

Greetings,

We are well, and hope you all are also. For an update on the last letter, our suitcases are finally unpacked and stored away. We finally found all the furniture we needed for our apartment (except the spare bedroom, no rush on that yet). We also finally made it to the phone company and signed up for a phone and DSL. We have an installation date of 18 April, but we are told not to hold our breath, but others assure us that it will happen. In the meantime, we are pretty much cut off from regular contact with family and friends. The internet café will only let you use their computers, so I can't use the laptop, and there has been a problem with the website and its e-mail, so it has been a month since we have had access to the princeministry e-mail. Hopefully that will be fixed soon. I actually sent the laptop to Jo'berg with Stu and Marilyn in the hope of them being able to download the outlook with the e-mail, but there was nothing there, the website really did have a problem. Not sure if all the missing e-mail will appear once the website is fixed. I sure hope so. An update on our water/electrical problems: After the first week of intermittent water and a note saying the water would only be on every third day, we have not had a problem with the water. Week before last, the power was off every morning for an hour or two. The paper said today that the power outages (called load shedding) would continue for the next 2 months. It will supposedly conserve power for the winter (coming soon). After being here for a month, we finally learned what we needed to do, to get the utilities put into our name. We live in a duplex and the man at the utility office said there was no such thing as an address with an "a" or a "b" after it, so he left that part off. Of course we do have an "a" after our address, so it will be interesting to find out how the bills get worked out between us and our neighbor.

We had also told you about a meeting regarding a permanent building for the soup kitchen. That's hit a snag. Since the location of the property is in the squatter village, no one can hold a deed to any of that property. So they are looking into trying to fix that. No point in building a building, if you're going to be told to move, right after you complete it. They did put a new tent up, so it looks a lot nicer. The soup kitchen has been having a record number of kids show up lately. We are currently in the middle of 3 weeks of school holidays. Usually this cuts down on the number of kids, but this past week, a record number showed up in the morning and ate the entire day's worth of sandwiches and milk. It was a mad rush to replace it all before the 2pm feeding.

We have had quite a bit of entertaining/aggravating culture shock. From buying a light bulb (there are 2 different kinds of plug ins) to using a credit card. Good thing we had people with us on the credit card. Evidently they have different kinds here, and the questions they were asking us, made no sense to us. If you come visit and use a credit card, your first answer is "credit" and your second answer to their questions is "straight". This will allow your purchase to be completed. In our town, you can do your basic grocery shopping and a few other small things, anything more requires either a 40 minute drive to one town, or an hour drive in the opposite direction to an even bigger town (don't ask me to spell the names of these towns). We spend a lot of time on the road it seems like. Of course there is the different names we must learn, like q-tips are "ear buds", and outhouses are "long drops". We still haven't gotten the correct pronunciation of "water". We order water, and they say "what?"

This is a very small town, and on the main road that runs through it, there is a 4 way stop sign. Evidently it is fairly new, and the talk of the town. You find the odd sign or two in other parts of town, but this is a big deal. Paul has started to get the hang of driving on the left side of the road. He rarely turns on the wipers anymore when he really wants to use the turn signals. But he is majorly direction challenged. He knew all the short cuts in Tulsa, but in this little town, he still gets lost. I have still not driven here. We have a stick shift, and I hate driving a stick shift. Not to mention the fact we drive on the left side here and you have to shift with your left hand. I'll get around to it eventually, but I'm in no hurry. I help Paul by pointing out which way to go, and which animals are in the road. We regularly dodge cows, donkeys and goats (also chickens and geese in the squatter village) here in town. On the drives to the larger towns, we have to watch out for the monkeys, baboons, warthogs, and anything large that may have escaped from a game farm. Our friend Harry recently found a giraffe in the middle of the road one early morning that had escaped its owner. They also have guinea fowl that cross the road. It's only a medium sized bird, but we're told it's a solid built bird that will do some major damage to your vehicle if you hit one.

We've been fixing up our apartment and working on the yard in our spare time. Paul put some weather stripping on the bottom of the front door. We have been having quite a few frogs in the house. This will keep them out, in addition to the snakes that might have followed them in. (we have not seen a snake yet)(thank you God) But we have had quite a few strange looking bugs in the house.

Easter was very nice. It's a major holiday here. A 4 day weekend, and this town is one of the getaway destinations. We were told to do our shopping early and stay out of town. This place was packed. A bunch of the area churches got together and sponsored a big event on Friday at the area rugby field, which is next to our house. First we had a 3 hour church service at our church that started at noon, and then at 4pm, there was the 6 hour event at the rugby field. It started off with different bands, then had a big speaker, then had a lot of interpretive dancing. I think we left about 8 or 9pm, not sure how much longer it went on. But we left with perfect timing. As we got to the gate to leave, Micky's mom called on the cell phone. It was good to finally hear a voice from the states. The church service on Easter Sunday was very nice, and totally packed out. We spent the rest of that day and Monday also, out at Stu and Marilyn's farm, doing some orientation with Stu, about South Africa, the people and their culture and world view. The schools take a 3 week holiday at this same time. So a lot of people are either on vacation or have people visiting them. This has put a little bit of a damper on us getting around to seeing and visiting with people in ministry. Due to the holiday, they are not available, are swamped, or have nothing to show us because of the holiday. So we are doing what we can to stay busy. We are not letting any time go to waste, but we feel like we should be "doing" something. (Saving the world) We know we are in a rush to be majorly involved in "something", but God has his plans for us, and it will be in His time, that we find our niche. All of our classmates from Mission Training International are having the same problems. We know this is normal. We all want to hit the ground running, but it doesn't work that way. God has to get us ready for what He wants us to do. We have been using the time to get our home set up, fixing things around the apartment, working in the huge yard we have (we have a guava bush and a lemon tree). And we have a huge pile of reading material that we never had time for; that we were told would help us out, on the field. We are staying productive. Of course we have soup kitchen

on Wednesdays, which is an all day affair. Tuesdays have a women's bible study, with women from the squatter village, and Tuesday night is spent making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the soup kitchen. Saturday afternoon's is a bible study with some teenagers from the squatter village. We go out with Terri and Hamish Rodgers when we can to deliver food parcels to the needy. We have already helped them out by purchasing items for the food parcels. We recently went with Terri to take an elderly gentleman to the hospital in the town 40 minutes from here. We have a small free clinic here for the poor people, but anything major is a 40 minute drive away. The doctor here thinks Alfred has stomach cancer and needed some x-rays. So we got to find out where the hospital was, and spent some time in the pediatric ward praying for the children there and visiting with the mothers. It was very depressing. Some of those poor babies were in such bad shape. We still don't know what Alfred's status is. His pension is the sole support for 15 people, most of them children. We have come to the conclusion after a few trips out with Terri, that we really do need to concentrate on language learning. We are going to hire a local to spend some time with us to help us with the language. She actually knows both of the languages we need to know. I think she will also be able to go with us into the poor village to act as interpreter for us. She really needs the money. She is expecting her third child, and is helping take care of her deceased sister's 5 children.

Last week we had to take the truck in for its 50,000KM check up. Each 10,000KM checkup/oil change is free until it hits 100,000. But you have to take it in within a certain time frame. We took it to the town that's one hour away because it has more shopping in it. I also found an internet café there that allows you to use your own laptop, so this next week, we will be headed there again, so I can get this letter out to you all. Hopefully the next update will be done from our home, because we will have a home phone on the 18th!!! (God willing)

I also managed to find a chiropractor for my back. He's 1 ½ hours from here, and not the type of chiropractor I prefer, but at this point, I can't be choosy.

Yesterday we spent the day with Stu and Marilyn. They reaffirmed us in that we are on the right track, and they were in the country for about a year, before they really got going in their ministry. They are also amazed at how much we have accomplished in the short time that we have been here. So that was reassuring. We think we may have all the materials required to get a bank account here, so hopefully that will happen sometime this week. We are certainly blessed with all the friends we have made here, and how helpful they have been. It's only because of them, that we have been able to get where we are. So this afternoon, after the ladies bible study, we are headed to the town one hour from here, to hopefully get this out to you all. If you can open the attachment, I have included a recent picture out of the front door of our apartment, and yes that is a road and not a field, so you can see what we are dodging on a daily basis.

Please be praying for our ministry, that we find what God has in mind for us. Also Paul's allergies have been miserable for him. Pray for the children here, that the seeds planted will grow, and they will have a better future.

God bless,

Paul and Micky Prince

