

# ROTE Newsletter

## May 2024



Dear family & friends,

‘When Pharaoh let the Israelites go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” So God led the people around by the desert road towards the Red Sea.’  
(Exodus 13:17).

Further to our update at the end of February, when we had to come to terms with not being able to return to Pemba for the time being and not really knowing what our short-term futures might hold during our time in England, we are thrilled to be able to present a positive picture of hope and fulfilment for this coming season.

### A New Home

We’re both really excited to announce that we have now become official members of the Lee Abbey Small Missional Community house in Knowle West. When we bought a house here in 2016 we immediately felt very connected to the area and had been looking for ways to get more involved in community life. Lee Abbey is providing us with that perfect opportunity while back in England and we are looking forward to finding out about all the services, projects and initiatives that we could potentially help with and make a real difference in the lives of the people we are living alongside. We had the opportunity to support a Family Funday outreach activity at the local Anglican church over the bank holiday weekend.



**Pray** : Please pray that God will guide our way and show us where we can be most effective in our service to others while thoroughly enjoying all that we do during our time with Lee Abbey in Knowle West. Pray that we will quickly settle into community life and that it will soon feel like home.

## Saying Goodbye

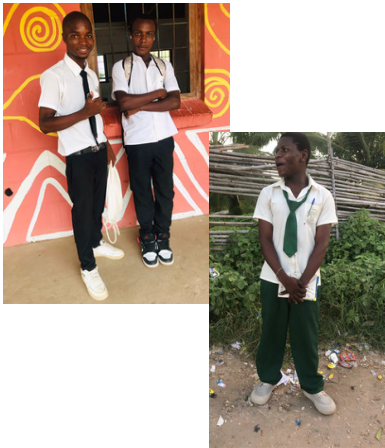
As we moved into Lee Abbey and embraced Knowle West, we had to say 'goodbye' to the Bourne Christian Centre and the past 19 years of service to the Kingswood area. We've grown so much and in so many ways during our time of fellowship, friendship and service at BCC and have been overwhelmed by the love and support we've been given by those who have practically and physically looked after us, emotionally supported us and faithfully prayed for us since our return to the UK last May. BCC has been a wonderful church to have been a part of and we will miss so many aspects of it very much. Thankfully we're not too far away!

**Pray:** Please pray that God will continue to bless, inspire and provide for BCC and that our friendships will not suffer due to our moving on.

## New Jobs

It's a huge relief to say that we both now have new jobs having not worked for 11 months! Paul is working at Silva Care based in Hengrove. He will be primarily supporting adults to access activities within their local community. Francesca is supporting a woman with looking after her (incredibly adorable) baby son.

**Pray:** Please pray that our new jobs will prove to be fulfilling and enjoyable while also providing the right level of challenge. Also pray that we will make a positive impact on the lives of the people we are in such direct contact with.



## ROTE:

We are continuing to support the boys in Pemba, Mozambique wherever we can with enabling them to continue to go to school. This month we have been able to provide them with school bags and shoes. We are also continuing to provide Nelson with his choir shoes and uniform as he is still very much enjoying singing in the Iris school choir which is one of the most recognised choirs in Pemba and is often asked to perform at special city wide functions.

Nelson is sending us regular updates on the construction of his house which we are always pleased to receive. The work seems slow but now that the rain has stopped, should progress more quickly. May, June and July are the coolest months in Mozambique so conditions to build are optimal.



**Pray:** Please pray for the boys' tests which seem to be incredibly frequent throughout the year! Pray for their success at school and good understanding of all they need to learn.

Please pray for Nelson's house to be finished within the month of May.

## **Our Future:**

We can never be certain of what the future holds for us but we believe it is in God's hands. Our desire to return to Africa to continue working with children in Education is no less today than it ever has been. As is expressed in the bible verse at the top of this newsletter, God sometimes takes us through life on a route that doesn't seem to make a huge amount of sense at the time; detours, confusion, time, money, physical and emotional exhaustion can all be present and lead us to thinking we must have heard wrong or God's SatNav for us must be glitching! However, reaching the destination in the quickest, simplest and most pain free way isn't always the most beneficial way, and even when we don't understand or like the detour, we can choose to trust that God has chosen this route for us out of his unfailing love and compassion for us. We are holding on to the dream he has given us and will keep our eyes and ears open to whisperings of new direction but for now we will allow Him to use us and strengthen us for this coming season which we are sure will be instrumental in the outworking of our African dream.

Thanks so much for taking the time to read this and for all your prayers and support.

With love and blessings,  
Francesca & Paul