St Andrew's, which is part of the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. He is also the author of several books, including Christianity in the UAE *and* Jesus of Arabia.

SECTIONS

NEWS 06
HISTORY 08
IMPACT 25
PARTNERS & FRIENDS 40
WHAT'S NEXT? 53

WELCOME AS WE CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF CORNERSTONE ABU DHABI!

By Matt and Rana, Duane and Isabel, Brendan and Linda, Paul and Nadia (The Cornerstone eldership team)

THEN: OUR FIRST MEETING, SEPTEMBER 16, 2005.

Based in the capital city of the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), Cornerstone is a multi-cultural community of Christ-followers and seekers from more than 40 nations. Occasionally people ask us if we are part of another church or grouping of churches called "Cornerstone" – we aren't. Cornerstone in Abu Dhabi is an autonomous, eldership-led local church that, for accountability, relates to an international network of church planters and leaders – friends with whom we regularly partner in ministry ventures, at home and overseas. Our name is inspired by a term for Jesus Christ that appears in the Bible – he is the "cornerstone" of the Christian faith.

The fellowship that became Cornerstone began life as a house church in Abu Dhabi on September 16, 2005 – an initiative of the leaders of Well Of Life Church in Dubai. It is the 10th anniversary of this first meeting that we are celebrating in these pages, but it was actually two years after the first gathering of "Well Of Life Abu Dhabi" that "Cornerstone" was established as a separate local church, with its own identity, eldership structure and vision – on January 4, 2008.

In those 10 years we grew from a small church plant of 23 friends meeting in a home, to an established, respected and much loved city church of 350-plus friends. But whatever our size, we have always been an international, multi-cultural fellowship – on day one we had people from seven countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. We are very grateful to the leaders of the U.A.E. for the freedom they have granted Christians to live out our faith in their wonderful country, and along with other Christian churches in our city we stand with the U.A.E.'s leaders in their considerable efforts to promote tolerance, respect and understanding between people of all cultures and religions.

"OUR MOTIVATION IS SUMMED UP BY OUR MOTTO, 'TO THE CITY, THE NATION AND THE WORLD, WITH LOVE'"

Church life at Cornerstone is best understood through terms such as "community" and "family" rather than "institution" or "organization". We believe God's plans and purposes for us go far beyond our Friday morning meetings and venue. Our weekly worship meetings and smaller midweek fellowships are vibrant celebrations of the good news of Jesus, and newcomers are always welcome. Through our core activities of worship and mission we want people to encounter the living God and experience authentic Christian community. Our primary motivation in all things is love, summed up by our motto, "To the city, the nation and the world, with love."

Our hope is that in sharing the Cornerstone story from many different viewpoints in the pages that follow, there will be readers who will want to join us in the next chapter of the Cornerstone adventure, and others still who will be stirred and encouraged to support future church plants.

May the following testimonies of what Jesus has done in and through Cornerstone prepare all our hearts for the exciting things he is about to do. For while this 10th anniversary is a time to celebrate our heritage, it also offers us an opportunity to prepare ourselves for the future. Ours is an ongoing story. Firm foundations have been laid. Now the task of building can truly begin.

Much love and blessings,

The Cornerstone eldership team.

10 YEARS ON: OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING, SEPTEMBER 11, 2015.

ASK THE DEACONS

CARLOS AND ANGELA AMAYA, COLOMBIA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
October 2011.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
The amazing message from Susan Toor and the welcome as we entered the service.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO COME BACK?
Susan's message.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
It was a response to a dream in which the Lord said to us, "Just say yes". The day after the dream Matt called us and said he wanted to come visit us. When he came he asked, "Would you like to become deacons?" The Lord had already told us the answer the night before: YES!

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
A new venue that the Lord has prepared for Cornerstone in advance. To see more people coming to know the Lord. And to keep being part of the most beautiful church in Abu Dhabi.

The BEST is yet TO COME...

CORNERSTONE'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, WITH MIKE ELTRINGHAM OF WELL OF LIFE DUBAI, 2015.

Abu Dhabi, September 11, 2015: Cornerstone Abu Dhabi marked the 10th anniversary of its first meeting with a Jesus-centred, heritage-honouring, future-looking celebration at its city centre cinema venue.

With special guests from Well Of Life Church in Dubai, Mike and Charmaine Eltringham, Wayne and Angela Jones, and their three daughters Katherine, Lauren and Ellen, the joyful gathering commemorated 10 years since the planting of "Well Of Life Abu Dhabi" – the house church forerunner of Cornerstone, which initially met in the Jones' family home.

Highlights of the morning included a worship session led by Brendan Law and band, who got the party started with *God's Great Dance Floor* ("Let the future begin ..."); Wayne leading the church in the breaking of bread for the first time in more than six years; and a powerhouse preach from Mike on "Leaving A Legacy", inspired by the story of Elijah and Elisha in 2 Kings 2.

CREATIVE FIRSTS

The catalytic nature of the celebration was evident in two creative "firsts" for Cornerstone – a dance choreographed and led by Petra Herrmann, and the reveal of the church's new animated logo, an audio-visual short developed by David Gibson.

The celebrations continued at Cornerstone's Family House in the evening, at a 10th birthday party in which Mike, Wayne and Angela swapped anecdotes of the early days, and Cornerstone's elders read out congratulations letters from church leaders around the world. A prophetic word was given by Charmaine, reading from Haggai 2:9, which she summarised as, "The best is yet to come!"

10 CANDLES ON THE CAKE.

MIKE AND CHARMAINE ELTRINGHAM, AND WAYNE AND ANGELA JONES, WITH CORNERSTONE'S ELDERSHIP COUPLES.

SHIN BOUSAMRA

BEGINNING IN THE

SHIN BOUSAMRA AND HER HUSBAND SHADY HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF CORNERSTONE ABU DHABI SINCE ITS BIRTH AS A WELL OF LIFE HOUSE CHURCH IN 2005. AS ONE WHO HAS BEEN PRESENT FOR EVERY STAGE OF OUR TRANSITION, FROM PLANT TO ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY, FROM THE VERY FIRST MEETING TO OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY, SHIN IS UNIQUELY PLACED TO OFFER THIS POTTED – AND PERSONAL – HISTORY, WHICH SETS THE SCENE FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT FOLLOW ...

On September 16, 2005, a Friday, Shady was invited to attend the first house church gathering in Wayne and Angela Jones' house in the Manaseer area of Abu Dhabi. Shady extended the invitation to a few more friends: Joe and Elaine Kong (a Malaysian couple) and me (at the time Shady and I weren't married). The initial name of this house church was "Well Of Life Abu Dhabi".
As we entered the villa, we were greeted by a handful of people from different countries and backgrounds. Everyone was very warm and welcoming, especially the hosts Wayne and Angela. After the introduction, we realised that the majority of the people in the villa were from a different church – Well Of Life Dubai. These brothers and sisters were visiting to support Wayne and Angela's home church.

The first praise and worship celebration was led by a young man, Mathew Wallen, a member of the Dubai support team. The session was very Spirit-led and the flow of the songs was beautiful. Instantly I found what I had been looking for, the oasis in the desert. By the end of the service the Spirit of the Lord gave me a significant confirmation this was the church he had prepared for me, not only to worship him in, but also to serve in and contribute to.

So week after week we met and gathered together every Friday around 8:30am. It was a small group in the beginning, and a few of us offered to help with the weekly set up. We arranged white plastic chairs around the living room, set up the coffee and tea corner, prepared the over-head projector (remember those?!) and practiced worship. Even though it was a small group, we all worked hand-in-hand and had great bonding with each other. Well Of Life Dubai constantly sent teams to support us. We began to invite more people to visit this home church. The number of people began to increase week by week. By late 2007 it had reached the point where we needed to move to a bigger place. Wayne found a new venue for the service. This place was very unique as it was the staff bar-cum-recreation hall of the Corniche Hospital. Surely the place was blessed by us week after week.

In January 2008, Matt and Rana were called to shepherd the church full-time. By this time, Shady and I were married and expecting a child. The elder of Well Of Life, Mike Eltringham, and his wife Charmaine, came to Abu Dhabi to ordain Matt and Rana in Cassells Hotel on Electra Street. At the same time, God had given Matt a name and a vision for the church – "Cornerstone International: To the city, the nation and the world, with love".

"INSTANTLY I FOUND WHAT I HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR, THE OASIS IN THE DESERT"

Soon afterwards, in February 2008, there was another very significant moment for Shady and me – our son Sam was born. Matt and Rana called him "the first Cornerstone baby", which is very meaningful to us.

As the size of the congregation has grown over the years, the leaders had to look for bigger and better places for our Friday Celebration services. Over the 10 years, in addition to our current venue, we've held our Friday services in many different places:

- Wayne and Angela's villa, off 28th / Khalifa Bin Shakbut Street
- Corniche Hospital's staff recreation club, at the junction of Salam St and the Corniche
- Cassells Hotel on Electra/Zayed 1st St (when the hospital was temporarily unavailable)
- The upstairs lounge at Al Ghazal Golf Club, near Abu Dhabi Airport Terminal 2
- Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital, on the Sweihan Road
- A recreation club in Sas Al Nakl
- Al Ghazal Golf Club's Academy building
- St Andrew's Church (temporarily, when the academy door closed)
- And the Cinema

In the last 10 years we have witnessed many individuals and families come and go. We have met lots of good brothers and sisters in the body of Christ from all over the world. There are many special moments and memories that we will always treasure in our hearts. Now the church is 10 years old – a big milestone for a local church. It's a time for celebration!

SHIN BOUSAMRA AND HER HUSBAND SHADY WITH THEIR BABY SAM IN 2008.

SHIN IN THE HOUSE CHURCH WORSHIP TEAM, 2006.

FIRST VENUE: THE JONES' FAMILY VILLA OFF KHALIFA BIN SHAKBUT ST, 2008.

THE GOLF CLUB.

ASK THE DEACONS

RAJESH AND KOGI HURRYPURSAD, SOUTH AFRICA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
Nov 2010.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
The warm welcome we received from the then deacons.

WHAT MADE YOU COME BACK?
God called us back. When we first visited, Matt and Rana were on a mission trip to India. After a few weeks of church hopping, the Spirit spoke to Kogi and our son Shikar to come back to Cornerstone. They felt a connection. Matt preached on that day, the word just resonated with us and the rest is history.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
We want to serve in the Kingdom. It was a matter of being obedient to the calling of the Lord.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
Over the last five years we have seen the Lord bring people gifted in various ways to the church. All of this has positively impacted the community. It's like we have shifted into high gear. We're excited to see the change in atmosphere the Lord will bring about through his church.

“THE CHURCH THAT MEETS IN WAYNE AND ANGELA’S HOME – SUPPORT ROSTER. DEAR HOME GROUP LEADERS, BY SUPPORTING WAYNE AND ANGELA JONES WITH THE CHURCH THAT MEETS IN THEIR ABU DHABI HOME, WE HAVE A GOD-GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY OUR PART IN GOD’S APOSTOLIC STRATEGY FOR THE CITY OF ABU DHABI … YOU DON’T NEED A PASSPORT, YOU DON’T NEED JABS, YOU WON’T GET JET LAG AND THE FOOD’S GREAT! HECK, WE HARDLY LEAVE OUR COMFORT ZONES! THERE CAN BE NO EASIER INTRODUCTION TO THE APOSTOLIC LIFESTYLE …”

Little did I know as I wrote those words as an elder at Well Of Life (WOL) Church in Dubai in September 2005 that just over two years later I would be moving to Abu Dhabi to be the first elder of a newly autonomous local church that I would have the privilege of naming “Cornerstone”.

For me and my wife Rana the past 10 years have been a most unexpected and delightful adventure in God. It hasn’t always been easy, but it has been God-given, it has been apostolic, and the fellowship has indeed been great!

Back in the late summer of 2005, Mike Eltringham, WOL’s lead elder, asked me to be the pastor on his team responsible for co-ordinating with Wayne and Angela as they followed his suggestion of starting a Friday morning fellowship group in their Abu Dhabi home.

Wayne and Angela were, and still are, good friends, who had been our home group leaders when we started attending Well Of Life in 2002. Together with Mike, Wayne had baptised us both in October 2003. When they were relocated to Abu Dhabi by Wayne’s company in 2004 we were sorry to see them go, but we knew God had a plan for them, and that our friendship would continue.

My role in 2005, as directed by Mike and in support of his apostolic church planting vision, was to facilitate whatever help Wayne required from Well Of Life for the new meetings in their Abu Dhabi home. Among other things, this included drawing up a roster of visitors – other elders, but also home group leaders and general volunteers – to share with Wayne, a busy lawyer, the responsibility for leading worship and preaching from week to week. As the group grew, my role included being available for Wayne, to share with him an eldership perspective on any opportunities or challenges he faced.

Had I known in the run-up to the group’s historic first meeting that I would one day be leading the church that grew out of it, I would have rostered myself in for a visit that day. In the event, it was Gavin and Izel Reed and their WOL home group who represented the Dubai elders for the first two weeks.

The Story

MATT JONES

OF A CHURCH PLANT

The Story OF A CHURCH PLANT CONTINUES...

MATT AND RANA JONES IN 2010.

My own introduction to what quickly became known as "Well Of Life Abu Dhabi" (or "WOLAD") came two weeks later, when Rana and I travelled up to do our first two-week stint on the roster. I shall never forget pulling up to Wayne and Angela's home for the first time on Friday, September 30, 2005 – it was then that God dropped the name "Cornerstone" into my heart, a name that soon afterwards I shared with Mike, who nodded thoughtfully and said that when the time was right it would fall to the first elder to name the church. Again, little did I know ...

OUR CALL

(or "How we moved from being the organisers of a roster to becoming the first leaders of a new church" ... or "Abu Dhabi? Are you serious God?!")

In September 2005 I was new to eldership in Dubai and had no sense of a call to Abu Dhabi. But over the following two years as one of the overseers of this plant, as I co-ordinated with Wayne about people and activities in the growing fellowship, and as we visited to minister on Friday mornings, per the roster and occasionally filling in for others, there was a knitting of hearts with the people.

Throughout 2006, with the growth of WOLAD to around 30 people, Mike would frequently ask the WOL eldership team if anyone was sensing the call to lead it as an autonomous local church. Initially sensing nothing and desiring to stay in Dubai, by the summer of 2007 this was beginning to change: Rana and I were actively inquiring of God about leading the Abu Dhabi plant and had begun to hear from him. The call became clearer over a period of eight months, from October 2006 to June 2007.

> "A LESSON OF THE CORNERSTONE STORY IS THAT CHURCH PLANTING IS A TEAM ACTIVITY"

For us, there was no single decisive moment of calling – there was instead a gradual revealing and understanding of God's will throughout a necessary season of training and equipping at Well Of Life.

We were not ambitious to lead a church plant, or in a rush to leave WOL, but through a process of prayerfully inquiring of God, submitting to fellow elders and apostolic team, and serving and building relationships in Abu Dhabi, sensing a call became a more certain hearing of it, giving rise to conviction and faith.

Looking back, an early stirring of a vision for the Abu Dhabi fellowship was my suggestion to Mike and the WOL elders that Wayne and Angela should be appointed as deacons in it. When they had left WOL in 2004 they stepped off the deacon team, and so out of church government. But during our visits to Abu Dhabi in 2005-2006, it was clear to me that Godly government – clearly delegated authority, through a public ordination, with the anointing that accompanies it – was needed for some of the situations Wayne was dealing with when we elders weren't there in person. It was agreed that Mike and fellow WOL elder Fred Dalais would ordain them as deacons, and to prepare the house church for this I taught a series on church government.

A key turning point for Rana and I came in October 2006 on day four of the New Covenant Ministries International (N.C.M.I.) Leadership Training Time in Bloemfontein, South Africa, when Ashley Bell shared a message on 'Things to Consider When You Leave to Plant a Church'. At the end of the message Ashley called for a response: anyone who wanted to lead or be involved in a church plant at some point in the future was to stand where they were as a gesture of willingness and surrender to God, and to pray and receive prayer.

Without checking with one another, we both stood, thinking that this would happen for us at some point in our lives, but not in our immediate future. Looking back, however, that decision to respond, to publicly declare our willingness to be used by God in this way, was a key moment in bringing about the shift in our hearts and minds that would be needed if we were to be used by God in Abu Dhabi.

CHURCH PLANTERS TRAINING IN ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA, AUGUST 2007.

The year-plus period after this, of hearing the call, responding to the call and preparing to walk into the calling, developed through prayer, Bible-reading, conversations, visits, serving, and prophetic words and pictures. A key scripture for me was Deuteronomy 12:10, while Rana was moved by God's encouragements to cross the Jordan and be strong and courageous in Joshua chapters 1-3.

Another milestone was a June 2007 e-mail we sent to Mike, in which we summarized all we felt God was saying to us about Abu Dhabi. This resulted in us being sent by WOL to attend a month-long Church Planters' Training Course in Adelaide, Australia, in August 2007, hosted by veteran N.C.M.I. church planters Leon and Pat van Daele, with sessions led by N.C.M.I. team leader Tyrone Daniel and other church planters.

By the time the course had finished it had become a matter of "when" we would relocate to Abu Dhabi, not "if", a feeling that was confirmed in follow-up conversations with Mike and the WOL eldership team. At the elders' annual planning weekend later that summer the date was set for our ordination: January 4, 2008.

> "THE PAST 10 YEARS HAVE BEEN A MOST UNEXPECTED AND DELIGHTFUL ADVENTURE IN GOD"

Through the remainder of 2007 our visits to Abu Dhabi increased as Rana and I prepared the folks of WOLAD for the birth of "Cornerstone", for the transition from WOL oversight to autonomy as a new local church. During this season of transition, from September to December 2007, we found an apartment in the city, Rana handed in her notice at work, and we moved the fellowship out of the Jones' villa into a new venue that Wayne and I had scouted: the social club of the Corniche Hospital, where most of the city's babies were born at the time – a fitting base for the coming season of new life and growth.

LESSONS LEARNED

(or "Thank you Lord, that wasn't as bad as we thought!")

Some of the key lessons we've learned over the past 10 years include: the importance of relationships – how God uses friendships and submission and accountability to other leaders to achieve his purposes; the value of serving outside the local church context before developing ambitions to plant; the necessity of actively inquiring of God, rather than passively waiting for him to direct our steps through others; developing a vision for a people and place; a growing love for a people and place; recognising the role of charismata / 1 Corinthians 12 spiritual gifts in discerning the call, in particular the gifts of prophecy and tongues; and the foundational importance of the Word of God in directing our path.

But perhaps the most important lesson is that church planting is not – or should not be – a one-man or one couple thing: in an apostolic culture such as ours (and the church of the New Testament), church planting is a team activity, with differently-gifted people involved and interacting at various stages until the plant is well-established, well-watered, growing and fruitful. Even then church remains a team activity, with a plurality of elders taking it forward (we thank God for adding Duane Furstenburg, Johan de Villiers, Brendan Law, Paul Szczesiak and their wonderful wives), the active participation of all members (we also thank God for the amazing deacons and faithful saints we've had over the years), and the ongoing input of Ephesians 4:11-gifted ministers.

But we should always remember and honour the most important member of the church planting team: Jesus himself. As he says in Matthew 16:18, he is building HIS church.

ORDINATION OF MATT TO ELDERSHIP AT CORNERSTONE BY MIKE ELTRINGHAM, 2008.

WORSHIP AT AL GHAZAL GOLF CLUB'S ACADEMY BUILDING, 2011.

ASK THE DEACONS

JACOB AND BLESSY PHILIP, INDIA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
Early 2009.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
We felt a little out of place as the only Indians at that time, but the spiritual atmosphere made us feel right at home.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO COME BACK?
We didn't have a car and getting to the Al Ghazal venue was hard. However, we always had our Open Lounge leader call and check if we needed a ride. That really made a huge difference.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
We had every excuse not to be deacons viz. an infant, parenthood, existing gifted leadership etc. However we had great role models in Duane and Isabel, who were leaders and parents of a young child. They led by example and we are so blessed to follow their lead. What a journey!

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
We believe we are moving into a new season and we should be willing to step out in obedience and in boldness to be salt and light to this city – "Love in action" "Love anyway"!

VISION TO REALITY

THE CORNERSTONE STORY OWES SO MUCH TO THE VISION, PASSION AND APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP OF WELL OF LIFE'S MIKE ELTRINGHAM, WHO RECALLS HERE HIS DIRECTION OF THE CHURCH PLANT AND THE BIBLE VERSE THAT INSPIRED IT.

We are so excited to be a part of this historic moment in the life of Cornerstone church. Way back, from the time before we planted the church in Dubai, God spoke to me about coming to the Middle East, to the U.A.E., and DIGGING WELLS (hence "Well of Life" Church, Dubai). He used a number of scriptures to confirm his call, one of them being Genesis 26:33: "And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba ..." (Beer-sheba. That is, the well of the oath, or the well of the seven: alluding to the seven ewe lambs. The verb rendered 'to swear' is derived from the word translated as 'seven'.) What made this more amazing was that I was unaware at the time that there are SEVEN emirates in the U.A.E.

So from the time we arrived in Dubai in 2001-2002, a part of our mandate and call has been to see WELLS DUG and CHURCHES PLANTED in all seven of the emirates.

MIKE AND HIS WIFE CHARMAINE AT MASDAR CITY, ABU DHABI, 2010.

Congratulations! "Keeping up with the Joneses" has been a delight and a privilege, and we pray for ongoing blessings and growth.

Mike Eltringham, a former elder of Well Of Life Dubai, is a visionary church planter and the leader of an international apostolic ministry known as 'Extend'. Recognised by the leaders of Cornerstone Abu Dhabi as an Ephesians 4:11-gifted apostle, Mike is a frequent visitor to the church and has ordained most of its elders.

"OUR MANDATE AND CALL HAS BEEN TO SEE WELLS DUG AND CHURCHES PLANTED IN ALL SEVEN EMIRATES"

After the Lord had helped us establish Well Of Life Dubai, Wayne Jones, then a part of our deacon team, came and spoke to me about the opportunity he had been given to open an office of his law firm in Abu Dhabi. As hard as it was to see this great family leave our community, we felt this was a "God moment" and began to speak of this as a door God was opening to fulfill his call to have "wells dug" throughout the region.

So in 2004, the Jones family left us, a year later they started a gathering in their home and, with the assistance of elders and deacons from WOL, saw a community of faith emerge in Abu Dhabi.

It became clear that as Wayne's company began to expand and the demands of a local church increased, the fellowship needed a full-time leadership couple to take the helm. Enter Matt and Rana Jones! I had tasked Matt, then on eldership in WOL Dubai, to oversee the teams who were regularly going down to Abu Dhabi. As this need of an elder to shepherd this fledgling church became apparent, and after much prayer, they put their hands up, and were released to go lead this group.

The rest is history ... Cornerstone was established and today we have a thriving New Testament church, impacting Abu Dhabi and partnering with us into the regions beyond.

"CORNERSTONE IS A THRIVING NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH"

FLASHBACK: MIKE MINISTERING AT CORNERSTONE IN 2008.

MIKE MINISTERING AT CORNERSTONE IN 2015.

WAYNE & ANGELA JONES

THE LAWYER WHO BEGAN A WORK OF GRACE

WAYNE AND ANGELA JONES SHARE THE INSIDE STORY OF HOW GOD GAVE THEM AND THEIR THREE YOUNG DAUGHTERS THE GRACE TO START A CHURCH IN THEIR HOME. BEFORE CORNERSTONE THERE WAS "WELL OF LIFE ABU DHABI". THE PIONEERING COUPLE REVEAL ALL.

We remember the beginnings of the church that is now Cornerstone. It met in our house from September 2005 to November 2007, in a very suburban setting on Abu Dhabi island, not far from what is now Khalidiyah Mall, which wasn't there then.

We'd been in the U.A.E., in Dubai, for three very happy years. At the centre of our time in Dubai had been another church plant – Well Of Life, a church that was bubbling over with apostolic enthusiasm, growing every day, and which had stretched, grown and challenged us in almost every way. We'd loved the experience and enjoyed being part of it.

We relocated to Abu Dhabi in July 2004. We knew there was a God purpose for the move, but we had no idea what form that would take. The reality was that Wayne was a wannabe partner in an international law firm, whose primary task in being sent to Abu Dhabi was to assist with the "planting" of an office. Challenging stuff. Angela was a young mum with three kids under seven, including a six-month-old baby. Even more challenging!

We knew no one, and had no base. Abu Dhabi was like a foreign land compared to Dubai. But we knew that God had a purpose for us in Abu Dhabi – which at that point in time seemed to be a dry place, in need of the Holy Spirit and more Bible-based, charismatic churches.

We were filled with trepidation. We had no plan, no great vision. We weren't your typical zealous church planters who'd stocked up at church planters' academy. We would hightail it back up the motorway to Dubai every weekend – it was our comfort blanket. Each week we'd dodge the Dubai well-wishers wanting to know "So, how's the church plant going, bru?" But we knew we were there to do something. So, we started as best we knew how: a midweek home group.

It was a disaster pretty much from the start. Our initial recruits included a suicidal satanist on the run; a would-be church planter dodging his calling in India; a Hindu cabin crew steward who accidentally found himself getting saved at a church in Perth on an Etihad stopover; and a bunch of other (mainly) wandering souls. Not much to build with. Difficult to lay those foundations. The strength of our endeavours was tested when we went off on a Christmas holiday and then moved house, just down the road. Everyone disappeared! Even though we'd been fairly half-hearted about things it was a bit shattering.

What to do? We hit upon a brilliant idea – we prayed! And then, miraculously, others came along to pray with us. People called us – and not people we knew. Then others appeared in Abu Dhabi, directed our way by chance meetings with people we did know. I can honestly say that not one of the people who gathered around us at that point was invited by us. Somehow they just appeared.

During a weekend with Mike and Charmaine Eltringham, we decided that if this thing was to get off the ground we would need to be "intentional". So, we set a date for a Friday meeting. No more midweek meandering. Some Well Of Lifers would come from Dubai, so we were not completely alone. And we would trust God.

September 16, 2005 was the day. We prepared our lounge area for the few people we thought might turn up. As it happened, the Abu Dhabi people who turned up outnumbered the Dubai folks. We were amazed – where had they come from? We hadn't invited them! It was wonderful – with a warm, loving atmosphere, people who

WAYNE AND ANGELA JONES, WITH KATHERINE, LAUREN AND ELLEN.

A CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PLAY IN THE JONES' GARDEN, DECEMBER 2007.

CORNERSTONE'S KHALIDIYAH HOME GROUP (OPEN LOUNGE), 2009.

were genuinely excited about worshipping God, who weren't put off by our lounge, and with whom we all of a sudden had a common purpose.

That Friday led to the start of a two year period in our home, during which the church blossomed and bloomed. Looking back we still can't really believe it happened; that we were able to shepherd it along; that people came, gave of themselves, their talents, their lives, and their resources. But each week they came. Pretty soon we did not need the home group support that faithfully travelled from Dubai each week. But they kept coming too – they were being blessed by what was happening.

At the time, it just seemed like what we had to do. Each week, we would prepare our home – the kids knew the routine: pushing couches around, rolling up carpets, putting out chairs, preparing the overhead projector (yes, that's what we used) and sorting out some space for children's ministry.

Tuesday evenings were prayer time and worship practice. Wednesday and Thursday evenings were spent searching God's heart for what to share on Friday. After fellowshipping with the flock and tidying up the inevitable mess, Friday afternoons generally saw us exhausted and catching up on sleep. But during this time, we pulled together a worship team, trusted God for an anointed message each week, and set about hosting the body of worshippers that would later become Cornerstone.

"THERE WERE TIMES IT SEEMED PERFECT. OTHER TIMES WE WONDERED WHAT ON EARTH WE WERE DOING"

During that time we had highs and lows. There were times it seemed perfect. Other times we wondered what on earth we were doing. But throughout it, we felt the hand and grace of God, blessing us, providing for us, protecting us (our Sudanese landlord who lived next door never once mentioned the noise on a Friday morning), and growing the body. We were seeing lives changed, spouses coming to God, families being strengthened, and the freedom of the Holy Spirit at work. We believed we were affecting the city.

One verse in scripture stood out for us, Isaiah 42:8-9:"... Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them". We were part of this new thing which God (not us) was announcing and bringing into being.

He also knew our shortcomings. For as wonderful as all that was happening was, we knew that we were barely scratching the surface. There was so much that could be done. We did not have the capacity. We began to question our role – were we the ones to lead this thing? Should we give up the day job?

Wayne toyed with various ideas, even interviewing for a part-time job to see if that would work. We heard the voices around us, people addressed us as "pastors", and we could see an acute need for the church to become a church with God-ordained eldership. But were we it? We knew we'd been called to help get the show on the road, but did we have the vision and the deep love needed for the work? At the same time, the thing continued to grow ... how long, oh Lord, could we continue?!

Matt and Rana. Dear friends from our Dubai days and wonderful supporters of the work in Abu Dhabi. We could not have dreamt of a better couple to welcome into the body and take it forward. It was so right. And they were such a perfect fit. Their deep love for the city and its people was exactly what was needed. We loved their vision and the pictures that God was giving them about the church – pictures and vision we had never had: seeing the church as a letter written on their heart. We were so grateful that God had called them to take things forward.

We love hearing stories about Cornerstone 10 years on. It's a wonderful body, led by wonderful people, fulfilling God's plan and purposes in Abu Dhabi and beyond. And we marvel at the humble beginnings of the church that used to meet in our house.

After helping Matt and Rana transition "Well Of Life Abu Dhabi" into Cornerstone in late 2007/early 2008, Wayne and Angela Jones continued to serve as deacons there until they returned to Dubai – and Well Of Life – in June 2009. Wayne continues to work as a lawyer today and the couple serve as faithful deacons at WOL.

NATIONS

THEN:

7

NATIONS WERE REPRESENTED AT THE FIRST MEETING OF "WELL OF LIFE - ABU DHABI", SEPT 16, 2005 (23 PEOPLE):
CHINA, JORDAN, LEBANON, MALAYSIA, SOUTH AFRICA, UNITED KINGDOM, ZIMBABWE.

NOW:

41

NATIONS ARE REPRESENTED AT CORNERSTONE, JAN 2016 (400 PEOPLE):
AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL, CANADA, CHILE, CHINA, COLOMBIA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO, EGYPT, FIJI, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GHANA, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, INDIA, ITALY, JAMAICA, JAPAN, KENYA, LEBANON, KOREA, MALAYSIA, MALTA, MOZAMBIQUE, NEPAL, NEW ZEALAND, NIGERIA, PAKISTAN, POLAND, PHILIPPINES, RUSSIA, SPAIN, SOUTH AFRICA, SRI LANKA, SWITZERLAND, TAIWAN, UK, USA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE.

NATIONS WE HAVE SUPPORTED WITH MINISTRY TRIPS OR OFFERINGS:
AUSTRALIA, FIJI, GREECE, INDIA, LEBANON, MYANMAR/BURMA, NEPAL, PAKISTAN, PHILIPPINES, SRI LANKA, UAE, USA.

ASK THE DEACONS

SHALEN AND SYLVIA SAGAR, FIJI

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
We joined in October 2010.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
Being welcomed by Hari Sharma, from Nepal, with a big man hug – a bit unusual for a first timer!

WHAT MADE YOU COME BACK?
We didn't have to think about coming back – the love factor was just too overwhelming. It was as if Jesus was right there. I know He was. The church was amazing and we wanted in. I (Shalen) remember getting into the taxi after church and throwing my fist in the air and saying, "Yes! Thank You Lord!"

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
It came naturally because we wanted to be a part of what we felt (we didn't just see, we had felt) was leadership in action – serving in love and not just being served.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
The thought of God working in the U.A.E. through us amazes me. Seeing what he has already done in and through his church propels us even more to allow God to use us to achieve his plans for nations.

ASK THE DEACONS

MARIUS AND MELINDA PRINSLOO, SOUTH AFRICA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
April 2013.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
That it was alive and friendly.

WHAT MADE YOU COME BACK?
Because we felt welcomed.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
The Holy Spirit. To be more like Jesus. To learn more of Jesus. To do more what Jesus did.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
Seeing how the Holy Spirit transforms people's lives.

DUANE & ISABEL FURSTENBURG

ARE YOU NUTS?

CORNERSTONE ELDERSHIP COUPLE AND STRIPE YOUTH LEADERS DUANE AND ISABEL FURSTENBURG ARRIVED IN THE CHURCH AS CURIOUS VISITORS IN 2008, WITH LITTLE IDEA OF WHAT THE FUTURE WOULD HOLD.

Wow, so how do we condense what Cornerstone church means to us in 500 words? It's certainly an impossible task but we'll try nonetheless, *writes Duane*.

When we first walked through the doors of Cornerstone in early March 2008 the very first thing we experienced was the incredible love of the guy who welcomed us at the door (Vaughan Granier) and the 25 or so people who were there.

Our initial intention was to check out this new church plant and a few others until we found the "right" church, but we can honestly say that 15 minutes into

"CORNERSTONE HAS SHOWN US WHAT CHURCH IS ALL ABOUT"

the experience we knew this was our home. What we didn't know was the incredible plans God had for us as part of this Cornerstone family. Ephesians 3:20-21 is our testimony: "Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams] – To Him be glory …" (The Amplified Bible).

Cornerstone has shown us what church is all about. We had no clue about how churches should operate and what Jesus really intended for us, his kids, in community together on mission. We have experienced a family away from biological family to a measure that is difficult to explain. We were discipled and mentored by Matt and Rana in the most gracious way to provide opportunities for us and stretch us so that we could take hold of that for which God has saved us.

DUANE AND ISABEL DEDICATE REUBEN IN 2010.

As a result, the most amazing things have happened. God has unlocked callings in a crazy way!

If you told me of the things God was going to expose me to and use me in before we came to Cornerstone my response would have been simple: "Are you nuts?" Being part of an amazing eldership team leading a church; leading, walking with and loving the most amazing group of youth in the world; going to other countries to preach the gospel (and seeing hundreds of people give their lives to Jesus) alongside the coolest people ever; marrying a couple whom we love and have been walking with (Paul and Nadia); baptizing people I love in the most insane locations; preaching in golf clubs and cinemas … the list goes on and on.

DUANE, ISABEL, REUBEN, LEVI AND NOAH FURSTENBURG.

Isabel writes, Coming to Abu Dhabi we didn't know what to expect with regards to church life, but God had a huge surprise for us! We not only found a family in Christ but he opened our eyes and hearts to so many things: to name but a few, the nations, how to love, serve, how to do life with other Christians, how to say yes to opportunities and so much more. We love Jesus and we love what he is doing here in Abu Dhabi and the nations. We have learned and seen that God has so much more for us.

In a nutshell all we can say is: it's ABSOLUTELY FREAKIN' AWESOME what God can do through his church. God takes the ordinary and with a bit of trust in him and obedience he uses us in extraordinary ways! We can't wait to see what the next 10 years hold for all of us at Cornerstone!

TWO YEARS SEPARATED THE ARRIVAL IN CORNERSTONE OF A "CLUELESS" PAUL SZCZESIAK FROM ENGLAND AND ETIHAD CREW MEMBER NADIA AVENANT FROM SOUTH AFRICA. ONCE STRANGERS TO THE CHURCH AND TO ONE ANOTHER, MR AND MRS SZCZESIAK ARE NOW AN ELDERSHIP COUPLE AND ALSO SERVE AS WORSHIP AND YOUTH LEADERS. THE DYNAMIC DUO SHARE THEIR FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

In February 2009 I (Paul) arrived as a young, single city graduate in search of adventure and was, frankly, quite clueless! I received the now trademark warm welcome from the then 80-strong community of worshippers at the Al Ghazal Golf Course and found a home away from home.

The "young professionals" demographic consisted of just two blokes back then, but in that time I really learnt the value of being part of this multi-generational, multi-cultural kingdom family. When Nadia first visited two years later, having been invited by a fellow cabin crew member, this was something she loved about the church.

Cornerstone has been a true family to us both, including caring parents, encouraging siblings, and now, as an eldership couple, an incredibly dynamic bunch of spiritual children. From welcoming us as independent singles, journeying with us through the awkward (yet exciting) dating phase, preparing us for marriage, and then nurturing and supporting us as a married couple, Cornerstone has been an amazing community to be a part of!

Over the past six and a half years, God has stretched and challenged us in so many areas of our lives. When we have said "yes" to the call of God to serve in different capacities within the church God has always provided what we needed. From energy for early starts, to patience with frustrating sheep, to words/time/chords/hugs/finances at the right time, God has always been faithful to bless us as we put his kingdom first.

Wow! Being part of building God's kingdom is the biggest privilege and our deep passion is to see his kingdom expand and grow in this city, country and across the region. We are so excited to see people encounter God in a real and life-changing way, and see them fulfil his plans for their lives. We love the thought of this family multiplying to be even more effective in demonstrating the love and mercy of Christ here in our context.

"GOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN FAITHFUL TO BLESS US AS WE PUT HIS KINGDOM FIRST"

BRENDAN LAW

"SO MUCH MORE THAN I EXPECTED"

CORNERSTONE ELDERSHIP COUPLE BRENDAN AND LINDA LAW AND THEIR CHILDREN ARRIVED IN ABU DHABI IN 2011 TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL. FOUR YEARS ON, BRENDAN REFLECTS ON WHAT GOD HAS ESTABLISHED IN THEM.

BRENDAN, LINDA, ROBBIE AND TAMSIN LAW IN NEPAL, 2015.

I well remember my first encounter with Cornerstone church: a Friday celebration meeting at Al Ghazal Golf Club in April 2011. First impressions count and I felt immediately at home: the love of God and for God was palpable through the warmth of the welcome and the ensuing worship; the message was Bible-focused and based upon the uncompromised Gospel; the presence of the Holy Spirit pervaded and guided all aspects of the meeting.

Having arrived alone in the U.A.E. just a few short weeks before (my wife Linda and children Robbie and Tamsin had stayed in the U.K.) I knew that I had found a strong spiritual base. This was confirmed four months later when the family arrived: the children had to be dragged to church in the U.K.; within one meeting in Abu Dhabi, they couldn't get enough and have been active participants ever since!

Cornerstone church does what it says on the tin: "To the City, the Nation and the World, With Love." One of the great hallmarks of our body of believers, despite the ebb and flow of a typically transient community in this part of the world, is the consistency of love, which can only come from Jesus. The love for our Lord is wholehearted and soulful; the love for one another is genuine, heartfelt and pervasive: God's greatest commandment is very much in evidence.

"CORNERSTONE CHURCH DOES WHAT IT SAYS ON THE TIN: 'TO THE CITY, THE NATION AND THE WORLD, WITH LOVE'"

It is wonderful to share this love within our community and even more exciting to take it outside, to our local, national and international communities. Cornerstone folks touch lives in all these areas, carrying forward Jesus' Great Commission of Matthew 28 in taking his message near and far. Whether in the local marketplace, on the beaches of Sri Lanka or the mountains of Nepal, Cornerstone church is touching lives with the love of God we carry so dearly in our hearts.

Cornerstone is only 10 years old but is already established as a base church, a place to come to in order to become equipped for God's service in the nations; a place where acceleration in spiritual growth is the regular testimony of so many of our congregation.

I came to Abu Dhabi to build a school but got so much more than I expected: God has built a temple within my heart which is on fire for him and I have latched on to outstanding discipleship through our own leadership, guided so well by Matt and Rana, and the apostolic network we enjoy. Like so many before and since, Linda and I came with human purpose and have quickly learned God's kingdom purpose, which now pervades our lives and guides our very beings. God has such exciting plans for each of us – Jesus is the head of our church and through Cornerstone he provides so many tools to help us discover our journey in him.

There are so many strands to Cornerstone life: like the Acts church, there is something available practically every day for growth and fellowship. We don't have to be at everything but, like so many, have caught the joy of being actively involved: church is not just for Fridays and the more we have become involved, the more we have received.

Our children have flourished: Duane and Isabel do such a wonderful job leading the Youth team and invest so heavily in all our children. Within a year of arriving, both children had given their lives to Jesus and been baptised: that fills Linda and me with great joy! Likewise, it has been a privilege and a blessing to lead worship with our entire family. Worship is at the heart of our church and we love to do what we were created to do!

So, what about the future? We know that God has super-exciting plans for our church and for each of us as individuals within it. With humility and wisdom, an openness to God's calling and with willing obedience to his every desire in our lives, I have no doubt that the next decade will bring yet more growth for us all. "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways', declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" – Isaiah 55: 8-9.

Let's expect the unexpected!

"HE WHO DOES NOT KNOW HIS PAST CANNOT MAKE THE BEST OF HIS PRESENT AND FUTURE, FOR IT IS FROM THE PAST THAT WE LEARN"

SHEIKH ZAYED BIN SULTAN AL NAHYAN

CORNERSTONE & Timeline

THE STORY OF CORNERSTONE ABU DHABI IN ITS FIRST 10 YEARS HAS BEEN SET AGAINST A HISTORIC BACKDROP OF DEVELOPMENT AND POPULATION GROWTH IN ITS HOME CITY, AS THE U.A.E. CAPITAL HAS SECURED ITS PLACE AND REPUTATION ON THE WORLD STAGE IN POLITICS, ECONOMICS, CULTURE, ARCHITECTURE, ARTS AND SPORTS.

2005

CORNERSTONE BEGINS LIFE AS "WELL OF LIFE ABU DHABI" IN A VILLA VENUE.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS CELEBRATES ITS SECOND BIRTHDAY WITH A SECOND CONSECUTIVE AWARD FOR "WORLD'S LEADING NEW AIRLINE" AT THE WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS.

EMIRATES PALACE HOTEL OPENS FOR BUSINESS.

CONSTRUCTION WORK BEGINS ON REEM ISLAND.

ABU DHABI DEBUTS AS A HOST CITY FOR THE ANNUAL RED BULL AIR RACE.

2006

THE FIRST ANNUAL PGA EUROPEAN TOUR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP IS HELD AT ABU DHABI GOLF CLUB.

CHANGES ARE MADE TO THE WORKING WEEK TO BRING IT MORE IN LINE WITH WESTERN NATIONS. THE U.A.E. WEEKEND MOVES FROM THURSDAY/FRIDAY TO FRIDAY/SATURDAY.

THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIE *THE KINGDOM*, STARRING JAMIE FOXX AND JENNIFER GARNER, IS FILMED IN ABU DHABI, DOUBLING AS RIYADH FOR FILMMAKERS.

2007

KHALIDIYAH MALL OPENS IN JANUARY.

SHEIKH ZAYED GRAND MOSQUE, THE THIRD LARGEST IN THE WORLD, OPENS.

SAADIYAT ISLAND CULTURAL DISTRICT IS ANNOUNCED AND ARCHITECTS' DESIGNS FOR WORLD-LEADING MUSEUMS ARE REVEALED.

ABU DHABI'S ICONIC BUT AGEING WHITE AND GOLD TAXIS ARE REPLACED BY A FLEET OF NEW SILVER TAXIS.

"WELL OF LIFE ABU DHABI" MOVES VENUE FROM VILLA TO HOSPITAL SOCIAL CLUB.

2008

"WELL OF LIFE ABU DHABI" BECOMES "CORNERSTONE" IN JANUARY.

U.S. PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH VISITS ABU DHABI.

THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER IS LAUNCHED IN APRIL.

AL WAHDA MALL OPENS.

AN EXHIBITION OF PICASSO'S PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURES IS HELD AT EMIRATES PALACE HOTEL.

A NEW IMPROVED BUS SERVICE BEGINS IN ABU DHABI, WITH A FLEET OF MODERN BUSES.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON MASDAR CITY.

THE FIRST RESIDENTS MOVE INTO AL RAHA GARDENS IN KHALIFA CITY A.

MANCHESTER CITY FOOTBALL CLUB IS BOUGHT BY ABU DHABI UNITED GROUP IN SEPTEMBER.

CORNERSTONE MOVES VENUE FROM HOSPITAL SOCIAL CLUB TO SAND GOLF COURSE IN NOVEMBER.

2009

THE STARS OF MEN'S TENNIS COMPETE IN THE FIRST ANNUAL WORLD TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP, HELD AT ZAYED SPORTS CITY IN JANUARY. ANDY MURRAY TAKES THE TROPHY.

COLDPLAY PLAYS A LEGENDARY OPEN-AIR CONCERT AT EMIRATES PALACE HOTEL, AGAINST A BACKDROP OF THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.

CHRISTIAN AUTHOR PHILIP YANCEY SPEAKS TO A GATHERING OF CHURCHES AT THE EVANGELICAL COMMUNITY CHURCH.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON SAADIYAT ISLAND'S LOUVRE ABU DHABI.

ABU DHABI AIRPORT'S TERMINAL 3 BUILDING OPENS, INCREASING ANNUAL PASSENGER CAPACITY TO MORE THAN 12 MILLION.

THE SHAHAMA-SAADIYAT HIGHWAY OPENS, CREATING A NEW ENTRY POINT AND CITY VIEWS FOR DRIVERS FROM DUBAI.

C.N.N. OPENS A STUDIO IN NOVEMBER. THE DAILY NEWS SHOW *PRISM* IS BROADCAST LIVE TO THE WORLD FROM THE CITY'S TWOFOUR54 MEDIA ZONE.

THE INAUGURAL ABU DHABI F1 GRAND PRIX TAKES PLACE AT YAS MARINA CIRCUIT AND IS WON BY RED BULL'S SEBASTIAN VETTEL.

AL REEF WELCOMES ITS FIRST RESIDENTS IN DECEMBER. THESE ARE THE FIRST HOMES IN ABU DHABI TO BE SOLD TO NON-GULF OWNERS.

2010

SKY TOWER ON REEM ISLAND IS COMPLETED AND BRIEFLY BECOMES THE CITY'S TALLEST BUILDING, AT 312 METRES (1,024 FT).

THE ALDAR HQ BUILDING, AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS "THE COIN" IS COMPLETED IN AL RAHA.

FERRARI WORLD AMUSEMENT PARK OPENS FOR BUSINESS ON YAS ISLAND, FEATURING THE WORLD'S FASTEST ROLLER-COASTER.

MASDAR CITY OPENS.

THE ABU DHABI-BASED U.A.E. AIR FORCE NATIONAL AEROBATIC DISPLAY TEAM, AL FURSAN, IS FORMED.

THE DOORS OF THE FIRST CORNERSTONE FAMILY HOUSE OPEN IN AL RAHA GARDENS IN APRIL.

BETWEEN JUNE AND AUGUST CORNERSTONE TAKES UP RESIDENCE AT THE FALCON HOSPITAL BEFORE RETURNING TO THE SAND GOLF COURSE.

THE FIRST TENANTS MOVE INTO THE NEW AL BANDAR COMPLEX IN SEPTEMBER.

BRITAIN'S QUEEN ELIZABETH VISITS ABU DHABI IN NOVEMBER.

SHEIKH ZAYED BRIDGE OPENS, CUTTING JOURNEY TIME FOR COMMUTERS ONTO THE ISLAND.

SHEIKH ZAYED CRICKET STADIUM HOSTS TEST CRICKET FOR THE FIRST TIME: PAKISTAN VS. SOUTH AFRICA.

2011

ABU DHABI'S FAMOUS "LEANING TOWER", CAPITAL GATE, IS COMPLETED.
CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON THE GUGGENHEIM ABU DHABI ON SAADIYAT ISLAND.
THE FIRST RESIDENTS MOVE INTO REEM ISLAND.
ETIHAD TOWERS OPENS IN NOVEMBER.
THE U.A.E. CELEBRATES THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING AS A NATION.

2012

ARCHITECT CESAR PELLI'S THE LANDMARK BUILDING IS COMPLETED ON ABU DHABI CORNICHE. AT 324 METRES (1,063 FT) IT BECOMES THE TALLEST BUILDING IN THE CITY.

IN OCTOBER, CORNERSTONE LEAVES ITS SAND GOLF COURSE VENUE, MEETS TEMPORARILY AT ST ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, AND THEN BEGINS 3+ YEARS IN A CINEMA.

WORK BEGINS ON ABU DHABI AIRPORT'S MIDFIELD TERMINAL PROJECT, DUE FOR COMPLETION IN 2017.
THE OBSERVATION DECK AT ETIHAD TOWERS OPENS TO THE PUBLIC IN NOVEMBER. LOCATED ON THE 74TH FLOOR OF TOWER TWO, 300 METRES (984 FEET) ABOVE THE CITY, IT OFFERS NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE U.A.E. CAPITAL.

2013

AN INTERNATIONAL IPSOS MORI POLL OF 18,000 PEOPLE IN 24 COUNTRIES RATES ABU DHABI AS THE WORLD'S FOURTH FAVOURITE CITY, BEHIND ONLY NEW YORK, LONDON AND PARIS.
GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING CHRISTIAN SINGER-SONGWRITER MICHAEL W. SMITH PLAYS TO A PACKED HOUSE AT THE ABU DHABI ARMED FORCES OFFICERS' CLUB IN MARCH.
CHRISTIAN TEACHER AND AUTHOR JOHN PIPER SPEAKS TO A GATHERING OF ABU DHABI CHURCHES AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE IN NOVEMBER.

2014

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY'S SAADIYAT ISLAND CAMPUS OPENS ITS DOORS TO STUDENTS.
CHRIS TOMLIN AND PASSION JOIN LOUIE GIGLIO FOR AN OPEN-AIR CONCERT AT ABU DHABI'S ARMED FORCES OFFICERS' CLUB IN MARCH.
SCENES FOR THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIES *STAR WARS: EPISODE VII THE FORCE AWAKENS* AND *FAST AND FURIOUS 7* ARE FILMED ON LOCATION IN ABU DHABI.
YAS MALL OPENS FOR BUSINESS IN NOVEMBER.
THE 92-FLOOR, 382 METRE (1,253 FT) WORLD TRADE CENTRE TOWER, THE NEWEST TALLEST BUILDING IN ABU DHABI, IS RENAMED AFTER HIS HIGHNESS GENERAL SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE U.A.E. AND RULER OF DUBAI.

2015

ABU DHABI HOSTS A LEG OF THE ROUND-THE-WORLD VOLVO OCEAN RACE IN JANUARY.

CORNERSTONE ABU DHABI CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY.

2016

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Unpacked

TESTIMONIES OF HOW CORNERSTONE CHURCH HAS IMPACTED LIVES

A FAMILY AWAY FROM HOME

FELICITY POTHECARY, UNITED KINGDOM

I started going to Cornerstone before it was Cornerstone, when it was still in Wayne and Angela's villa. This was about May 2007, and my husband Richard joined me around Christmas time 2008. We continued to attend until September 2010, when we left Abu Dhabi. There were about 30 to 40 people attending when I joined and around 100 in Al Ghazal Golf Club when we left.

I remember going to the first home group, where there was just Wayne and Angela and myself! This went on to become the home group that met in Audrey and Keith's house, where we had great fellowship and food with the many who went there. Richard and I helped with the first Alpha Course in early 2010 and I helped with a few of the Alpha meetings that we held at the Filipina safe house. Richard started playing the guitar and enjoyed playing at a few "Jam 'n Gel" sessions. The Cornerstone fellowship was a family away from home for us and a great support through prayer and friendship, especially when Richard became ill, and even after we had returned to the U.K. We had great teaching from Matt and also from the international speakers who came to visit, and great worship times led by Derek Clements and Paul Szczesiak each Friday and during the week.

Belonging to Cornerstone during our time in Abu Dhabi made our time there a great experience and I am so grateful that the fellowship brought Richard to know Jesus Christ. I pray for the continuation of the fellowship in Abu Dhabi and the spreading of God's Word around the world as people return from there to their own countries.

WARM, WELCOMING AND GREAT FUN

JOHAN, MONICA, KARLA AND MICHAEL DE VILLIERS, SINGAPORE

"IN MANY WAYS IT WAS THE MOST AMAZING TIME OF OUR LIVES"

In 2011 we had the opportunity to move from Qatar to Abu Dhabi. After praying about it we felt that it was from God and decided to go. Due to schooling terms Johan moved five months before the rest of the family, but through this difficult time we got to experience the church as our extended family, both in Qatar and Abu Dhabi. The support that we received at both ends was amazing.

We never really had to make a decision about which church to join in Abu Dhabi – we were part of Doha Fellowship and our leadership team in Doha already had a wonderful relationship with the leaders of Cornerstone. They spoke of Cornerstone with such respect and honour that our minds were made up before we even set foot in Abu Dhabi.

The first meeting that Johan attended was in a bar at the Abu Dhabi sand golf course! But what the setting lacked in attractiveness, the church community more than made up for – the people of Cornerstone were warm and welcoming and great fun to be with at the same time. There was a wonderful genuineness in their friendship that was irresistible!

During those very early days, God knitted our hearts together in an amazing way. After only a few weeks we got to know and love people in the community as if we had been there for many years. If there is one word for me to describe our time in Abu Dhabi it would be "acceleration". After only a short time we became part of the Cornerstone leadership team and it was an incredible privilege to serve with Matt, Rana, Duane and Isabel on eldership. We learnt so much from them. Some of the stand-out characteristics for us were: the energy and enthusiasm with which everyone served; the humility and groundedness; the love and care for people; how Jesus was the centre of everything; how the church is built with apostolic partners; an amazing attention to detail, which ensures that small issues don't become big issues; preaching only what is in the word of God; and experiencing first-hand that it is really God himself who builds HIS church.

What our daughter Karla experienced in Cornerstone STRIPE Youth is something that only comes once in a lifetime, and it was life changing for all of us. What an inspiration!

When we think back on our time in Cornerstone it feels like it had the effect of 10 years, while we were there less than two. In many ways it was the most amazing time of our lives and we have countless fond memories.The decision to leave was an impossibly difficult one, but today we look back with such gratitude for what God put into us in that short time, because it has become a resource and a deep well from which we draw as we serve in Singapore. In many ways it has set the standard for a local church that we aspire to as we build in this part of the world.

Happy 10th birthday Cornerstone! May you continue to grow and inspire and serve and build God's Kingdom.

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

CATHERINE CHUNG, HONG KONG

When we started going to Cornerstone in July 2013 it was a group of about 120 people meeting on Fridays in a cinema and during the week at "The Family House" in Al Raha Gardens. The first ever preach we heard was Duane, the youth leader, on intimacy with God, and it was powerful.
We spent about two years at Cornerstone. During that time, we went on four overseas mission trips. It was on the first trip, to India, that my two children Lia and Ethan decided to follow Jesus. This had a really big impact on our whole family and now we pray and study the Bible together at home. They were baptized during the trip in the ocean at Goa. We will never forget that special day – in fact, Lia has the date tattooed on her arm. The sea was so warm and frothy and we prayed and sang together until night fell.

I served on the Sound Team and learned how to set up the stage equipment for meetings. Lia served in the worship team and youth band as a singer. I have been especially blessed by the rich togetherness that is at Cornerstone, where different cultures and ages join with each other rather than splitting off into their own groups. I have also been strengthened by the apostolic ministry - speakers from other churches coming through regularly to share.

What else can I say except that there was a whole bunch of beautiful, clever, funny, creative people there, sold out for Jesus and empowered by the Spirit. I leave you with 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind. I know you're already doing this; just keep on doing it." (The Message Bible).

A SPECIAL PLACE IN OUR HEARTS

KEITH AND AUDREY JESUDESAN, TEXAS, USA

The Cornerstone Abu Dhabi family holds a very special place in our hearts.

When we arrived in Abu Dhabi in 2008 we were unsure about what God had in store for us. We were introduced to Cornerstone by a good friend. The church was meeting at the time at the Breakers bar in the Corniche Hospital – an unusual place to meet but it said a lot about the church: we met regardless of venue.

The worship, sermon and fellowship pointed us to God and would strengthen our walk with him. One clear message that resonated with us was from Ephesians about walking into our inheritance as sons and daughters of God. We took it literally and stepped forward to serve, being faithful and as obedient as we could. Slowly but surely we started seeing amazing growth and blessings from above. We had not realised that it is through serving that we receive blessings many times over.

We were honored to host a home group (Open Lounge) at our house, as well as a ladies group called "Coffee and Crafts", and we were given such support to see lives knitted together in Christ. The groups were an important part of church life and demonstrated how a church strengthens and reaches further into the community around us. We loved to make new people feel welcome, as we knew what it was like to arrive in a new country. We could not imagine before this how giving more of our time and effort to Jesus' kingdom gave us more of everything else. It was a humbling experience to be able to have served the Cornerstone family.

"A FAMILY WHERE WE TRULY GOT CONNECTED"

Cornerstone is a family where we truly got connected – to Jesus and others in the church. We thank Matt and Rana for the great example they are of the light of Christ shining to all around them. They embraced us and just loved everyone who walked in. Their heart for the Lord and people brings out the best of Cornerstone for Abu Dhabi. This is the first church we plugged into where you could literally see the body of Christ in action for his kingdom!

AN OASIS OF LIVING WATER

GRANT AND ELMARIE LITTLE, SOUTH AFRICA

Once upon a time (summer 2008), a young family from Africa wandered across the desert and after a long journey chanced upon an oasis filled with living water and many friends who soon became family. And so the family settled in this golden land, whose Christian heritage can be traced back 1,400 years, when a monk built a monastery on an island called Sir Bani Yas.

The family's new life was filled with adventure. The father, mother and their two boys, Alex and Lloyd, met amazing people from the east (India, Nepal, Malaysia), the west (Panama, Jamaica and Peru), the north (the U.S., U.K., Germany and Russia), the south (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Zimbabwe), and from nearby lands (Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt) – people who became brothers and sisters.

Many wise people travelled to the oasis to share their stories with us, and we in turn travelled to other lands – Bahrain, Sri Lanka and India – to share our stories with others.

Scrumptious meals, encounters with Bill Johnson, Philip Yancey, Heidi Baker and others, exciting trips (from camel beauty pageants to rugby matches) and generally sharing life together ensured this was no difficult exile, but an exciting life. The one and only God had blessed us with friends, experiences and a growing faith.

Over three years we had amazingly awesome times and we had tough times. We had happy times and we had sad times, as did those around us. But the community of Cornerstone made it special. Through it we learned that the family of Christ is large, loving and diverse, and that God makes his love for us visible no matter who you are or where you are from. And so we got involved wherever we could: from carrying chairs to teaching children.

We look forward to seeing all of you again – if not here or there, then in eternity ... just look out for the loud table of friends in heaven, people from all over the world, eating hummus, drinking coffee and talking about Abu Dhabi! A word of encouragement to close with: read Isaiah 45:1-3.

"GOD WANTED US TO BE PART OF HIS WORK HERE"

KEVIN AND CHARLOTTE HUMPHREY, BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

It is very encouraging to see how God has grown his community in Abu Dhabi. Our family was privileged to be a part of the initial gathering at Wayne and Angela's house where we all sat around their table meeting new people over pizza.

We had arrived from Zimbabwe into a culture very different from our own and were desperate to find friends we could connect with and share our journey and time in Abu Dhabi with. We had been attending another church, but this gathering felt like home. God wanted us to be a part of his work here. We had no family and this church became our family.

As time went on, God brought more beautiful people into the church from all parts of the world. It was always exciting to hear their testimonies and faith journeys and to share ours with them. Everyone had wonderful experiences of how God had brought them to Abu Dhabi for specific reasons.

During our six wonderful years in Abu Dhabi, the last five years of which were with Cornerstone, we helped in the children's ministry, which is always a blessing. We were meeting at the golf club by then and all the kids piled into cars as we parents and teachers had to drive them to where the driving range was, where they had the whole top floor of a building to themselves. We were also blessed with having the weekly prayer meeting and worship practice at our apartment, at the junction of Airport Road and Delma (13th) Street. It was always a time of encountering the Holy Spirit through praising God. The sweet sound of music would travel down the corridors of our apartment block.

I remember in particular one social we had when the men blessed the women with an amazing evening. They had cooked different types of roast dinners, set up white linen tables with roses and had put on entertainment. One member hadn't seen his wife in many years and the men had organised for her to fly out from Jordan to be with him. What a delight for all! The love of God knows no bounds! One of our favourite socials and outreaches was when the church put on a Christmas nativity play. It was set up beautifully in the garden at the Jones' house. There were hay bales and even a real baby for the props! Our family had managed to borrow some animal hats for the barn scene.

We have so many wonderful memories of our time in Abu Dhabi and being a part of Cornerstone was a privilege. We will always remember you fondly and pray for God's continued blessing! We have always hoped that one day we would return, even if it was for just a visit. We love you all and miss you!

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

RICKUS AND XIO BRANDT, SOUTH AFRICA

Greetings from Cape Town, South Africa! We always have fond memories of our Cornerstone years (2009 to 2011). It was like a breath of fresh air to walk into a Friday service where everyone was buzzing with what God was doing or did that week in their lives! The outside world was suspended for a while, as we entered into worship together.

We used to meet at the sand golf course, then out at the Falcon Hospital, then back at the golf course Academy building. It was amazing to hear how the kids would pray for one another during their time together – and healings would take place. Fellowship afterwards was sweet.

Xio was part of the worship team, and Rickus sweated by the projector for a while. We also were given the opportunity to re-start the Youth group that became STRIPE, and ran it with Duane and Isabel.The home groups (Open Lounges) were always something to look forward to, as we shared each other's joys and burdens, laughter and tears. And who can forget the meetings at the Family House! Food, fun, life, God! Oh, hold on ... and the "Jam 'n Gel" sessions for emerging musicians – a time to learn how to make some music, and as a group bring our musical offerings before our Father. Great memories!

We would love to encourage you all with the following words: Love one another, because through your love for one another, the world will see that God has sent Jesus and loves all mankind. And remember, let the children come to Jesus! Our love to you all.

HONOURING FAITHFULNESS

VAUGHAN AND KATHRYN GRANIER, NEW ZEALAND

Hello, beautiful people. We are so blessed to have been part of Cornerstone in its early days. When we arrived in Abu Dhabi, we were married for just a month and, like most expats, we were very new to the U.A.E. and to being so far away from the friends and family we knew. For a time our church was Well Of Life Dubai, but we were committed from the start to being part of the church plant in Abu Dhabi. We met Wayne and Angela and became part of that early home church as soon as possible. After a few months we moved from WOL to Abu Dhabi completely.

One thing that stands out so clearly for us is how the faithfulness of a few people can be LIFE to a new church. In a transient world such as the U.A.E., these people brought life to the vision. From the very first days we fondly remember Wayne and Angela Jones, Shady (and then "Shin and Shady"), Steve and Marjon Haffner, Anania, Daniel and Cclia Ling, and Gary and Nancy Loveland. These were people whose contributions were huge in so many ways. We want to honour them for being the building blocks of the church that now is.

> "IT WAS A HUGE PRIVILEGE TO CONTRIBUTE IN WHATEVER WAY WE COULD – FOOD FOR MEETINGS OR OUR HOME AS A VENUE FOR EVENTS"

Matt and Rana were very committed to inter-church relationships, so we remember with gladness Richard and Heather Pheasant and the U.A.E. National Day prayer meetings that got snarled up with traffic, and the Global Days Of Prayer where we joined hands with churches across the region to cover it with prayer. Our daughter Lexi was in fact the first baby born to members of Cornerstone church (back when it was still "Well Of Life Abu Dhabi"), and that is always a beautiful memory for us.

It was a huge privilege to contribute in whatever way we could – food for meetings or our home as a venue for events such as a Valentine's Day dinner etc. We especially want to honour Matt and Rana for building into our young marriage and supporting us through difficult learning times, as we discovered what it took to be married. Only in hindsight do we realise the depth of their passion for us and the extent of the sacrifices they made for the church as a whole, and for us specifically as a couple. It is no small thing to lead a church, and it requires no small commitment.

We also specifically want to honour Wayne and Angela Jones. Raising three daughters, delivering excellence in an incredibly demanding job, and still preparing sermons, leading worship and shepherding a young home church. Wayne and Angela, your beautiful beautiful contribution to Cornerstone stands tall. Your faithfulness through all sorts of challenges, the gift of your house and your finances to the building of the Abu Dhabi church. Thank you. We miss you.

We were there when there was a hurtful division in the church, and we saw the pain caused by a divided flock for Matt and Rana. We want to say that their kindness, their gentleness, their meekness and their trust in God were never more clear.

We now live in Wellington, New Zealand. Lexi was born in Abu Dhabi and is now eight and achieving wonderfully at school. She loves ballet and is a talented artist, interpreting her world through drawing and singing as often as she can. Aidan was born in Auckland shortly after we arrived in NZ. He is bright and loves science and maths and building things (his "creations"). Riordan and Lachlan, born in Wellington, are the fulfilment of Kathryn's dream to have twins. They are 120kph, 120 decibels of chaos and mayhem, and we love them. They are funny, silly, enchanting, challenging and completely delightful all at the same time. They love Kindy and will love school more.

We are blessed and grateful, and remember Abu Dhabi and Cornerstone church with great love. We miss you all. Love you guys.

ASK THE DEACONS

JOHN AND SAYALI SAVIO, INDIA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?

I (John) became part of this family on December 24th, 2012. I was at The Family House within three hours of finding Cornerstone online. Sayali joined Cornerstone when she arrived from India in April 2013.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?

What struck us most was the sheer diversity of nationalities and the openness and warmth with which we were welcomed.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO COME BACK?

The Spirit-filled worship and the fabulous fellowship nudged us to come back for more.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?

We were motivated by the focus of Cornerstone on mission and the simple motto to love people like Jesus did.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

We are excited to see God pushing us past our boundaries to extend his kingdom in the land of Abu Dhabi and beyond. We're excited about growth, impact and acceleration for the kingdom.

A CHURCH OF MANY FIRSTS

BOUTROS AND BRENDA ZOUKI, AUSTRALIA

We lived in Dubai for six years and went to Well Of Life. We will never forget one Friday when Matt introduced himself. I thought how nice of him to talk with us. We had no idea who he was and never thought that he would be the elder of our new church.

In 2007 we moved to Abu Dhabi and joined a home church suggested to us by our Well Of Life home group leaders Douw and Janine Meyer. Our first gathering was in Wayne and Angela Jones' home with only 20 people. Our first thoughts were, "Wow this seems small and different." The warm welcome we received made us come back for more.

A few weeks later we moved to our first venue after the villa, at the Corniche Hospital, and not long after that Matt and Rana moved to Abu Dhabi. I still remember Matt's announcement of our church's new name: "Cornerstone".

Cornerstone's venue has moved many times, usually due to unforeseen circumstances, and we learnt that the church is the people and not the building – a truth that is missed by many Christians in Western nations.

Cornerstone was a church of many "firsts" for our family, a church where:

- Our middle and youngest daughters were dedicated (Carmen and Caprice)
- I (Brenda) got baptised
- We shared our first testimony
- We learnt what a privilege it is to worship God with people from different cultures and languages (Matt used to ask us to say "I love you Jesus" in our mother tongues – it was just amazing!)
- We learnt the principles of a Bible-based church – just like in the apostles' time

Most importantly Matt, Rana and the Cornerstone members taught us what a privilege it is to feel part of a family. God's family. We experienced God's love through a family that cared about each other and served each other.

In 2012 we moved to Australia. We went to many different churches since we came here, including the main campus of Hillsong. None of the churches we went to could compare to Cornerstone. In Cornerstone we learnt that it does not matter how big your building is, what facilities you have or how famous the pastors are – we learnt that a true biblical church is a family of people who are not perfect but are connected because of their love for Jesus, and therefore they love and accept each other. We learnt that a truly biblical church stays true to God's Word no matter what the world says.

Our word of encouragement comes from Psalm 43:3: "Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me. Let them lead me to your holy mountain, to the place where you live." We truly believe we live in the age of deception. Our enemy the devil will do everything to deceive God's children and the Bible says it's possible even the elect will be deceived. However, when God's truth and light guide you, they guide you to the Lord's holy mountain, the very place he lives. Ephesians 6:17 says: "Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." The Word of God (the Bible) will protect you from being deceived and lead you to truth, and the truth will set you free.

Thank you Matt, Rana, Duane, Isabel and everyone else in the Cornerstone family. The impact you had on our lives is significant. We now go to a church called Rivergum in Sydney and when people ask why, we say it's because it is just like our Abu Dhabi family in Jesus, called Cornerstone. Love to you all.

HEART FOR PRAYER & WORSHIP

STEVEN AND MARJON HAFFNER, THE NETHERLANDS

We arrived in Abu Dhabi on February 8, 2006. Two days later we came to the home of Wayne and Angela Jones where a small group of believers was meeting as a home group church, which would grow into Cornerstone.

We were welcomed with open arms and knew that we were in the God-appointed place for our family. Our two daughters, Robyne and Bronwyn, were the only teenagers, but felt at home among caring adults. Trusting and following Holy Spirit's leading and allowing him with his full authority to guide us is critical in knowing that we are found in his perfect will.

We found ourselves involved with the music ministry, with Wayne leading with voice and Steven, Shin and Marjon playing instruments. We gave what we had, but most importantly there was a heart for prayer and worship.

We saw how God added people that complemented the ministries of the church. We prayed for more musicians to join and God soon added musicians to the worship team, with skills that enhanced every ministry as the church grew. Bronwyn was blessed with drum lessons and became the drummer in the team. Robyne assisted with the practical logistics, such as setting up instruments for worship and other chores.

What a joy it is to worship God together, to pray together, and encourage each other through difficulties, to laugh and cry together, share each other's burdens, and of course eat and celebrate together. Over the years, we came to understand that being part of God's family releases in us the ability to live life, and live it to the full, and only because Jesus is the giver of life, who not only lives in us, but is the head of the church.

We have moved on, first to Rivers Of Joy in Bahrain, and then three years later to The Netherlands. We have joined Redeemer church in The Hague, and meet in the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) which opened its doors in 1658. We continue serving God as we draw close to people here. The need is enormous and the workers are few. Europe needs Jesus. In a country that is not one's own, the sense of belonging in a family is important. God's family is what we belong to. We found God's family in Abu Dhabi for the appropriate time and season. That is what Cornerstone was to us from the beginning. We have very special bonds with friends all over the world that we met in Cornerstone Abu Dhabi.

Our encouragement to Cornerstone is to continue to be open to God's purposes as he calls people to himself to restore, encourage, become involved in ministry (no matter how small or large), and to simply love as he loves us. Philippians 4:6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

FAST FRIENDS

ANDREW AND KATE GREENSTOCK, UNITED KINGDOM

Clearly we were not "meant" to come to Cornerstone for some time despite being aware of the gatherings happening in the Jones' villa just 50 yards around the corner from our own. We went to another church where we met a South African couple whose prayers with us did deep work in our marriage.

Our decision to move to Cornerstone was influenced heavily by the warmth of the kids work and the welcome in general, and a sense that this was a place with potential for the Holy Spirit to work in us. The timing was perfect.

Matt and Rana's faith in leaving careers behind and in putting down roots in Abu Dhabi without official "sanction" was inspiring, as were Wayne and Angela Jones' tales of their efforts to get the house church started in the first place.

We soon made fast friends with several people in the church, including Richard and Felicity Pothecary. Felicity's faith in prayer for Richard, continuing after he was diagnosed with cancer, resulted in Richard's dramatic conversion testimony. It was beautiful to see the way this Commander Royal Navy (Retired) then dived into worship and songwriting.

Our commodious villa was a great venue for church socials, coming complete with a small pool with steps that made it ideal for baptisms, of which there were quite a few, including ours. Wayne talked little Ellen Jones (then six?) through her spontaneous commitment to Christ in our kitchen and then Matt baptised her forthwith!

After Wayne and Angela returned to Dubai (a sad moment indeed!) our home group moved to Keith and Audrey's. We loved the intimacy of that place and the love filling every corner. Kate's faith was deepened and enriched by the Tuesday morning women's Bible studies, led by the amazing Susan Toor. I loved having the Cornerstone women of all ages and nationalities fill our oversized living room and cuddle our baby daughter Ione. The spirit of worship at Cornerstone inspired Andrew who, through Derek's "Jam 'n Gel" sessions, picked up his guitar and played with the group. The group included the multiply-musical Haffners, including Bronny, who Derek tutored into an awesome rock drummer! We were also inspired by the ministry work Cornerstone did in workers' camps, led by Hari Sharma.

> "KATE'S FAITH WAS DEEPENED BY THE WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDIES"

Rana, your gift of giving and of noticing has never left me (Kate). The care and attention you pay is truly a gift. I am now picturing us fast walking along the Corniche sweating despite the "cool" winter air, sharing our lives. You gave me the Danny Silk *Loving Our Kids On Purpose* book which has led to God working in many ways in our lives. Your tender encouragement did not go unnoticed. And Rana, your faithfulness in believing, trusting when others would be bitter or questioning, remaining light amongst heaviness ... Love you.

We stayed in touch with lots of people after we left. It was amazing to see lives move on, with the joys of attending Derek's marriage to Fiona (at last!), Paul marrying Nadia, and seeing Felicity and Richard back in the UK before Richard's King claimed him forever.

FREEDOM OF WORSHIP

DEREK CLEMENTS AND FIONA DUERDEN, AL AIN, U.A.E.

Derek came to Cornerstone in May 2009, sent by Well Of Life Dubai to work as the church administrator and lead worship. It was a new chapter moving from Dubai to Abu Dhabi, but (with a little encouragement from Matt and Rana!) Cornerstone soon became family. Fiona arrived a year later, sent by a word of God spoken at the top of a Nepal mountain. Her very first memory of the church is of being quite distracted by the unhelpful good looks of the worship leader. What do we remember about Cornerstone? Obviously there will always be a special place in our hearts for the place where we met, but above all else we remember a sense of community, family and warmth.

One of our warmest memories is of being part of Keith and Audrey's "downtown" small group (Open Lounge), which was later led by Jacob and Blessy. We found it a place where we could really relax and be ourselves, meet God and build meaningful relationships. Keith and Audrey had a gift of creating family – and it wasn't just the food! Relationships were forged over all those wonderful Malaysian dishes, then deepened over Bible study and prophetic prayer. Freedom, honesty and openness were encouraged. Lives were shared. Small group was a safe place, a family time: a highlight of our week.

Worship at Cornerstone also stands out. Leadership completely understood and valued the freedom of worship, allowing Cornerstone to become one of the first charismatic churches in Abu Dhabi. It was a church that it was a pleasure to invite others to, knowing that the expectation of a living and active relationship with God was both taught and demonstrated. In any meeting there was an expectation that God would speak, whether personally to individuals or corporately to the church. Alongside this there were also great times at "Jam 'n Gel", another expression of community in an informal gathering to encourage musicians and singers to explore their talents. How could we ever forget Richard Pothecary and his funny but profound lyrics –especially those "love bombs"?!

> "A CHURCH IT WAS A PLEASURE TO INVITE OTHERS TO"

It seems that most of our memories involve food. When describing the sense of community at Cornerstone we often find ourselves telling people how the after-church coffee took longer than the service, and in turn often ended with us filling a row of tables at the Hanoi Vietnamese restaurant. Again, it's the relationships that stand out: conversations that ranged from points of theology to the latest cinema release and the purpose of life. Honesty and laughter, questions and tears. Friendships were fire-forged at Cornerstone that will remain with us for the rest of our lives.

We pray that God will bless Cornerstone and keep using the church to reach the people around it, providing an outward focused place of family for the community of Abu Dhabi.

Derek, from Pakistan, and Fiona, from the U.K., met at Cornerstone and were married in March 2012. They now live in Al Ain, U.A.E., where Derek serves as Director of Worship and Friday Services at Al Ain Evangelical Church.

BLESSED TO SHARE

DAVID AND HELENA DUNBAR, UNITED KINGDOM

In 2010, after several months in Abu Dhabi, we desperately needed to find a church family, and from our first Friday service at Al Ghazal Golf Club, Helena and I felt at home in Cornerstone.

We hadn't realised at the time that we were on a journey, not just from the U.K. to the Middle East, but a spiritual journey in which Matt's teaching and our Cornerstone friends would be an integral part of God's plan. Our journey culminated in a memorable pool baptism for Helena and I, our daughter Caitlin and son Conor, who had also been blessed by the work of the Holy Spirit in Cornerstone. Caitlin has very fond memories of the youth activities and she really grew in her own faith during this time, largely due to the tremendous encouragement from Duane, Isabel and Nadia, and the nurturing times with Rana. The highlight was a mission trip to Sri Lanka where Caitlin gave her testimony and learnt to surf.

During our time at Cornerstone so many of the guys in church were feeling vulnerable in job situations and the Lord inspired a vision in me for a "Band Of Brothers" men's group, in which we hoped to foster friendships, community and accountability between guys, standing alongside one another like David's mighty men. We met fortnightly for breakfast at The Family House in Al Raha Gardens, and also enjoyed a few island boat trips and games of Ultimate Frisbee! I am glad to hear that BOB continues and I have exported Ultimate Frisbee to our U.K. church! Helena sang in the worship team and together we shared in Duane and Isabel's home group.

We were blessed and privileged to share in the life of Cornerstone. Go all in for Christ guys, make the most of your time in Cornerstone. The Lord wants to fill your vessel with blessings, you just need to be empty and pure. Happy birthday Cornerstone!

A LITTLE TASTE OF HEAVEN ON EARTH

LLOYD AND ANNALISA JEFFREY, AUSTRALIA

Man we miss you guys. It has been over three years now since we left Abu Dhabi and our beloved Cornerstone family. Where did that time go? We hold you in our hearts always. Our time with you was an amazing time of growth and encouragement for our whole family.

After months of not knowing where to fellowship in a new and strange city, we came across Cornerstone and immediately knew we had found our home church. The first person who greeted us at the top of the stairs at the Al Ghazal Golf Club function room was Duane Furstenburg, one of the nicest guys we've ever met. It was 2009.

Matt and Rana were such awesome pastors to us, leading with love and grace, taking the time to nurture and involve new families amid the coming and going in this city of transit. Their belief in people and ability to equip people quickly with responsibility and integrity created a great foundation for us to be involved as active members in the body of Christ. Both our children, Olivia who was then 12 and Noah, six, (now 18 and 13), built lifelong friendships in the kids and youth groups. Olivia and Noah were both baptised in 2012. This was a poignant and joyful day we shared with our Cornerstone family.

Lloyd started to learn the guitar on his own while we lived there, and before long Paul Szczesiak had delegated him to lead worship for one of the first "Open Lounge" meetings. Even though this was a small group it was a big deal for Lloyd. He was really blessed by the music ministry team, who loved him and pushed him to realise his God-given talent. Lloyd went on to write a song after a song-writing workshop. One Friday, he led the worship team and the whole congregation in his own song, which became a regular in praise and worship.

I (Annalisa) was privileged to teach in the Cornerstone Kids ministry. This was invaluable for me. Praying before the service with Deanna Lee over the morning's teaching is a fond memory. I also helped Rana with some new branding for the Lions, Bears and Eagles, which was fun.

Preparing for the lesson was growth time for myself, learning to walk in the prophetic, stepping out in faith, laying hands on the sick ... Seeing the innocent open hearts of the kids growing from powerful messages was awesome. There were such creative lessons, with drama, crafts and real learning. The kids all had active participation in prayer and praying for each other.

Matt and Rana opened the first "Family House" during this time, sharing their home with the whole church for fellowship, meals, prayer time and ministry. The year we left had been the year of "It's All About Jesus", a word Matt had been given. And it was – a year all about Jesus. Matt and Rana are people after the heart of Jesus. The sense of the first Acts church was replicated here.

Cornerstone was a little taste of heaven here on earth. People from all corners of the globe, all colours and languages sharing their faith in Jesus, together as one.

We send our love and encouragement to the current congregation of Cornerstone. You are here for a purpose, God has brought you to this place for this time. Exercise the gifts God has given you. Walk in authority, righteousness, love and humility. Love and hugs.

"GIVE IT YOUR ALL!"

ERNEST AND LYNETTE MCMILLAN, ZAMBIA

We arrived in Abu Dhabi in June 2008, sweaty, bewildered and wide eyed. We knew that a spiritual home and a spiritual family would make this sticky-hot desert city a bearable new home. That was when our short search started.

The mother of a friend of a sister-in-law told us to try Cornerstone. I told her we enjoy lively worship. Instructions in hand, one Friday morning we set off to the staff club of the Corniche Hospital Abu Dhabi.

This was our introduction to the Cornerstone family: I clearly remember the stale smell of cigarette smoke from the previous night's customers and the glass stains on the bar counter, not to mention the reflections from the disco ball on the bald head of the preacher. That would be the pastor, then and now. We will also not forget the great egg-mayo sandwiches the hospital kitchen provided for us, placed on the covered snooker table, with tea and coffee. On that first day, there were no more than 35 people there, but soon we needed another venue as the Cornerstone family grew. Yes, we had found our new family!

We attended as many prayer meetings as possible at The Family House, which were so uplifting and empowering. I never missed a meeting of the gorgeous Cornerstone ladies Bible study and joined them in presenting the Alpha Course at the Filipina safe house. I went there to serve, but received much more than I could give. Ernest and I also facilitated the Friday morning Welcome Team, where the same thing happened. One can never out-give God.

After we left Abu Dhabi at the end of 2012, for Malawi and then Zambia, we so missed Cornerstone and our desert family. To those people who are blessed enough to be counted among the Cornerstone family now, appreciate the time you have with them. God will never leave you, but you will eventually have to leave that family behind. Give it your all!

CITY OF REFUGE

NANETTE SAUCEDA, CALIFORNIA, USA

We have been thinking a lot about how much Cornerstone has meant to us, and how to convey how crucial it was for our family to be a part of what God is doing in the Middle East. Looking back, we thank God for his sovereignty.

When we think of Cornerstone we think of the cities of refuge in the Old Testament. The cities of refuge are types of Christ, in whom sinners find a refuge from the destroyer of our souls. Cornerstone was our oasis, our refuge.

We decided to visit the church after finding it online and talking on the phone to Duane, who kindly informed us that the church met at the cinema and that he looked forward to meeting us at the next Friday service.

That day, after the congregation sang several songs, Matt took the microphone and shared that there were people there seeking God for healing and that the elders wanted to pray for them. Without hesitation David and I practically skipped several steps down to the front and stood before Matt utterly exhausted. Matt began praying for us with such a heart of compassion. The prayer was like warm oil poured over wide open wounds. Little did he know that we were battered and bruised after stepping out from what seemed like a level five hurricane. Our world had been turned upside down. We were shipwrecked.

David had only days before been released from a 28-day stay in prison. He had been arrested because our cargo shipment contained toy airsoft guns. The port authority considered these as contraband. David was arrested and sent to Abu Dhabi's maximum security prison at Al Wathba while his case was being investigated. God allowed him to share the gospel there and 21 men surrendered their hearts to Jesus, while several others rededicated their lives to the Lord. David's prison mates believed that at anytime either Tom Cruise or Jason Bourne would come busting through the thick walls to release him, such was his faith.

Meanwhile, the fierce winds of fear, doubt and uncertainly blew on me and our children Christian and Natalie, as we clung to the remaining vestiges of our faith, hoping that God would shine through this incredible dark storm and rescue us while David was imprisoned. Many nights we were gripped in terror and many tears flowed as we tried to figure out what to do and how to help. How would God deliver us?

The following Friday morning, with David now released, the wind and waves gently blew us onto the shores of Cornerstone church, a gathering of believers we would learn to call our family. We had felt absolutely deserted, abandoned and weary, but never underestimate the power of the laying on of hands and constant contact with the Father. Fear, doubt and anxiety disappeared as Matt prayed directly into our storm and the peace of the Holy Spirit began flooding our hearts and minds.

The last verse in Acts 27 says, "... some held on to planks or debris from the broken ship. So everyone escaped safely to shore." This is an accurate portrayal of our family landing on the shores of Cornerstone that first Friday we attended.

Your reward will be great and we long for the day when all you have sown produces its reward. Open Lounge leaders Paul and Nadia, dear friends Geoff and Theresa, Rachel and Renjit, Grant and Suzana, Deanna Lee and so many other spiritual warriors continue to inspire us to be current and connected in our walk with God.

CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES

TRACY DOUGLAS, PANAMA

My journey with Cornerstone began in 2012 and continued until July 2015. Cornerstone was already meeting in the cinema when I joined, but they hardly filled the venue like they did when I left! It's wonderful to see how much Cornerstone has grown in the those three years.

Right from the word go, Cornerstone challenged my church stereotyping and gently pushed me out of my comfort zone. Looking back and reflecting, that could only have been successful with the close guidance of the Holy Spirit.

There has always been something different about the members of Cornerstone that kept drawing me back during my initial visits. I think it is that the church has always been drenched in the Father's love, embracing newcomers in a way that most have never experienced before, with LOVE and complete acceptance of where you are in your journey with Christ.

For me Cornerstone epitomises family, that feeling of being loved, encouraged and comfortably at "home" in church company. It encouraged me to step out of my safely-moored boat by going to an Open Lounge (home group), attending meetings with visiting speakers at The Family House, going on a mission trip to Nepal, and lastly by publically declaring my faith by being baptized. Upon stepping out of my "boat", I discovered that God's grace abounds when one is willing. His hand is always the kindest of guides, stretching one, but ever so gently. Cornerstone encouraged me to take God's hand; they can encourage you too, if you'll let them!

EMBRACING KINGDOM CULTURE

DEANNA LEE, MALAYSIA

Time flies. The Lees arrived in Abu Dhabi in 2007. We started worshipping at Well Of Life Abu Dhabi (later Cornerstone church) on arrival from Malaysia in September that year.

The congregation then was only about 35 people. Coming from a relatively big church with a mildly charismatic style in Malaysia we had to make adjustments. I remember walking into Wayne and Angela's villa the first Friday after our arrival: Cornerstone was 90 per cent smaller than our home church! And one thing was sure, the people were really huggy people! This presented a sticky situation for us. How were body-contact-shy Malaysians supposed to cope with huggy-welcoming-friendly leader Wayne and the rest?

But slowly we transformed for the better and embraced the warmness of the fellowship. Well before we returned to Malaysia in September 2015, we were the ones extending gracious hugs to regulars and newcomers!

What does Cornerstone mean to me? Cornerstone is a church that actively loves on people. One thing I learned from Rana was, "Just love on people, Deanna." I constantly heard this from her lips.

Hmm ... All I knew was that I wanted to do the "active" work of serving the Lord with my talents and gifting. What was so important about loving on people? Then one day, the Lord reminded me that the "love" chapter of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13, is sandwiched between 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 on the spiritual gifts. Without love, we with all our gifts and abilities are like a noisy cymbal. One can be all-serving and full of gifts, yet if it is done without love, one does not glorify the Lord. Cornerstone church showed me that the way to do church is by embracing Jesus' kingdom culture with a kingdom mindset. We constantly received people from all nations with diverse spiritual experiences. I met many mature Christians who were hurting and disappointed with church, to the point they were no longer inspired to serve God. Many of us came with our own ideas of how a church should be or should behave. We had forgotten that WE are the church. What Cornerstone reminded us is that collectively we are the body of Christ. The church does not belong to Matt and Rana, it belongs to Jesus and he desires our active contribution and participation.

Cornerstone is certainly Word of God-based. Through preaching and teaching, the elders continue to lay the church's foundation on God's Word. What's also evident is an emphasis on knowing the person of the Holy Spirit and his powerful spiritual gifts in equipping the body of believers. The leadership team at Cornerstone is constantly identifying areas we need building up in and several times a year invites visiting speakers with particular spiritual gifts to come teach and help us discover our gifts, and God's power to do miracles through us.

Cornerstone's strength also lies in its many loving and caring families and individuals. In times of need, my family received lots of prayer support and words of affirmation. I am thankful that as a family, we have been well cherished and loved. We also witnessed many people genuinely extending kindness and deeds to help others in need.

I pray for and encourage everyone to play his or her part in keeping Cornerstone's unique strength going – loving on people. Do your part. Find your style. Maybe you can pray for others, be a great listener, cook a meal for a family in need, give car-less people lifts to Open Lounges and on Fridays, disciple young believers, organise games nights, welcome newcomers and include them in your circle of friends, invite friends for meals at your home or outside in restaurants ... In this way I truly believe you will represent God.

ASK THE DEACONS

GEOFF AND THERESA STOKES, USA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
September 2011.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
Duane saying hello to us and us having a very hard time pronouncing his name the way he says it.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO COME BACK?
The friendly people and the "surrendered to the leading of the Holy Spirit" nature of the service. Also the invite to lunch – the fellowship and interest in us was cool.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
Being more involved in the life of Cornerstone and with what the Holy Spirit is doing. We care deeply about seeing people move up and out in the calling and purpose of God. I (Theresa) see myself as a helping hand or a nudge from behind or a sign pointing them to Jesus.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
Growth. A huge move of God bringing people who want more out of life and are hungry to live set apart for God. Seeing more people step out in faith to use their gifts within the body.

AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE WITNESSED THE GROWTH OF CORNERSTONE IN ITS FIRST 10 YEARS ARE THOSE WHO HAVE QUITE LITERALLY GROWN UP IN THE CHURCH – OUR AMAZING YOUTH. WE ASKED 14 MEMBERS AND FORMER MEMBERS OF OUR STRIPE YOUTH GROUP TO SHARE ON HOW THE CHURCH HAS IMPACTED THEM.

KARLA DE VILLIERS, aged 15
(11 when her family joined Cornerstone)

I only lived in Abu Dhabi with my family for 18 months, but I can confidently say that they were by far the best 18 months of my life. Cornerstone and STRIPE Youth had such an amazing impact on my life, and I have made memories and friends that I will treasure for the rest of my life.

I only fully realised how lucky we were to be a part of such a loving church when we moved to Singapore – there is nowhere else in the world where you could ever find such an amazing group of dynamic, enthusiastic and passionate people. The willingness to serve and sense of community blows my mind.

From our golf club days, to fellowship over a Subway sandwich every Friday morning, to Youth meetings with way too much sugar, to day trips to islands, to disaster F1 concerts, to mission trips to Sri Lanka and playing games into the early hours of the morning, I have loved every second at Cornerstone and can't thank you guys enough for the blessing that you have been to me and my family!

ROBBIE LAW, aged 16 (12 when his family joined Cornerstone)

One of my favourite memories of Cornerstone was the first day. My parents had struggled to get me to church before, but when I arrived at Cornerstone and was greeted by all the smiling faces, I knew that it was different from any other church! Since then I have become more and more involved with worship and Youth, which have both come such a long way from when I arrived in 2011.

It is incredible to see how God has blessed us with an awesome worship team and how amazingly talented they are. STRIPE Youth has completely transformed me. I started off as a guy who thought he knew about Christianity but wasn't nearly dedicated enough. But with the amazing help and leadership from Duane and the team, I am now helping to lead the Youth, which has grown to be so big. It is amazing to see how far it has progressed – when I arrived there were only seven regular attendees and now there are over 30. We also now have "Relentless", the most awesome youth band.

My favourite memory of STRIPE Youth is the Truth Conference 2015, when all the Sri Lankans started dancing with us and we had the most amazing praise party!

"STRIPE YOUTH IS SOFT TURF FOR TEENAGERS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CHRIST"

FROM LEFT, KEVIN GAA, ELDERS PAUL, MATT AND DUANE, BENJAMIN LEE, ROHAN TOOR AND JOSHUA TOOR, 2014.

TAMSIN LAW, aged 13 (nine when her family joined Cornerstone)

One of my earliest memories in the church was getting baptised. Another early memory would be going to Sri Lanka on mission for the first time. This was an amazing experience. I remember the tuk-tuk rides up mountains with really narrow roads to get to a small church. My best memory from that first trip was probably going up a mini waterfall on the way to someone's house on a hill somewhere. That trip really got me thinking about other people's situations. I've learnt so much from all of the things I've done in the church, but the mission trips have probably given me the most opportunities and taught me the most.

My time in STRIPE Youth has been absolutely amazing. Everyone loves it so much. I love it so much that I would never think of missing one night or a weekend away. Watching it grow so big has been awesome. I think everyone has become each other's second family (everyone definitely has for me.) Youth has really impacted me in so many different ways, and I'm sure it has for others as well! I can't wait to see what's coming for the church, for kids church and for Youth in the next few years!

BEN LEE, aged 16 (eight when his family joined Cornerstone)

Cornerstone church has always been a home to me. It has always been a place I would look forward to going to every Friday, especially after a hectic week of school and activities. Attending Cornerstone has given me the freedom to worship God and express myself, even though we are living in an Islamic country. Cornerstone has also played a large part in guiding me towards strengthening my relationship with God, along with meeting like-minded Christians of my age.

Cornerstone's STRIPE Youth is a fun and exciting place to bond with many young Christians with a diverse range of personalities and talents. It is also soft turf for many teenagers to explore and find out more about Christ. Serving in the Cornerstone band and the STRIPE Youth band "Relentless" has given me space to explore and improve my musical talents to worship God.

Another important aspect of Cornerstone is its diversity: it is a safe medium where people with different backgrounds and cultures can come together and meet. It's a great way to connect and to meet new life-long friends!

One of my favourite moments was when STRIPE Youth went to Umm Al Quwain and stayed overnight for the Alpha Course's Holy Spirit weekend. It was an exciting adventure with tons of activities and competitions. Moreover, it gave us the space and opportunity to escape our busy lives and to connect and listen to the Holy Spirit!

"MISSION TRIPS TAUGHT ME THE MOST"

JOELLE LING, aged 13 (four when her family joined Cornerstone)

I've been going to Cornerstone almost as long as I remember, and all the memories I've had of it have always been fond ones. I never thought I'd find so many great people in one place – a place I could call my second home and a people I could call a second family.

It's true that there was a period of time where I'd grown distant from it and had questions about my own faith, but when I came back, I no longer had any doubts. That's the kind of effect Cornerstone had on me, especially STRIPE Youth. Everyone's just so accepting and loving to the point I can't explain it in words.

Cornerstone isn't just a church for me, it's a place that changed me; a place where I could grow closer to God as well as the loving people around me. Overall, Cornerstone is a family I could never replace.

There are a lot of different memories I could talk about, but the best one of all probably has to be an overnight stay with the rest of the Youth, maybe because it was the first time I got to get to know everyone there and have fun along with it. It's something I'll probably never forget.

ROBBIE, TAMSIN, ROHAN AND LIA IN NEPAL, 2015.

ROHAN TOOR, aged 17 (11 when his family joined Cornerstone)

A picture many imagine when visualising church for the first time is of a doleful chapel, hard wooden pews and a monotone organ chorus … Let me tell you that Cornerstone is anything but this.

Passionate, warm, loving and unwavering in its message of the gospel, these are the words I'd use to describe Cornerstone. The reason for this is the amazing impact the church has had on me. Opportunities such as becoming part of the worship team and becoming a member of the world's greatest youth group, STRIPE, have radically impacted my walk with the Lord.

I am so excited for the new season that lies ahead, and for all the new opportunities that we as a body will have to honour and worship God with all that we have, and more!

SARAH ELLIS, aged 17 (15 when she and her mom joined Cornerstone)

Looking back at the first time I stepped into Cornerstone, I was overwhelmed with the sense of community and how friendly everyone was. It was so great how my mom and I immediately fitted in to this amazing church group. I quickly made friends with the kids in STRIPE Youth and consider them to be my lifelong and best friends today. STRIPE Youth has allowed me to meet so many new people and make new friends. We have been on fun trips together, as well as joining with other youth groups from around Abu Dhabi and the other emirates. But more importantly it has taught me more about God. Cornerstone has helped me develop my relationship with him. Shortly after joining the church I gave my life to the Lord.

I have so many amazing memories, such as the time we went to Sri Lanka, where we helped a lot of people give their lives to the Lord; where we shared his word through our testimonies; and where I was baptised in the sea alongside one of my friends.

LIA CHUNG, aged 16 (14 when her family joined Cornerstone)

Being exposed to Christianity in a youth group or church can have the biggest impact when the people around you are loving, full of Jesus, fun and supporting. The people of STRIPE Youth and the Cornerstone church family as a whole are exactly like that. For me, simply being around them was amazing, because it opened such a great opportunity for God to shine through and get to me.

I have so many memories with these one-of-a-kind people, it's hard for me to write only a few down. Some of my earliest memories were nights in Duane's old house in Al Reef, like the night when Elisa and I turned up wearing matching cat onesies. Another memory is the beautiful journey I went on with the worship band, which started with me wishing for the connection that the singers had with the Lord and ended with me developing that same connection with God myself through leading songs on Youth nights.

My favourite moments include the night I gave my life to the Lord; times of intense worship and soaking where God's presence was strong; and praying for people on mission trips, as there is nothing better than knowing that you are living out God's will by showing others who he is.

Even though I am miles and miles away in Hong Kong, Cornerstone and STRIPE Youth will always be like family to me. I love and miss you all so incredibly much!

DANIEL SAGAR, aged 20 (15 when his family joined Cornerstone)

Bula (hello) from Fiji. First of all I would just like to say … WOW! STRIPE! It's amazing to see what God has done in our church and Youth group, not only in the numbers, but also in our flame.

When I started in Youth at Cornerstone, there were only five of us – I know right, quite boring. But man, the fun we had made up for our numbers! Haha! And a good thing about our numbers in the beginning was that we all learned to be close – to God and each other. We knew that no matter what, we would be there for each other without question, and I see that same support in the STRIPE Youth family today.

CORNERSTONE'S YOUTH ON MISSION IN SRI LANKA, 2012.

Favorite moments? Hmm … I would have to say Sri Lanka 2012. Guys, if you haven't done the trip IT IS A MUST! I think the biggest lesson everyone learned was not to take for granted what we have, and to be humble. Seeing the struggle the Sri Lankan people experienced, especially after the tsunami, but then looking at their lives and seeing how content they were with what little they had, that was a real slap in the face for all of us. It was without doubt my most favourite trip. Also not to leave out our boat trips to "STRIPE Island" in Abu Dhabi!

I shall leave you with this: "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong" – 1 Corinthians 16:13. Love you guys.

"PASSIONATE, WARM, LOVING AND UNWAVERING IN ITS MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL"

CAITLIN DUNBAR, aged 15 (12 when her family joined Cornerstone)

So much of who I am today is because of the influence of the church, the leaders and friends at STRIPE Youth. Because of them I can now lead a church into worship, to help others discover God in the way I experienced. I don't have many years behind me, but I know I can make a difference.

The amount of time the leaders inputted into my life really allowed me to grow both in the church and outside in the world. They have seen me mature in spirit and joy as a member of the next generation.

Before I left Abu Dhabi to live back in England, I was told I had the passion to lead, and this has continued through the tough times. I am so grateful to everyone at Cornerstone and I pray that no young person will ever take for granted how much some people can impact and change your life. Go out and make disciples of all nations. God has an incredible plan for all of us. Be bold, be courageous, be passionate, be sincere, be compassionate and be yourself, a daughter or son in Christ. "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" – Exodus 33:14. See also Jeremiah 31:3.

HOLLY STOKES, aged 15 (11 when her family joined Cornerstone)

I remember the first day I came to Cornerstone. I was really confused as to why we were at a golf course venue. I had just come from this huge church of a least 600 people to this little church meeting in the strangest place and it barely had 50 people. But little did I know that the little church I walked into at the age of 11 would have been the best thing to ever happen to me.

In March 2014, the Youth had a Holy Spirit weekend and that's what really blasted off the growth in my faith. Being involved in STRIPE Youth has impacted my faith and has grown me a great deal thanks to the Youth leaders and members.

One of my favourite moments in the church is when I first played with the band as a new member in May 2014. That day was a major breakthrough for me and my expression of love for God. That summer, I was baptized in the Spirit and received the gift of tongues, and ever since then I've been singing in church, serving God with the gift he's blessed me with, and continuing my fascinating and passionate walk with him.

ROBYN OKANOME, aged 16 (nine when her family joined Cornerstone)

I joined the church with my family when I was nine years old, and then STRIPE Youth when I was 12, and at first it was a weird experience. I had never been with so many people who loved each other and God so much and it felt amazing to be welcomed by so many people.

Being in Youth encouraged me to go on my first mission trip. We went to Sri Lanka. It was my first time travelling without my parents and I was so scared, but the mission trip was one of the most amazing things I've ever experienced. I had never been bold enough to pray for someone myself or step out and share my testimony, but God and the leaders just gave me that confidence. Since then I have been on two more mission trips, both to Sri Lanka and all equally amazing.

Being in the church encouraged me to give my life to the Lord. Times at Youth, church services and events have impacted my life so much in such a small amount of time and I will be eternally grateful.

SHIRLENE SAGAR, aged 16 (11 when her family joined Cornerstone)

My earliest memory of Cornerstone was the time we had Youth at The Family House and there was only like 10 of us, and that night we came up with the name "STRIPE".

My favourite thing that has happened while I've been in Cornerstone is being able to watch the church grow every Friday from around 100 people in a small hall to nearly 350. I know for a fact that I wouldn't still be in Abu Dhabi if it wasn't for the people in church and the friendships that we have made.

JOSH TOOR, aged 16 (10 was when his family joined Cornerstone)

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" – Matthew 18:20.

An intrinsic part of my life since the day I was born, I have always considered church to be a home away from home. Having been a part of only two churches, I consider Cornerstone to be my home church, as I have been a part of its community since I was 10 years old.

Since then, I have felt involved in all matters of the church, being voluntarily absorbed into all available facets, such as Youth and the worship team. A supplement of my personal walk with Jesus, Cornerstone, from my perspective, along with others, embodies love in action, fostering a culture of hospitality and friendship, showering love on all who walk through its doors. An extension of this relevant to my walk has been its Youth Group, which has been integral to my development as a Christian, providing a safe haven for me to be accountable without judgment and learning to love in the same way Jesus did! So in short, my church is awesome!

"SO MUCH OF WHO I AM TODAY IS BECAUSE OF THE CHURCH, THE LEADERS AND FRIENDS AT STRIPE YOUTH"

ASK THE DEACONS

RANVIR AND SUSAN TOOR, INDIA

WHEN DID YOU JOIN?
September 2009.

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MEMORY?
That it is multicultural, friendly and "real". At the time it was meeting at Al Ghazal Golf Club.

WHAT MADE YOU COME BACK?
We enjoyed worship, and the prophetic word shared by the leaders during the service was spot on and spoke directly to me.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO SERVE AS DEACONS?
It seemed like a natural outworking of God's call on our lives.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?
We're excited to "rest" in the Lord and be a part of this new chapter of the church. I (Susan) am also expectant for a fresh anointing in the Women's Ministry.

Partners & Friends

WE NEVER WALK ALONE

TYRONE DANIEL

A MODEL FOR MANY TO IMITATE

TYRONE DANIEL, THE LEADER OF NEW COVENANT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL (N.C.M.I.), WHICH PARTNERED WITH WELL OF LIFE IN THE PLANTING OF CORNERSTONE, WRITES FROM DENVER, COLORADO, WITH HIS THOUGHTS ON OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY.

Congratulations on a task well done! We celebrate with heaven and with you on your 10 years of carrying out a great task for the King and his kingdom.

Cornerstone has not only had a God impact in your region but also across the nations of the world. You guys are a true inspiration and I believe have become a "model" for many to see, know, understand and imitate what it means to be true followers of Jesus.

It has been a joy for us to watch, pray and even at times have the privilege of being personally involved in your God story as a community, from your humble beginnings to where you are today.

"CORNERSTONE HAS NOT ONLY HAD A GOD IMPACT IN YOUR REGION BUT ALSO ACROSS THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD"

Well done in obeying, believing and stepping into all that God has ordained for you. Because of your desire and determination to be a people who exist for the benefit of others, many lives and destinies have been altered and affected for eternity.

We cannot wait to see what God will do in and through you guys in the next 10 years. Remember, you haven't been called to "SURVIVE" the culture but have been commissioned to TRANSFORM it! Go big in him, with him, for him and I'm still convinced that if you make your life about him, your ministry will always be about him!

Isaiah 58:11-12 is a promise for you guys. Blessings and know we are cheering for you all the way.

ROB HUTTON

PREGNANT WITH PROMISE

CORNERSTONE WAS THE FIRST CHURCH PLANT OUT OF WELL OF LIFE DUBAI. 10 YEARS ON, THE CURRENT LEADER OF THAT "SENDING" CHURCH SHARES HIS PERSPECTIVES ON OUR GROWTH.

We are so delighted to share this milestone with you – 10 years! It's amazing that God has allowed Linda and I to be spectators to this wonderful story from the very beginning, with our friends Wayne and Angela's move to Abu Dhabi – a city we knew only by the fantastic pictures our imaginations created.

We loved hearing the reports about a group beginning to gather in Wayne and Angela's home, and by the grace of God, which enabled it to grow and flourish. It seemed just like the God we serve to take such an ordinary situation of a work transfer and to use it as the seed for something extraordinary. We remember Mike Eltringham telling with joy how vibrant this little community was becoming and of the incredible job the Joneses were doing in loving and feeding it.

As it continued to do what all things seeded in God do – grow – it became increasingly obvious that God was looking for a couple who would take on the mantle of elders in this community. We already knew Matt and Rana and celebrated when the news came that they would be moving 'south' to take this community of faith into its next season as Cornerstone Church. Seeing a photo of a recent meeting in the cinema, we can see the wonderful fruit that has come from their leadership.

Little did we know that we ourselves would be picked up by God and set down in the same nation. When we arrived in Dubai in 2011, one of the first couples to welcome us was Matt and Rana, who invited us to minister at Cornerstone. What struck us that day was how warm that fantastically diverse group of people was. They were ready to receive every single person who came through the door. I know in the past few years much has changed as people have come and gone, leaving their mark, but that DNA of a God-glorifying, loving and apostolic church just seems to have gotten stronger and stronger. Enjoy your birthday Cornerstone, but know the years ahead are pregnant with promise.

FRED & VANESSA DALAIS

FROM A DAY OF SMALL THINGS

PARIS-BASED CHURCH PLANTERS FRED AND VANESSA DALAIS, WHO WERE ON THE WELL OF LIFE ELDERSHIP TEAM THAT OVERSAW THE ABU DHABI CHURCH PLANT AND WERE THE FIRST OF THOSE ELDERS TO MINISTER IN IT, SHARE THEIR MEMORIES OF OUR FORMATIVE YEARS FROM 2005 TO 2007, AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE FUTURE.

Zechariah 4:10, about not despising the day of small things when God's people begin a building work, is a scripture that's used a lot when a ministry begins. It was, most likely, a scripture used when Wayne and Angela set out to start a home group in Abu Dhabi. It's not always possible to see what a work will become when it's born, but we know that it has great potential.

We remember the impression we felt on one of our first visits to Abu Dhabi in those early days about 10 years ago, that God was planting a new work in Abu Dhabi to reach the city and from the city to reach the nations. This was God's idea and his doing. It was very exciting and exhilarating, yet the group was very small at the time. Still it had within it the potential that we have since seen realised through you, and that we will continue to see realised in increasing measure.

"GOD HAS POSITIONED YOU AT 10 YEARS OF AGE TO WALK INTO MORE OF HIS PLANS. SO KEEP GOING WITH YOUR EYES FIXED ON JESUS"

We also clearly remember being in the elders meeting in Well Of Life in Dubai when Matt and Rana shared that God had placed Abu Dhabi on their hearts and that they would be willing to relocate to become the visionary elders/pastors of the church that was beginning to take shape there. This was again God's provision at the right time, a further establishing of what he wants to do. There was unanimous agreement and excitement that this was the right couple and the right time.

We have been delighted to see what is happening in and through Cornerstone since those early days, through visits or from a distance. Through you many lives have been touched, the gospel has gone forth, Jesus has been praised and adored, saints have been equipped, the lonely have found family, leaders have been raised, other churches have been encouraged and strengthened, and much more. The Kingdom of God has advanced.

And in you is the potential of great things. In many ways it is still "the day of small things", in many ways it is still the beginning. God has positioned you at 10 years of age to walk into more of his plans. So keep going with your eyes fixed on Jesus. God has placed you in Abu Dhabi to impact that city, the UAE, the region and the nations of the world.

To all who have made, and continue to make, Cornerstone what she is today, we salute you and rejoice with you on this 10th birthday. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do.

To Matt and Rana and the elders at Cornerstone, congratulations on this great occasion and well done for your faithfulness in leading this chosen lady called Cornerstone into her inheritance. We understand the privilege and the price as well as the joy and the pain of leadership. We salute you.

We pray that the message of the Lord will continue to spread rapidly and be honoured among you and through you (2 Thessalonians 3:1). We stand alongside you in friendship, partnership and prayer to see this happen.

TONY & LINDA JOHNSON

A TIME FOR FAMILY, WORK AND PLAY

NEW DELHI-BASED CHURCH LEADERS TONY AND LINDA JOHNSON ARE FREQUENT VISITORS TO CORNERSTONE AND OUR PARTNERS IN MINISTRY DURING CORNERSTONE VISITS TO INDIA, NEPAL AND MYANMAR/BURMA. HERE THEY OFFER A HUMOUROUS TAKE ON WHAT IT MEANS TO TURN 10.

Happy 10th birthday! What a church. What amazing people. What love we have experienced from you. What power and potential there is in each of you. We love you so much and are so happy that we will always be part of your past, present and future.

So now you're 10 you've graduated to 4th Grade! Here are some characteristics of a 10-year-old, which we might learn and take encouragement from:

10-year-olds are known to really love their family and family life. Most, even if they have bouts of sounding less than loving to their family members, really do love and respect and admire their parents, family activities and outings. This is an age of happiness – most 10-year-olds tend to be more happy than they were at nine.

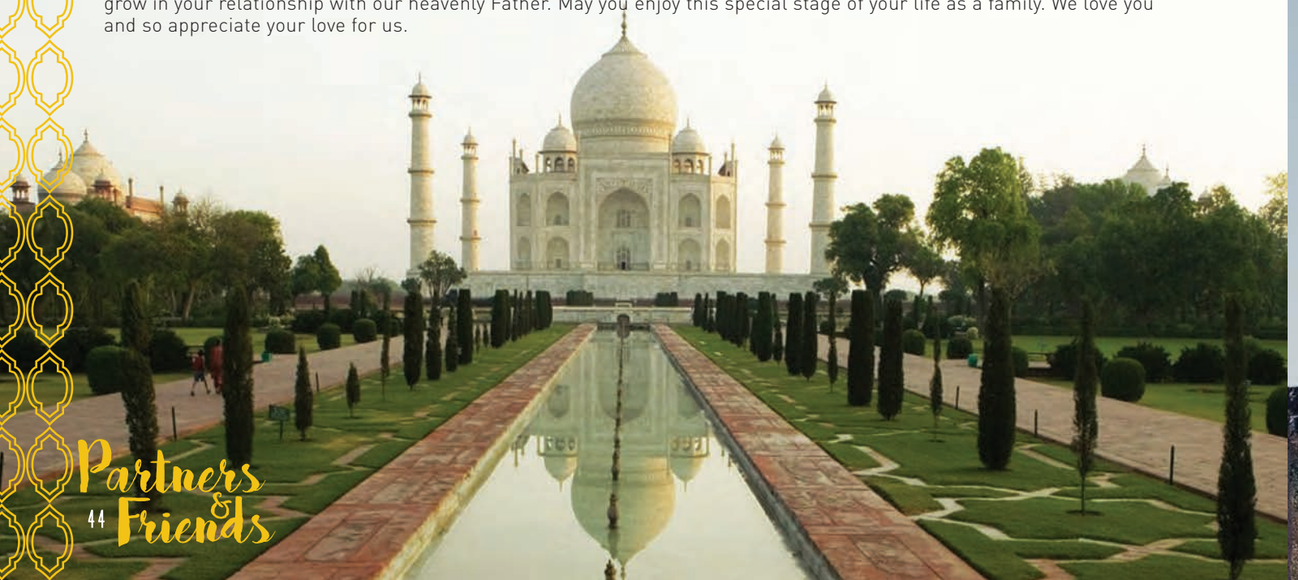
10-year-olds tend to respect their teacher and work hard in school. They have many interests and are very active. They aren't yet aware of when they are tired, and they need to be reminded about bed and rest. Tens move around a great deal, often just for the sheer joy of movement rather than to conform to any special rules of a game – the sheer pleasure of exercising one's body is enough. It's an age of creativity – collecting things, making models, sewing, cooking, drawing and reading are all popular.

10-year-olds may not always know right from wrong. A 10-year-old boy usually goes by what his parents tell him, or by what he learns in children's ministry at church. A 10-year-old may become teary and cry when angry, but it is one of the last really tearful stages. Fairness is really important to them.

10-year-olds show a dramatic increase in the need for physical affection from their parents. Fathers hold a very important role. Tens love to do things with their fathers. They love their friends as well and are thrilled to have a special best friend.

High levels of energy, playing to the point of fatigue, generally being easy going, content, friendly and balanced – all these are characteristics of a 10-year-old ...

So as Cornerstone celebrates its 10th anniversary, may this year be full of all the good things above, as you continue to grow in your relationship with our heavenly Father. May you enjoy this special stage of your life as a family. We love you and so appreciate your love for us.



AFTER "WELL OF LIFE ABU DHABI" BECAME "CORNERSTONE" IN 2008, THE FIRST EPHESIANS 4:11-GIFTED MINISTER TO PREACH IN THE CHURCH WAS DAVE WALLEN FROM DOHA FELLOWSHIP, QATAR. NOW BASED IN THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS, DAVE AND HIS WIFE CATHY WALLEN SHARE THEIR IMPRESSIONS OF THE CHURCH.

A MOST BEAUTIFUL BRIDE

DAVE & CATHY WALLEN

"Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready" – Revelation 19:7.

When I think of Cornerstone, *writes Dave*, which I often do, I think of Revelation 19 and see a most beautiful bride standing with dignified poise and elegance – enthusiastically waiting for her bridegroom. She is breathtakingly and heart-stoppingly beautiful. She is dazzling and fiery. She is confident and courageous. She is caring and committed. She is blushing with graceful humility. I see that the bride is being made ready for her groom – King Jesus.

As I picture Cornerstone in my mind I see that Matt and Rana, with the elders and deacons, are making the bride ready – with perfect skill, noble wisdom, intelligent endurance and systematic instruction, borne out of industry and infused with a pure and delicate yet passionate love. I see that this bride is as busy as she is beautiful, because, "'it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure' – for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints." (Revelation 19:8.)

I see Cornerstone doing the righteous deeds of the saints throughout the earth – demonstrating and promulgating the reality of Christ and His Kingdom in the neighbourhoods of the Arabian Gulf states and in the nations of the world. How marvellous!

I saw this glorious quality when I first visited Cornerstone, back in the early days, shortly after the very delightful Wayne and Angela had handed over the reins to Matt and Rana.

I see too that Matt and Rana flawlessly exemplify that "salvation and glory and power belong to our God." This is verified in their innate obedience to Jesus and his call on their lives, and in their profound tenderness towards the Cornerstone bride.

We, around the world, as loyal friends and allies of Cornerstone can truly "rejoice and exult and give Jesus all the glory" at what has happened over the last 10 years and look forward to all that is yet to be birthed through INCREDIBLE CORNERSTONE.

Cathy writes, I just remember how enthusiastic Matt and Rana were, with passion that everyone would feel loved, included and part of a family. They strived and fought for this. Now, 10 years on, they are still as passionate and dedicated to their vision to love those around them. I sit back and see the remarkable fruit this active loving has produced. God has caused wonderful growth in all areas of individual lives and, collectively, the church. I am proud to be able to say I know Matt and Rana and am a friend of Cornerstone. I do feel that in the future there will be a call upon you and doors opened for you to be able display your love in hands-on ways for orphans and widows, because this is your heart. I see a picture of you throwing windows open and confetti and sunlight bursting out in exuberance and joy.

I think that "church life" is going to become ever more adventurous and wondrous for the Cornerstone family. I see many, many people coming to wholeness through your ministry and the way you have built – everyone from Cornerstone daily involved in someone's life, bringing life.

TOM & UNA TAPPING

HEALTHY DNA

IN 2011, VETERAN CHURCH LEADERS TOM AND UNA TAPPING TRAVELLED FROM NORTH CAROLINA, USA, TO SPEND TIME IN CORNERSTONE AND ORDAIN OUR SECOND ELDERSHIP COUPLE, DUANE AND ISABEL FURSTENBURG. THE TAPPINGS RECALL THEIR TIME AT CORNERSTONE (AND A TRIP TO FERRARI WORLD).

"GOD'S FINGERPRINTS ARE ALL OVER CORNERSTONE AND THIS BODES SO WELL FOR THE FUTURE AS YOU CONTINUE TO BE PART OF WHAT HE IS DOING"

Congratulations on your 10th year anniversary! It's an important milestone, an opportunity to look back to where you have come from, forward to where you are going, and to celebrate Jesus lavishly, *writes Tom.*

We visited Cornerstone four years ago – not just a "pop-in", preach-and-go visit but a six-week immersion into the life and essence of Cornerstone. Living at The Family House with Matt and Rana was both delightful and edifying. We experienced a couple who were, along with the leadership team they were gathering around them, highly capable yet humble, fun, crazy, foodies, passionate about Jesus, thorough, generous in every way and full of faith even in challenging moments. We were thoroughly refreshed and left in love both with Abu Dhabi and her people. (The only moment of pride was Matt beating me on the Ferrari World simulator.) It was a rich time for us indeed and we are sure this is your experience too. We were also there for Duane and Isabel's coming onto eldership. Paul was also around but not an elder and there was no Nadia then. (Now there's Nadia and eldership – yes!)

The DNA of Cornerstone was evident from day one. At the many different meetings that took place at The Family House we experienced community and family at a deep level. Passionate worship and prayer, planning for the development of more leaders, a fun marriage seminar, strategizing more adventures to the nations, Holy Spirit ministry times, teaching times, outward looking hearts, and huge swathes of laughter and amazing food.

At the time of our visit, Cornerstone was meeting at the sand golf course. Since then we know you have been in other venues. This speaks to your DNA. Church is not "the building" but rather about community, the mission and the worship of Jesus. That flexibility has served you and is a contributing factor to growth. You are also an unpretentious church that is quietly getting on with answering God's call to the nations, both in Abu Dhabi and beyond. Magazine covers and cheap fame is not you. Thank you! Plus you have fun in the doing.

At the 10 year mark it is very clear that the DNA is intact and stronger. As you have built "line upon line" you have grown in stature, with more people and leaders added, and more opportunities into the nations. Looking back it is evident that God has not been with you on YOUR mission but rather that you have experienced his faithfulness as you have been on HIS mission. God's fingerprints are all over Cornerstone and this bodes so well for the future as you continue to be part of what he is doing. That same faithfulness will be evident as we celebrate new victories in another 10 years' time. Cornerstone church, in these 10 years you have built an Ebenezer (1 Samuel 7:7-12) to the living God; we along with all those who love and pray for you, loudly applaud you and simply say, "More of the same please!"

Una writes, How quickly the years go by! 10 years! Well done Cornerstone church! It's so amazing to see what God has done in a desert land, to make an oasis for his people through his church. We are so grateful and privileged that he allowed us to be a small part of it four years ago.

Matt and Rana, thank you for answering the upward call of Jesus, in being faithful servants, along with all the faithful that make up Cornerstone. My prayer is that you will always love and obey our King, and walk in his truth and way. Stand firm in the face of trials. Live in a way that brings much glory to this magnificent King. We love you all so much and are glad to call you family.

KEVIN & NICOLE VAN ECK

THE ANTHEM OF UNITED HEARTS

WHEN THEY FIRST VISITED CORNERSTONE IN 2009, KEVIN AND NICOLE VAN ECK WERE LEADING A CHURCH IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA. NOW ON ELDERSHIP AT DOHA FELLOWSHIP, QATAR, THE VAN ECKS REFLECT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING STRONG AND COURAGEOUS.

Nicole and I were visiting the Middle East region for the second time in March 2009 when we were invited by Matt and Rana to come and be with you as a church after our visit with Well Of Life in Dubai. I remember you were meeting at the golf club on Fridays and Wayne Jones was leading the worship.

One of the things that stood out to us about this growing community of God's people was your sincere hunger for God's purposes. It was like there was an anthem coming out of your hearts that declared: "WE WANT WHAT GOD WANTS!"

I also remember how your meeting on Friday started at 10am in the upper room and finished at around 3:30pm down in the clubhouse restaurant. The desire the people had to simply be together around this person Jesus was something that really stood out to Nicole and me. The other thing that deeply impacted us was the number of nations that were represented in the church and how you were all pulling together to serve God.

Besides the Friday gathering, we also had a meeting with a group of current and potential leaders at Wayne and Angela's home. It was a rich evening of encouraging many with prophetic words. As Nicole and I simply spoke what we saw over people's lives we realised what incredible wealth lay hidden in so many of the people there.

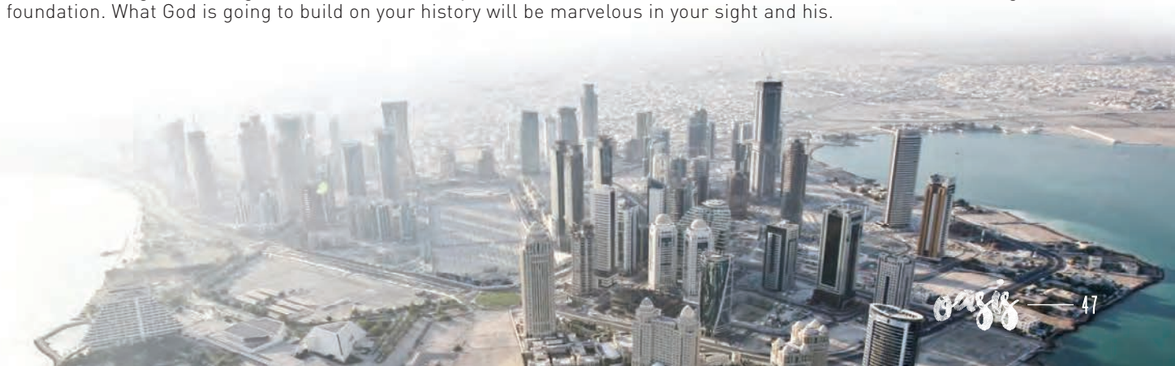
"ONE OF THE SIGNS OF GOD'S KINDNESS TO A CHURCH IS THE QUALITY OF THE LEADERS GOD GIVES"

A picture that will remain etched in my mind though, was seeing a bunch of the ladies, led by Angela Jones, racing around a temporary track on the ground floor of their villa on children's wriggle trikes. Wayne and Angela had been a vital part of the start and early growth of Cornerstone. It was very clear to us that having FUN on the journey was mandatory. After Matt and Rana Jones had come in to give leadership to Cornerstone, Wayne and Angela continued to serve as deacons. At that time they were in the process of moving back to Dubai. Over the years we have got to know Wayne and Angela as good friends who are blissfully unaware of the incredible couple they really are.

One of the other couples we had the delight of spending time with during our visit and who need to be applauded for the excellent way they love and lead is Matt and Rana. They hosted us in their home with sacrificial excellence and proudly took us around their great city to see some of the sights. One of the signs of God's kindness to a church is the quality of the leaders God gives. You have many wonderful people God has put in place to lead and guide.

The message Nicole and I came with on that visit was from Joshua 1:6-9: "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous ..." I encourage you to go and read to the end of verse 9. The sense we had was that in light of the incredible inheritance God had placed before you as church, he wanted and needed you to be a community that was strong and courageous.

One of the things that has delighted us over the years as we have followed your story has been to see how strong and courageous you have been as you have stepped out into all that God has planned for you as a people. If maturity is measured by the willingness to take responsibility, you fit that definition very well. You definitely are a people that are mature beyond your years. Your passion for this region and for the nations is inspiring. Our encouragement to you is still be strong and courageous. What lies behind you is a valuable investment into what is a beautiful and strong foundation. What God is going to build on your history will be marvelous in your sight and his.



KEIR & CALLIE TAYLER

AN APOSTOLIC MANTLE FOR NATIONS

BASED IN PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA, FORMER SPECIAL OPS SOLDIER AND EVANGELIST KEIR TAYLER AND HIS WIFE CALLIE MINISTERED AT CORNERSTONE IN 2014 AND 2015. AS WE CELEBRATE OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY, THE TAYLERS SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS ON WHERE GOD IS LEADING HIS PEOPLE FROM THIS MILESTONE EVENT.

Ten years ... Congratulations! What a celebration!

We first met Matt and Rana many years ago when they were elders with Well Of Life and then more recently, in 2013, we met again on a trip to Sri Lanka and they invited us to bring "such as we carry" into the life of Cornerstone.

We were both so amazed by the international representation in the church and how it is such a FAMILY. The Family House is a place where all sorts of nationalities gather under one roof to share their lives and worship the King. We were welcomed with open arms and embraced into the life of the church. Many different people come to Cornerstone because of its LOVE. We both sensed this love to be evident amongst the people and it was easy to minister.

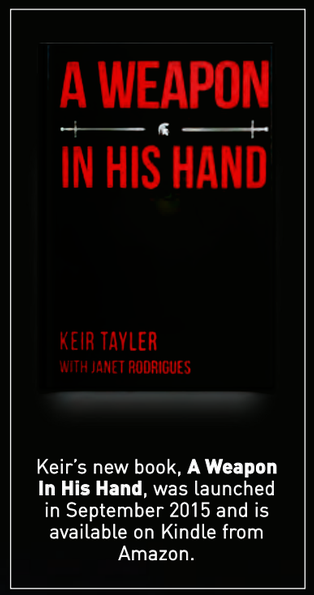
"WE WERE WELCOMED WITH OPEN ARMS AND EMBRACED INTO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH"

The elders are people of integrity and since we first came to Cornerstone two new sets of elders have been appointed. Again, they are the highest quality people with love, compassion and a sense of destiny on their lives.

Our encouragement to you is that we sensed God is drawing different nationalities into cities where there is a life giving source. Joel 1:12 talks of four trees. These trees give life and in the text are found in desert places: the fig tree, representing healing for the people; the pomegranate, for the miraculous operating in the church; the palm tree, symbolising the oil of the anointing; and the apple tree, the truth of the Word of God.

In Joel 2:1 it declares that we need to blow the trumpet in Zion (the church) to sound an alarm, causing people to tremble because the Lord is coming soon. Regardless of traditions and backgrounds of peoples, the Lord utters his voice and those who execute his Word are powerful (Joel 2:11).

We pray that Cornerstone will continue to carry an apostolic Antioch mantle into the nations, into the future.



Keir's new book, **A Weapon In His Hand**, was launched in September 2015 and is available on Kindle from Amazon.

GILL PATTERSON

AN UNFOLDING OF MANY PROMISES

WHEN GILL PATTERSON VISITED CORNERSTONE IN 2009 SHE BROUGHT WITH HER A PROPHETIC GIFTING THAT HELPED LAY FOUNDATIONS INTO A YOUNG CHURCH. TODAY SHE WRITES FROM JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, WITH FURTHER ENCOURAGEMENTS FOR OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY.

Blessings to all as you celebrate this wonderful occasion! I well remember the beginnings of Cornerstone and how as a small group of guys and gals you pursued what God had asked of you.

10 years is a long time and yet it seems to have gone by so quickly. During these years God has been working his purposes in each person, moulding, fashioning and creating vessels to carry the gospel of his kingdom worldwide. Everyone who has come through your doors, for however fleeting or lengthy a period, has been impacted by God in various ways.

God has given you many prophetic words and you have had the joy of seeing a lot of these come into being. However, as you continue doing what God has asked of you, there will be an unfolding of many more of these promises. At times there will be a "little by little" evidence of his blessing, and at other times it will seem as though an avalanche of his goodness is falling upon you as God faithfully does what he has promised to do.

There have been "Ecclesiastics 3" times and in each circumstance and situation God has worked to strengthen, encourage and build you into an incredibly strong body of believers. Psalm 133 will be fulfilled as you continue to walk together. Blessings are commanded by God and will overtake you. I hear the words coming down to you from the corridors of heaven, "Well done, good and faithful servants".

May God continue to bless you as you make an impact in Abu Dhabi. Isaiah 60:1-3. With much love.

PAUL & TRACEY TOTHILL

HUNGRY FOR SPIRIT AND WORD

FORMER POLICEMAN AND LAWYER PAUL TOTHILL AND HIS WIFE TRACEY LEAD GATEWAY CHURCH IN ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA. RECALLING THEIR VISITS TO CORNERSTONE, THEY CELEBRATE THE EVIDENCE OF GOD'S GRACE IN THE CHURCH.

We have had the privilege to minister into the life of Cornerstone Abu Dhabi on a few occasions over a couple of years. Our time with Matt and Rana has always been one of friendship, honour and abundant hospitality, with a genuine hunger for the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to be established in the hearts of those in the church.

Our journey with Cornerstone as a community involved meetings in which the gifts of the Spirit operated freely and the love of God was revealed through the prophetic, words of knowledge and healing. These times were very rich indeed and provided an essential framework and reality for establishing the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of believers. Beyond these gatherings we experienced an amazing time of friendship and abundant generosity and hospitality. The evidence of God's grace has always been evident in great measure not only through Matt and Rana but in each of the amazing leaders we spent time with.

It has been a privilege to say we have been friends with the Cornerstone church community, a dynamic people of diverse expression and culture carrying forward the heart of God and his kingdom mandate into a key city in a key nation of the world.

We know and believe that this precious community will continue to grow in spiritual maturity and in its genuine sphere of influence. It will continue to draw many to the reality of God through its expression of love, spiritual authority and power.

We have been deeply blessed because of Cornerstone's journey, their faith and their love. We encourage you all to keep the faith, pursue God with all your heart and let the world see the reality of the unseen God through the lives of those who have entered into his salvation and grace by faith.

Richest of blessings and favour for the future.

MIKE HANCHETT

PURSUING AUTHENTICITY

MIKE HANCHETT, FROM DENVER, USA, IS AN EPHESIANS 4:11-GIFTED MINISTER WHO HAS VISITED CORNERSTONE ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS IN RECENT YEARS. AS HE REFLECTS ON THOSE VISITS, HIS OWN IMPRESSIONS INTERMINGLE WITH PROPHETIC WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

My first visit to Cornerstone church was in April 2013. I had heard good things but had no idea what to expect.

I met Matt at the airport and wondered what he was like and what the church would be like. I found Matt extremely articulate with a dry sense of humour. I was overwhelmed at my meeting of Rana, as she was so bubbly and serious all at the same time. When they took me to my room, which was really their room, I was shocked by their servant hearts. They truly were wanting the very best for me while I was staying with them. My thoughts were, "If this is what the leaders are like I can't wait to meet the rest of the church."

"YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING TO THE MAGNITUDE OF WHAT GOD HAS IN STORE ... THE BEST IS YET TO COME"!

It wasn't long before I met Duane and Isabel, the other elders. I found them to be very sincere, engaging and in love with their city. It was easy to see why this church was being blessed and growing.

When I met the church I found them to be hungry for more of God. There was a sincerity and desire for authentic encounters with the Holy Spirit. I hadn't seen such hunger in a long time. The people embraced me and the message of Jesus our Prophetic Model with excitement and enthusiasm. They began to implement the message almost immediately. I felt that if the meetings had continued we were on the verge of revival. To look around the room and see the people implementing what was taught was extremely fulfilling.

Since that first visit I have been back and was overjoyed to see the same hunger and thirst for more of God; to see the people still implementing what I had taught before; and to see significant growth in the people and the size of the church.

There is life in this church! Life more abundantly! Truly God has raised up this work to be a significant sign in the region, and I believe God is going to continue to expand this work into other areas of Abu Dhabi. More sites! More leaders! More growth! More miracles! More impact! More nations! I hear the word "Influencers"!

I think it will not always be a case of Cornerstone going out, but because of what you are building others are going to want to come to you and see. I believe you have been flying under the radar, but that time is drawing to a close. God is going to elevate you! This will be a God thing! "Because you have walked in humility before men, I will lift you up and men will look and see and want to come and learn from you. They will sit at your feet and feast on the words that come from your mouth. Your words will be my words and my words have life!"

Ten years is a real accomplishment! But I believe you haven't seen anything to the magnitude of what God has in store for you. God wants you to have "Now Faith", for the foundation has been laid and the edifice is ready to be unveiled! The glory of the latter house will be far more grand than what you have seen in the past. Well done for these last 10 years but "The Best Is Yet To Come"!

Have a very happy and joyous celebration! May God continue to bless you, encourage you and strengthen you as you are "A City On A Hill"!

ASHLEY BELL

DIVINE DESTINY

ASHLEY BELL LEADS NEW COVENANT CHURCH BRYANSTON, IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA. A FREQUENT VISITOR TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, HE REPORTS ON AN INTIMATE ENCOUNTER WITH GOD THAT HAS PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR CORNERSTONE AND THE WIDER CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

In an environment that is sometimes challenging God has faithfully built Cornerstone as a local expression of the New Testament Church.

Nadine and I have fond memories of your meeting place on the golf course. You were a small group of friends committed to the task at hand, unaware then of your contribution to the establishing of a church that was to become significant to God's plans for the region.

I hear heaven's declaration of love and encouragement. "Well done good and faithful servants!" thunders through the heavens, bringing a shudder of fear to every opposing demon. How true is the saying, "Shared experiences build true friendship"!

I think of all the promises God has declared for this local church, all indicative of the tsunami of blessing still to come. I can almost see your trans-local horizon beginning to change shape as all the seeds you've planted are beginning to take root. Growth is imminent.

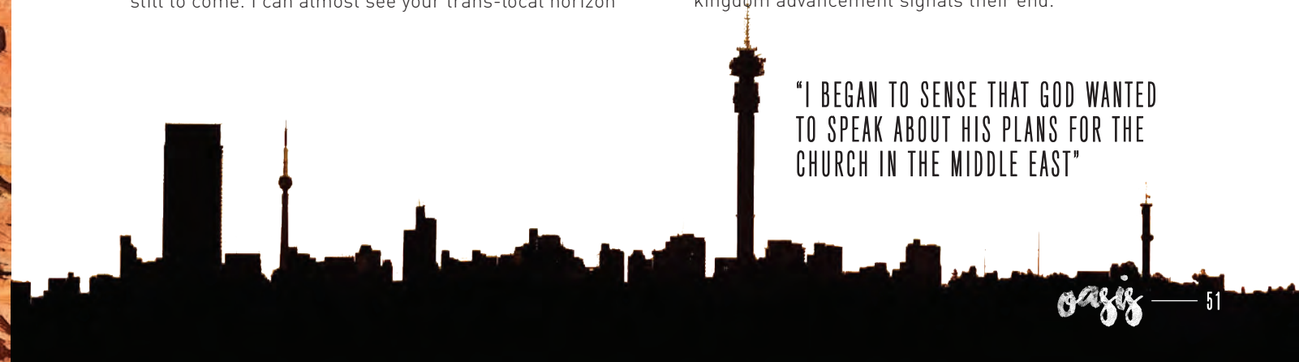
Several years ago God spoke to me about how he saw his kingdom advance in the Middle East. I want to share the experience I had – what I saw while praying for the church in the region:

I was in Dubai having completed a trip to Jordan, France and Abu Dhabi, and was preparing my heart for home. While out on an early morning run I found a secluded gated wilderness area that seemed ideal to pray in. With the gates wide open I thought nothing of stepping inside. I enjoyed a time of prayer and worship there and left satisfied that I had found a spot to enjoy the Lord without any restraint.

A day or two later I returned to my new Gethsemane only to find that the gates to this untouched wilderness area had been shut and tightly secured with lock and chain. The owner had further improvised with an additional barricade constructed out of massive branches. The message was visible from some distance away: "Keep out!"

This sudden closure of the gate was a disappointment at first. My former prayer spot was clearly barricaded. Disheartened I began to look about for an alternative spot and sat down on a large cement brick at the foot of the fence – another great spot to pray and intercede. At first I spoke to God about the aggressive barricade alongside us but I began to sense that he wanted to speak to me about his kingdom plans for the future of the church in the Middle East. I began to type the following thoughts into my phone:

By analogy, the gate with its aggressive barricade was an access to unreached people groups – many tribes and nations still needing to be discipled. Territorial spirits have dominion over nations. They want to preserve these areas as their own and courageous kingdom advancement signals their end.



"I BEGAN TO SENSE THAT GOD WANTED TO SPEAK ABOUT HIS PLANS FOR THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE EAST"

When the church, led by courageous men and women, begins to defy these illegitimate authorities their immediate response is to become aggressive. They're capable of doing us harm. But God has made a way to defy their aggression by simply making a mockery of their barricades. Those who gain access ridicule their efforts to restrict entrance. God will make a way where there seems to be no way. It is in the midst of great adversity that God proves himself to be most dramatic and capable.

Nearby I saw a construction site that was well elevated above the other dwellings. From a distance it had the appearance of a five star luxury island resort that extends out into the ocean. This spoke to me of much wealth and opulence that is being preserved for the funding of kingdom initiatives to reach unreached nations. God says, "I'm preparing the hearts of those I have set apart to be wealthy. These will be those who will give generously to what I am doing. They are silent in their giving and not willing to be showy or be on display. In fact, anything ostentatious repulses them because they have pure hearts that are kingdom focused". These will be men and women from previously "gospel-disadvantaged" nations – places like the Middle East, China, even those nations in the former Soviet alliance. God has identified these individuals with his call and hand of blessing. His purposes will be fulfilled.

In this suburban setting I saw people walking and running their dogs. I saw early morning joggers out getting some essential exercise. This was a pleasant picture of what is a daily routine for some. The picture carried no judgement as the setting was tranquil. It spoke of peaceful and happy living. It spoke of opportunity and discipline.

Suddenly my thoughts were interrupted by the steady growl of a bright red 4x4 truck negotiating the desert dunes. Comfortable on the soft desert sand it carved a distinct path. Showing no respect for the terrain, the driver weaved his way between the sandy dunes. In a moment I felt God say, "My blood avails even in the harshest of spiritual climates". Through history we can see the trail left by the scarlet thread. He was about to do the same in the Middle East. Thousands in the desert regions would become blood-bought and blood-washed. Those seeking truth were in his sights. He was not going to camouflage his presence in these regions, but is wanting to be conspicuous. At that, the driver of the bright red truck drove off, looking for more dunes to scar.

Staring at the foliage around me I began to marvel at how such beauty could exist in a harsh climate. I noticed a small yellow flower in full bloom, adding a touch of beauty to a world that has so many shades of brown. Something so small and delicate was robust enough to enjoy its full life in such hostile terrain.

I felt God say that the flower represented a church plant. Unnoticed yet ever so present these were believers meeting in homes and other inconspicuous venues that were like these little yellow flowers to him. I felt God say that he is both planter and irrigator. He was providing protection and had made them tough and resilient to withstand hardship. Their presumed insignificance was his way of masking the exceedingly great power that was invested in them. He is well capable of giving beauty and life in a stark world of legalism and death. In that moment I felt a sense of weighted purpose and realised that what I was seeing and feeling was a future pregnant with divine destiny. Much was about to happen.

With that a thunderous roar of an A380 sounded overhead as it came in to land. Waiting in line on the runway was a steady stream of aircraft anticipating being airborne. Each plane had the markings of a foreign nation inscribed on its side. These were not war planes but passenger aircraft. In a flash I saw planes filled with brave courageous believers leaving from airports to spread the gospel – some to relocate, some to return from their mission, but they were going in their hundreds. An end time harvest awaits the Arab regions and beyond.

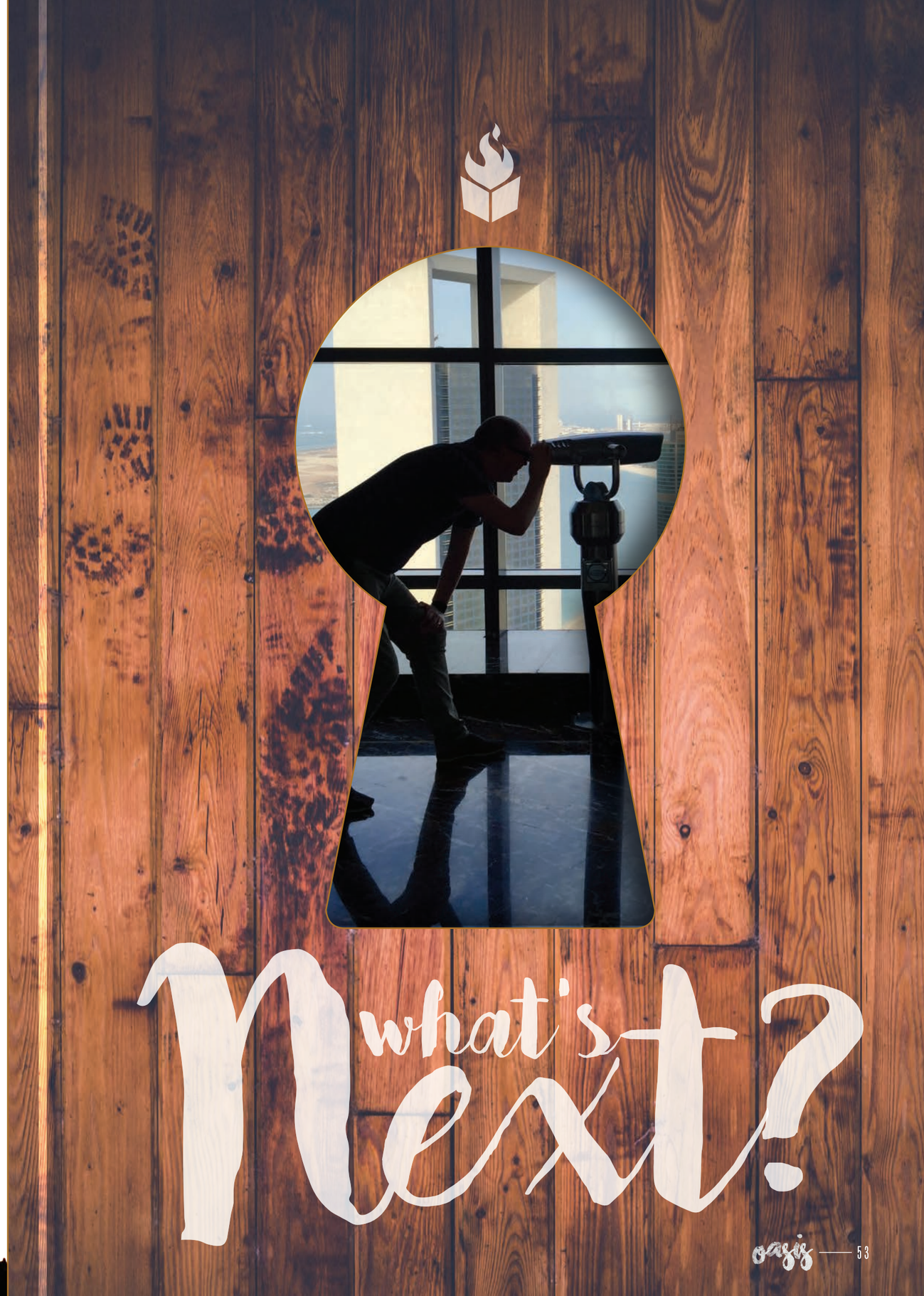
I became conscious of the cool fresh desert breeze blowing ever so slightly, coming from the east. It became clear to me that our prayers become like heaven's breeze filling the sails of prophetic promises. Let us heed the call to prayer. I noticed a large front-end loader parked some distance from where I was. Its appearance seemed sudden. Its presence indicated that it had arrived for future use. These vehicles are essential in leveling soil and removing heaps of stubborn ground and anything that would obstruct road or building development. I felt God say, "Just one person praying in faith would do as much work as a front-end loader in paving the way for my royal procession."

"GOD IS NOT GOING TO CAMOUFLAGE HIS PRESENCE, BUT IS WANTING TO BE CONSPICUOUS"

The sudden appearance of several wagtails who promptly burst into song surprised me, their harmonious melody sounding like a delightful song of praise and thanksgiving to their creator. I felt God say he was about to write worship songs on the hearts of musicians to be sung far and wide. Home grown local worship will be translated for foreign worship contexts. These songs born in heaven and inspired by the Holy Spirit would bless thousands. That has always been God's intention around worship – that it would be about him and not about bank accounts and personal fame.

I also felt that God is going to start preparing the world's heart for his grand end time work by revealing himself in different art forms. Musicians who have no knowledge of him will write about him, allowing him to touch their troubled hearts with his love.

I am comforted by the text that declares, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:10). We are praying with you for God to have his way. Love you guys.



what's Next?

CORNERSTONE'S FIRST CAMP, OCTOBER 2015, ABOVE AND OPPOSITE PAGE. BELOW: MINISTRY TRIP TO INDIA, TOP, AND AN N.C.M.I. CONFERENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

IF, AFTER READING *OASIS*, PEOPLE ARE INCLINED TO ASK "WHAT'S NEXT?" FOR CORNERSTONE, THE ANSWER IS ULTIMATELY TO BE FOUND IN THE LORD JESUS ...

Whenever Christians celebrate what God has done, as we have in this magazine marking the 10th anniversary of Cornerstone Abu Dhabi, it is good to be reminded that Jesus Christ is not only the God of past achievements, he is also the God of future hope.

In the Book of Revelation, in chapter 19 verse 10 it says, "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." In other words, as Christians testify or tell stories about what Jesus has done and is doing in and through us, we are creating a spiritual environment, an atmosphere of faith, in which he comes to do those things again, and again, and again. He is the living God (Daniel 6:26; Hebrews 9:14) who is "the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). He is the eternal God, "the Alpha and Omega" of Revelation 1:8, who is not limited by time, as we are; he is the God who knows what's next for us because he has already determined it (Acts 17:26-28; Ephesians 2:10).

So as we move on from our milestone 10th anniversary year and this celebration of what God HAS done, we are mindful that all the stories contained in this magazine also contain prophetic insights of what God CAN and WILL do in and through us in future.

If, after reading this magazine, people are inclined to ask "What's next?" for Cornerstone, we encourage you to reflect on what you have read, because our future is seeded in our past. In faith, therefore, we can anticipate that the momentum that has gathered over the last 10 years will continue to increase, with exponential growth as God sets more people into the Cornerstone family (Psalm 68:5-6):

- The growth that you have read about in these pages will continue;
- The impact of Cornerstone on people's lives that you have read about in these pages will continue;
- The salvations, healings and transformational encounters with God that you have read about in these pages will not only continue but increase as our community grows;
- The trips to nations that have been referenced in these pages will continue, with more people joining us; we can also expect more trips, as more doors to more nations open to us;
- The need to move into bigger venues, facing together the logistical challenges that this can present, will continue;
- Leaders will continue to emerge from within our ranks to become elders and deacons in Cornerstone, increasing the leadership team that partners with God's Spirit in leading us into the plans and purposes he has for us;
- Volunteers will continue to step forward to ensure that not only are we able to meet the various needs within our growing community, but we are also well resourced to serve in the wider context of the city and nation; we will need more of them – growing numbers of servant-hearted people who will contribute to all areas of church life;
- There will be continuing participation in church life from gifted and skilled individuals, who can help us be excellent for God in a variety of areas, from set-up, music and sound to media.

In short, what Jesus has done and is doing in and through us he will continue to do – this is the testimony of his holy Word and his holy Church to the question, "What's next?". And in so many ways the Bible also provides the answer, "MORE!" to that question – there will not only be a continuation of the ministry of Christ in his church, but an increase in its scope and its effect, for as Isaiah 9 verses 6-7 declare, the government of Jesus is everlasting and ever-increasing: "Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end."

So we can expect there to be increase, reproduction, multiplication and even seasons of acceleration as we journey forward into our second decade as a church. In John 14:12, Jesus says, "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." So we can expect GREATER things! From the seed of our testimonies about Cornerstone between 2005 and 2015 will come even greater fruit! And as our community grows, we can expect to play a greater role in the positive contribution the wider Christian Church makes to U.A.E. society.

There will be times when we will be surprised by the nature and timing of the opportunities God presents to us. God's nature is constant and unchanging, and his plans and purposes for his church have not changed (Ephesians 3:10). But he also promises to do "new things" (Isaiah 42:9). Bottom line, we can expect the living God to be active in his Church, which will sometimes require us to expect the unexpected, with the assurance that whatever God does will be according to his Word – according to the testimony of Jesus, the Bible. "What's next?" Well, we need to be reading our Bibles, to know the Lord better, his will and his ways, in order to discern and determine what opportunities are from him, and what are not.

The invitation that Jesus' Church presents to the world is, "Come and PARTICIPATE in what God is doing and will do."

2016: NEW YEAR, NEW VENUE.

From one local church to another, this participation may take many forms. At Cornerstone, the answer to the "What's next?" question for individuals who have never been to one of our main Friday Celebration Meetings is, "Come along to one! Newcomers are welcome!"

Alternatively, depending on where you are in your relationship with Jesus, the answer to the "What's next?" question might be:

- Attending one of our Alpha Courses to learn more about Christ and the Christian faith;
- Joining one of our many fellowship groups that meet around the city on Monday evenings (we call these friendship gatherings in people's homes "Open Lounges");
- Coming along to our vibrant men's or women's small group meetings, or to STRIPE Youth for those aged 13-18, to build friendships, study the Bible, and experience the joy and adventure of Christian fellowship;
- Attending one of our seven-week Marriage Courses we run through the year;
- Joining us for Midweek Worship and prayers, or for several of the midweek training sessions we have during the year with visiting speakers from the U.S., U.K., Australia, South Africa and other countries;
- Serving in some capacity;
- Coming away with us on our next church camp;
- ... it might even be joining us on overseas trips, either to attend conferences to better equip us, or to serve in local churches we partner with in nations such as Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and Myanmar/Burma.

Hopefully, the answer to the "What's next?" question will be found by individuals in a combination of the above – there are many ways for people to participate in the vibrant community life of Cornerstone Abu Dhabi and to discover for themselves 'What's next?'. Further details of all we do can we found on our website, www.cornerstoneabudhabi.com.

FAVOUR

In terms of God's promises for the corporate body, we'd like to leave you with excerpts of a prophetic word of encouragement from Mike Hanchett, which he shared with the church on April 26, 2013. Beginning with Isaiah 42:6-9, Joel 3:18 and Psalm 5:12, Mike went on to encourage us with words that have a continuing resonance and significance:

"God has called you here for such a time as this. Do not look at yourselves and say, 'Who are we? We are small and insignificant.' Know, I have called you! I have empowered you! I am equipping you! This is my plan and not your plan so do not see yourself less than what I have made you to be.

Favour is on this house. God wants you to know it! He wants you to expect it! He wants you to live in it! He wants you to know that where you go, favour will go with you. Favour brings feast in the midst of famine ...

Raise your expectation level. Expect more revelation! Expect more salvations! Expect more manifestations of my presence! Expect more healings! Expect more! Psalm 5:12.

My plans for this church have not changed ... I want you to spend more time with me ... I will give my plans to you in the secret place.

Young and old will come here. They will love and honor each other and no one will look down on another. The priesthood of all believers will not only be taught here but practiced by all. Everyone will find their place and see their value ... People will come here because they have heard that God is in this place and they will come from many surrounding areas. When they come into this place they will be touched by my presence. They will not understand what is happening but their tears will flow and they will be cleansed. Be open handed. The people are mine.

People will be your advertisement. They will say, 'Have you heard what God is doing at Cornerstone?' People will come to see and be transformed in this place ... Many will come with heavy hearts but will leave healed of all hurts and made whole.

Blessing will be upon this house. All who come here will live in God's blessing as well ...

The supernatural will be here and many will be healed. People will come to this house of healing. Do not fear. Do not be afraid ... For my presence will lead and guide you. My presence will be tangible in this place. For it is a day of new things. Unusual things ... Do not be shocked when my Glory begins to be on display ...

I hear the word TRANSITION! Not transition out, but transition into all I have called you to. It's a New Day! Guard your hearts! Walk in humility! ...

God is in this house! His plans will be fulfilled here."

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WWW.CORNERSTONEABUDHABI.COM

GO TO OUR WEBSITE
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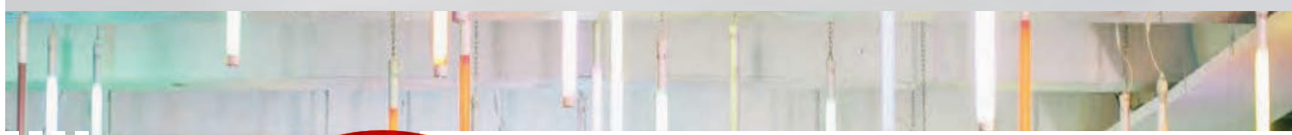

Alpha

GOT QUESTIONS?

Cornerstone co-ordinates with London's Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) church in running its world famous Alpha Course twice a year, in the spring and autumn. Developed by Nicky Gumbel, Alpha offers a practical guide to the Christian faith for non-churchgoers who are curious about Jesus, Christianity, or the meaning of life.

056 441 1331 • CORNERSTONEABUDHABI@GMAIL.COM

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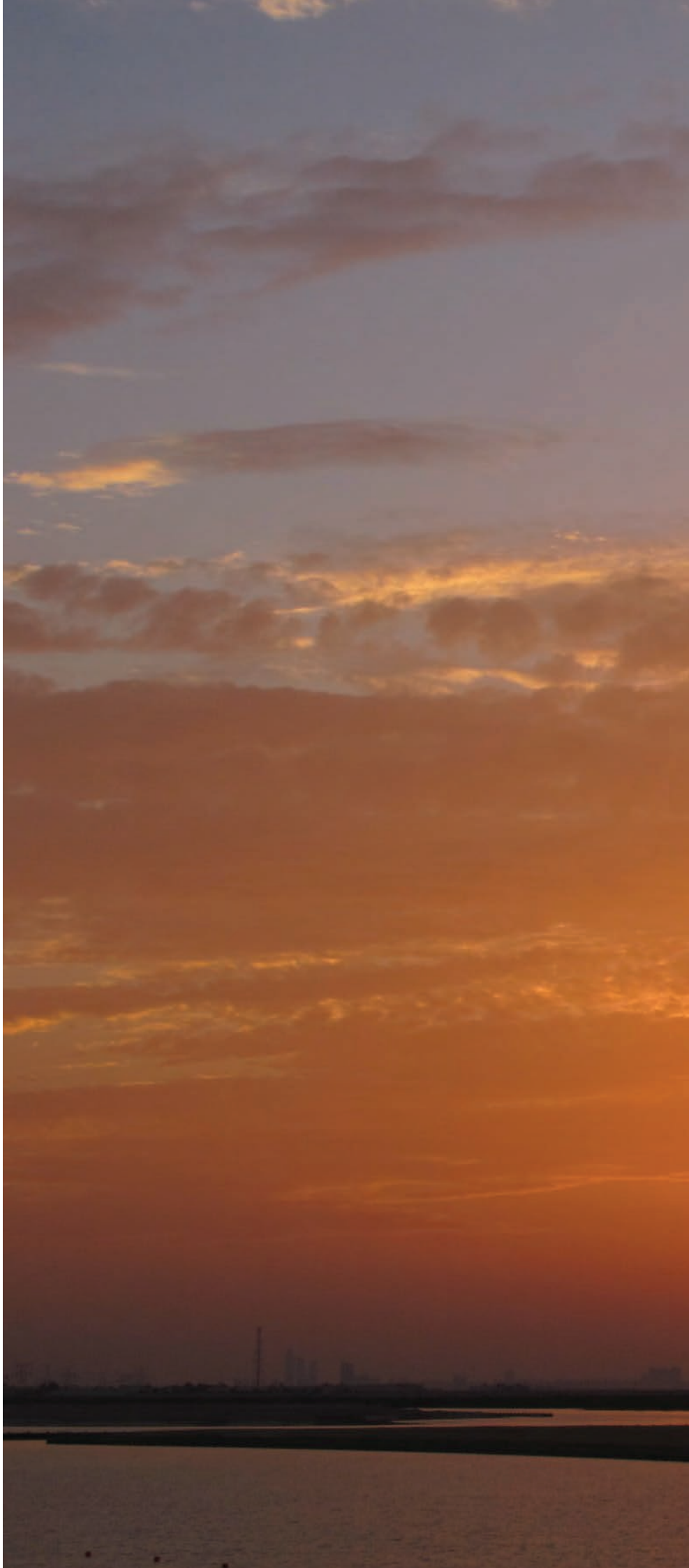

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TO THE CITY, THE NATION AND THE WORLD, WITH LOVE

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