

Y's NEWS and VIEWS

2022 EDITION

GOD'S WAYS. 1 Kings 17: 1-16

After Elijah had experienced some very trying times under Ahab the evil King who led the people into Baal worship, God sent a severe drought in judgement. The Lord told Elijah to flee to Zerephath where a widow would provide food and shelter for him.

I think Elijah did not expect to hear, and must have been quite shocked, that the widow was about to have her last meal. She was extremely poor and was expecting that she and her son were soon to die of starvation. How was she to provide for him? But in spite of the outward circumstances Elijah trusted God would supply their needs.

God so often astonishes us in the most surprising ways.

The favoured Joseph didn't understand the disaster his life had become living in jail for 3 years, but he nevertheless trusted God who did the unexpected by using him to save his family and the Egyptian nation from starvation.

I am sure Abraham did not understand or see why God wanted him to sacrifice the only son He had given him in his old age, but he obeyed and must have been astonished to be told by God that his descendants were to become as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore.

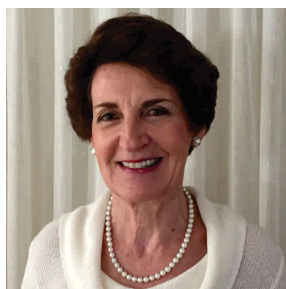
David, the youngest and least significant in Jesse's family, the shepherd boy, was chosen above all his brothers to become King.

God often delights to astonish us by the wonder of His ways. Our limited understanding of Him can be likened to a spider crawling on one of the great pillars of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. What does that insect know about the architect's magnificent design? It sees only the little space of stone on which it moves. The beautiful carvings and ornamental work only seem like obstacles to his progress and he can't see his destination.

We as Christians often see only our immediate circumstances and perhaps only catch a glimpse of God's marvellous purposes. The obstacles and difficulties that block our vision and get in the way of our plans are actually part of the beautiful designs of His divine grace.

Our heavenly Father knows exactly what He is doing. Although His ways are "unsearchable and past finding out", He assures us in His Word over and over again that all will work out for our good if we trust Him.

God may conceal the purpose of His ways, but His ways are with a purpose. God's ways are not our ways, but His route and destination are always the best for us.



Please read the "Stories" of previous YW residents in our centre pages. Heather stayed in the Pretoria "Y" 56 years ago, Melanie 25 years ago in Cape Town, Falon in Pietermaritzburg 13 years ago and Jane in Cape Town 7 years ago. All have a unique story of God's faithfulness to them.

Margrit Temple
National President.

NEWS and VIEWS :

The YW Cape Town has had a good yet challenging year. Covid 19 is still having an impact on accommodation, but life is somewhat easier with restrictions a little less severe. We praise God that we have been protected, in the most part, from illness in the house.

Mostly due to many colleges and universities holding online classes, as opposed to in-person classes, many students have not needed accommodation away from home. This has impacted us in that we have only been 50% full for the majority of this year.

Considering the above we have been mightily blessed to have been able to sanitise our mattresses for the year, paint rooms that needed freshening up, hold lovely functions, serve amazing food and update our wifi system so that it is now more stable to deal with all the loadshedding.

We have a lovely group of ladies in the house and we were able to treat them to a *Welcome Function* in February. *Claire, our Life Coach*, joined us for the event



and co-ordinated some fun activities. These helped the ladies to get to know one another better. They enjoyed a picnic style meat braai with a selection of delicious salads and several scrumptious desserts.



Each lady received a gift of a homemade charm bracelet and chocolate heart.

We were able to hold our AGM in May this year and were delighted to be able to host our National President and National Secretary for the night. Their attendance at our AGM was such a privilege.



During the year we have been able to treat the ladies to an Easter function and a Women's Day function. For our Women's Day function we invited the ladies from Red Harbour Church (our partner Church) to join us. There were some activities, a lovely message from one of the Red Harbour ladies and a selection of tasty savoury finger food followed by, as always, delicious dessert. Each lady chose a gift – either a tube of hand cream or a re-useable make up removing face cloth. Such a fun and collaborative event.

Claire has worked closely with many of our ladies and, besides meeting in the lounge on a Tuesday evening, they have climbed the mountain, taken walks on Sea Point promenade and been to see a movie at the Labia Theatre. She really seems to have built up a good connection with many of the ladies and built up their trust in her. We are praying that this foundation will lead to many more deep and spirit-guided connections which will draw the ladies into a close walk with our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have been blessed with many guests staying with us, which is extremely helpful for our financial situation.



: CAPE TOWN

Management of The YW will be changing as from the end of this year. For this reason we have spent many months searching for the right couple. God has guided us through this process and a wonderful couple, *Mike and Cynthia Stemmett*, have now been working alongside us since July. We are excited to see what new ideas they will bring and to experience the renewed enthusiasm for this ministry.

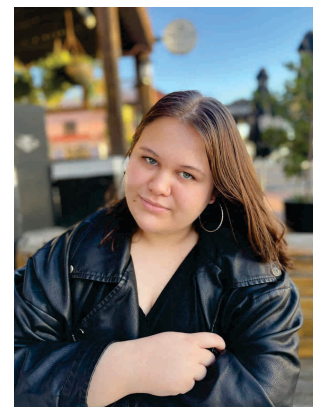


Testimonies

My name is *Jana Basson* and I'm a second year Jewellery Design and Manufacture student at CPUT. I'm originally from Oudtshoorn and started living at The YW Cape Town in 2021. The transition was easy due to all the conveniences of living in Gardens and experiencing everyday life with fellow residents and friendly staff and management. The YW is a place where you can build good relationships and become friends with people you wouldn't have met otherwise. The residents of The YW learn to get along with their differences and enjoy spending time together. We do many activities together like shopping, going for walks or hikes, watching movies in the lounge, having long conversations, making each other laugh, and helping each other when needed. The YW provides us with a balanced diet and a variety of foods and desserts. The garden is very well kept and Table Mountain can be viewed from the garden and the swimming pool. The YW takes the safety of the girls seriously and wants us to feel at ease in our home away from home. We have made so many memories and hope to make many more in the future.



I am Violet but also known as *Blanche Niewoudt*. I am a third-year student studying Brand Building and Management at Vega. The first time I heard of The YW was back in 2019 when I was in Cape Town for an open day and me and my parents were also looking for a safe place for me to stay. I had contacted a childhood friend of mine who lives in The YW to show me the place. My parents and I went to The YW and the managers welcomed us with open arms and to show us around. At that moment I knew I would be staying here because I already felt at home before applying to stay.



I'm *Ivana Bunt*, originally from Johannesburg, but raised in Gaborone, Botswana. In 2019, after a lot of prayer, and with a great amount of courage, I moved to Cape Town to study jewellery design and manufacture at CPUT. Finding a suitable place to stay was the greatest challenge since I'd never been to the area. During my first year, I lived in a student house, but ultimately decided to look for a better place to stay. I didn't have any success, until a trustworthy family friend referred me to The YW. It was a miraculous answer to prayer! The YW has been a home-away-from-home experience ever since. Currently, I'm interning at a jewellery company here in Cape Town and I must say there's nothing like coming home to a beautiful garden and a cooked meal after a long day's work! Thank you YW.



NEWS and VIEWS :

To begin this edition, we asked some of our young ladies to talk about their experiences at The YW Pietermaritzburg, going back some years and finishing with the 2021 end of year party. We then get some up to date 2022 news from two of our "new girls". Enjoy!

THANDO MASEKO: Thando is currently a PhD fellow at the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) based at the UKZN Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine. Her research focuses on inflammatory responses and cellular phenotypes in TB/HIV co-infection. She has been residing in Durban since she started her PhD in 2020. Thando is an ordained Elder in Onelife Church.

My spiritual journey at the Y...

I moved into The YW when I started my degree in 2014 and stayed until the end of 2019 when I had completed my Master's Degree in Biochemistry, what a remarkable time. In 2014, The YW hosted a welcome braai where I was invited to join a Connect Group, hosted on The YW premises, and to visit the local church (One life church). Little did I know that this event had painted a picture of how the rest of my stay at the Y would look. The YW soon became a place where I found Godly friends; got connected to a lovely church community; found supportive parents and had lots of fun. The YW also fostered a conducive environment for academic support and spiritual growth, whilst promoting emotional and mental health.

I got plugged into the local church and attended Connect Group, and before I knew it, Church Leaders recognised my potential and I became a leader at the Church Site I was attending. The Lord and I grew deeper and deeper in relationship, and He spoke to me about the call He'd placed over my life. Auntie Penny and Uncle Fred also allowed me ample space and opportunity to develop and utilize the spiritual gifts I had. They let me lead a Connect Group at The YW, allowed me to host ladies' breakfasts on weekends; supported our visits to the local orphanage, Indawo yeThemba, for some fun-activities; helped prepare food for Street Ministry that we distributed on Monday and Wednesday nights; let us host many prayer meetings and other church meetings at The YW. I learnt how to play the drums and joined the Church Worship Team. Additionally, I became a leader for our Church Missions' Team. My time at The YW really enabled me to mature in the Lord and grow in my gifting. It was a busy time, but somehow the Lord still enabled me to graduate my Masters Cum laude.

Throughout this season of my life, Auntie Penny and Uncle Fred truly remained pillars of support. I'd often walk into their office with many stories about school, my family and church and they'd always listen and provide guidance when necessary. Their doors were always open and have remained open even as an ex YW girl. I've come many a time post my stay and they're still willing to lend an ear and speak into my life. They have remained parents to many of us, and have a special place in my heart. I remember writing a piece for an edition of The YW News & Views about my experience at the Sparkle Ladies Conference that The YW had encouraged us to attend. This past weekend I had the privilege of preaching at our Sparkle Ladies Conference at two church sites. This alone speaks to how great a role my time at The YW played in growing me spiritually, developing my gifting and walking into all that God has in store for me.



SPHI (SIPHINILE) GAMBUSHE: Sphi completed her degree at the end of 2019 and is currently working at Margate Middle School as a Learning Support Assistant, supporting children in any way she can.

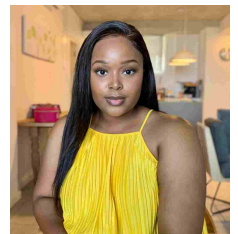
I arrived in Pietermaritzburg in 2017. On my third day there, I was mugged in the early morning and Uncle Fred and Auntie Penny opened their doors to me to stay temporarily at The YW, so that I wouldn't be alone at my digs. Little did we all know that I'd meet a lifelong friend who would help me flourish spiritually. When other girls arrived to stay at my digs, I moved there, as The YW was full. After that, I walked across the road from my digs to The YW for the rest of that year, and I experienced weekly Connect groups and being part of all the activities offered at The YW.

I finally moved into The YW in 2018 and it was such a prosperous year for me. Not only did I gain the confidence to join the Varsity Church Site band, I also led Connect groups and worship nights.

I had been saved since I was 17 but it was my first time experiencing God's wholeness, because I myself was whole. I didn't know that serving could bring so much joy. I served wholeheartedly and grew exponentially. I lived out Romans 8:28-30. I was serving and growing, as well as thriving academically. This highlighted to me that God takes care of His people. I have been equipped for situations I go through now as a young woman and I am so appreciative of the platform that allowed me to come into my own.

Auntie Penny and Uncle Fred were the best support system, not only to me but to all the girls. The unmatched confidence they have in each of us to thrive in new spaces, gives one the extra confidence boost.

I can confidently say that The YW is a wonderful space to help young women not only find themselves in faith, but to heal, grow and experience for all the seasons life has to offer. I have become a prayerful young woman. In my life thus far, I have learned to put God first and keep Him first, and I've watched Him remain faithful through my seasons. The Bible says, "Iron sharpens iron," and I believe that Uncle Fred and Auntie Penny shape us young women in that way, by encouraging leadership, hosting weekly Connect Groups for all the girls and even through the conversations they have with us. These are the things that have helped challenge how we view God and how we serve Him. Seeing them live out the gospel really encouraged me in ways they probably don't know. I have been blessed with the best varsity experience and I always encourage young women to stay at The YW, as it is a wonderful and safe environment.



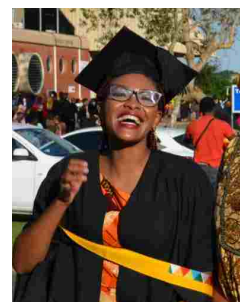
OLLIE (OLWETHU) NDLOVU: Ollie is currently busy with her Post Graduate Diploma in Accounting. Last year was a big year for Ollie – not only did she complete her Accounting Degree, she also won an award. Ollie has been a part of The YW family for four years.

2021 at The YW Pietermaritzburg:

There's an IsiZulu saying that goes "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" which loosely translates to "a person is a person through people". I feel as though throughout 2021 this was the theme at The YW. Due to academic reasoning, I started my 2021 stay at the Y halfway through the year, but I fitted right in. The 2021 group was a bit smaller, due to online learning, which made us closer. Connect on Monday's was always a joy, everyone came together, forgetting the stress of books for a bit, and just let their hair down. My housemates were nothing short of amazing and supportive.

I am currently the chairperson of the Association of the Advancements of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA) UKZN PMB student chapter, and I won an award for the Student Leader of the Year. I remember after getting the call, I was met with screams from all my housemates. Half of our house completed our degrees at the end of the year and the day we got our results we were screaming so much we thought Uncle Fred was coming to quiet us down, but actually he was there to congratulate us. The spirit of togetherness at the Y got a lot of us through the year. Studying online and barely leaving the house can take its toll on a person. We occasionally left the house together for groceries or fun activities like bowling. We all impacted each other in different ways and were even a little bit different after coming together.

#ForeverGrateful



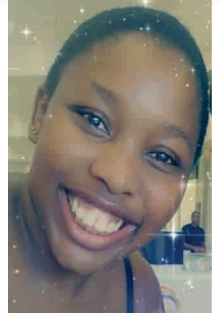
PIETERMARITZBURG

PHUME (PHUMELELO) MZONELI: Phume is currently completing her Law Degree online. Phume was with us for three years.

My experience of House 4 at The YW Pietermaritzburg

There are a few cliches that hold a lot of truth, and this is one of them: 'One of the best parts of communal living is meeting people from all walks of life.' During my stay at The YW in 2021, my housemates and I were the very definition of 'different walks of life' in so many ways. We had different interests, and held different beliefs. Phe had 7 siblings, while Skhona and I were only children. Linc belonged on an episode of MasterChef, and I knew how to cook exactly 4 things. Ntokozo genuinely enjoyed hiking and camping, while I tried to see the sun as little as possible, and had no interest in life without Wi-Fi. Peanut was at the law library every morning when it opened, and I always managed to roll out of bed just in time to submit my assessments; and Peanut and Skhona were the very embodiment of 'strong and silent', while I never stopped talking.

Under normal circumstances we probably would have never met, let alone become such good friends, but, by some miracle, we'd found... this place. This home. We'd found comfort, warmth, and laughter. We'd found stimulating conversation, good food, late nights swapping stories. And now that I'm studying from home, they're the leading ladies in some of my best stories. I can't count how many times I've told the one about the time we opened our Secret Santa gifts early, or the night Uncle Fred almost scared us to death. And that's because it's not the assessments or the cold that come to mind when I think about my life in Pietermaritzburg. Instead, what comes to mind is Peanut forgetting to put butter in her butter chicken, and Ntokozo teaching me how to skip. I remember the night we went bowling, where we learnt the hard way that Phe is the most competitive person to ever walk the face of the earth; and crossing our fingers that Ntokozo's birthday balloons didn't fly away on the walk home. I remember all of these moments, and about a million more, and I'm filled with an immeasurable love, and an immense gratitude.



PHIWO (PHIWOKUHLE) MKHIZE: Phiwo is currently in the 3rd year of her second degree – this one a BSc in Dietetics and Human Nutrition. This is Phiwo's second year with us. Before she arrived she thought The YW was a cult!

THE 2021 END OF YEAR PARTY WAS QUITE THE EVENT!

The year's planning committee really managed to pull together something great, with beautiful decorations, great food, and a decorated photo area for all of us to capture the memory of the night. To really capture the essence of the evening, we need to talk about the preparations that went into the party. The planning committee was divided into groups for the food and decorations. The decorations were handled by Laura De Oliveira, Yanda Mgwabi and Luthando Ngwane. Their passion and attention to detail (from the table runners right down to the painted pinecones and twinkling fairy lights) really took our garden to the next level.

A party isn't complete without great food, which is what our food committee really provided. Coming up with the menu was quite a fun challenge and we managed to pull together something that everyone really enjoyed. The members of the food committee included Sne Sibisi, Phiwo Mkhize, Lusanda Mngadi, Bridget Ngcobo and a few other lovely ladies who came to help, including Aunty Penny who cooked the meat and made the best homemade strawberry ice cream.

Also, 2021 was a little different because we had a fun little interhouse competition. Every house was tasked with making a TikTok that was to be submitted and judged by Aunty Penny, Uncle Fred and our Connect group leaders, Khwezi and Ntokozo who also made a TikTok of their own. So, the day came, the food was ready, the decorations were set, and the night began. We played games that brought out the competitive side of everyone present and ate the lovingly prepared food. We then watched, on a 'big screen' (a sheet), all the TikToks that had been submitted, after which the winning house was announced (always controversial). The rest of the night was spent relaxing, taking pictures, and enjoying the dessert. It was a great night.



THOBEKILE NTKOZO MLAMBO: Thobekile is currently a first year student studying Social Sciences at UKZN.

Hi there. The YW is a great place for young women to grow, build and find themselves

The YW recently invited me to attend The Sparkle Women's Conference, 2022. I was able to attend thanks to the loving Aunty Penny and Uncle Fred, who made it possible. When I arrived at Sparkle it was full of women of different ages and there was a wonderful spirit. The Sparkle Conference helped me acknowledge God's presence and His love for me, within my life, and how He has been with me through every difficult stage. One of the speakers at the conference said, "God will test you, not because He wants to trouble you, but because He wants you to be ready for every beautiful thing He has planned for you." (Vanessa Goosen). Another thing, or rather a verse, which helped me trust and stop questioning why things happen, is Mark 5:36, "Do not yield yourself to fear, all you need to do is keep on believing." This verse has truly helped me to trust God and believe His plans for my life.

I am truly grateful for the experience and cannot wait to attend again next year, and to continue building my relationship with God.



NELISWA KEWUTI: Neliswa is busy with the first year of her Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

The struggle is real!

As a first-year student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, I thought everything would go smoothly with my application, but challenges came my way: the University sent me a message on Thursday 24th February, offering me a place as a student, but without accommodation. Registration was closing on Monday of the following week, so decisions needed to be made quickly.

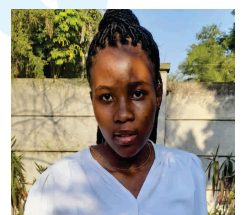
While I was on my way to the University the next week, some students told my parents that there was a protest at the University. The previous day students had been told they would be put into University Residences, but by nightfall they had not been given accommodation, and had to sleep on the pavement.

The only assistance we could get was from the Students' Representative Council Members. After a long day of struggling, I could finally accept the offer and register. While waiting at the school gate I met my current friend, Luyanda Simelane. She was one of the students who had to sleep at the University gate the previous night because they could not afford to travel all the way home. After a few days, the protest eased because the registration period had been extended. The residences were full, and students were instructed to find private accommodation.

The next struggle was accommodation. Fortunately, one of the SRC members gave us a YW information pamphlet and told us it was a nice place to stay. We 'Google mapped' The YW, as we did not know where it was, and followed the directions until we arrived at the gate. There was The YW accommodation: beautiful and warm, with a safe atmosphere – not just the buildings but also the very wonderful souls, Uncle Fred and Aunty Penny (although I call them Grandpa and Grandma). They invited us in, we got to choose our rooms and meet S'phumeleli Mpanza, who had also slept on the pavement the previous night, and she became our friend.

From day one, things at The YW have been wonderful: it is a safe haven, the environment is peaceful, and our "Girls' night session," "Connect, has been there as a break from school stress on Monday evenings. Unfortunately, I cannot always attend due to my late classes. The garden is the best place to freshen my mind and "chill" with my friends. It is also where we get to take very cute pictures.

I would recommend this place to any young woman.



The YW

...so much more

than a

HEATHER SIMKIN'S YW STORY. 1966-1967. As staff member 1971-1972.

In 1966 I moved into the YWCA in Pretoria lock stock and barrel having left Port Elizabeth where I had packed up my flat and all the trappings. It caused great alarm to those in charge to see all my STUFF coming in the door! My intention was not to stay permanently at the Y but to get myself into a flat as soon as possible; but God had other and better plans for my life.

After having been there a few weeks I discovered that it was rather a nice place which was very near to the Department of Agriculture where I worked. The only problem was that I had to attend prayers every Monday night and for someone who was not interested in God it was a pain! I decided that all in all I could grin and bear it as all the other things about the place were positive.

I started making good friends and life was good.

But God started convicting me of my sin and made it quite clear that I was lost and without God and hope of Heaven. I was on the run and argued and fought tooth and nail against anyone who was on God's side! Unbeknown to me the staff were praying for my conversion. The fight got harder and then one day it was announced that Dr Stern, a retired minister of the gospel was coming to the Y for special meetings. When he came in 1967, I could not resist a thing he said and so asked to speak to him one evening. He gently led me through verses explaining the way of salvation and especially the part with which I had the most difficulty, the assurance of forgiveness of all my sins. He explained that if God said it, it was true and all I had to do was to believe and receive this wonderful salvation that Jesus had accomplished on the Cross dying in my place for my sins. That day in February 1967 I became a child of God by His grace and mercy.

Not long after that, a missionary came to speak to us and through her message the Lord spoke very clearly that He was calling me to fulltime ministry. I was surrounded by a lovely group of Christian girls who taught me how to pray, read the Word and wait upon Him, seeking His face for all aspects of my life (some with whom I still have contact today).

Not too long after this I applied to the Bible School of South Africa in Cape Town to enrol in a two year Bible training course to prepare me to serve Him in the place, yet unknown to me. I arrived the beginning of 1968 and finally stayed for 3 years thinking that by then I would know where my calling would lead me. I didn't realize that when God calls He needs to train one properly before sending us out. He also knew that my calling was for life and that the odds I would be facing would be extremely daunting without a deep sense of His call and a faith in Him that nothing could shake (not even an earthquake which in the past three years I have experienced constantly!) I passed through God's training school for 9 years during which time I served for 2 years at the Pretoria Y (1971-1972) and then back at the Bible Institute for 3 and a half years. (1973-1976.)

In all this time He was teaching me to submit my stubborn will to His and to truly live by faith for all things plus my finances.



During this period, I met up with 2 future colleagues who would be part of my ministry, one of whom is Jeanette Lelliott also a YW convert from Pietermaritzburg. The Lord called the three of us to serve Him on the island of Mayotte, now a province of France and an ex-member of the islands of the Comoros in the Mozambique channel. We had to learn French and the unwritten Bantu language, Shimaore. The island was yet untouched by the Gospel. Jeanette and I are still here after 46 years of service and still going strong by God's grace! I arrived at age 29 and Jeanette came 3 years later and we will stay until the Lord tells us that our job is done.

We really appreciate The YW's care and support in prayer and financial support all these years, plus the hundreds of others who have stood with us through thick and thin. After all this time we have seen very little fruit but believe that God has a mighty plan waiting in the wings to be manifested in His timing. We have sown the Gospel in all sorts of ways and we know that these good seeds will bear fruit. Many other Christians have come and played their part for the salvation of this nation. In the end we will all with our supporters rejoice together in the mighty power of our faithful God.

We now run a Christian Bookshop as well as doing teaching and training of others for the future. In all these years the story of our life on Mayotte is that our God is a Faithful God.

residence for young women.



MELANIE AIMER'S YW STORY. 1997-1998.

The YW was a sanctuary and fellowship that God provided.

Recently I found myself feeling I had come a full circle in life. A few months ago, I travelled from London (where I now live) to South Africa for business in Cape Town. As the head of the business, I stood on the stage to welcome our clients. As I looked around, overwhelming emotion flowed through me as suddenly I realised that a few metres away was where this journey all began, at The YW in Bellevue Street in Cape Town in 1997. Later that afternoon, I took a walk along Kommetjie beach to look back at my life and see all the wonders of God's blessings, protection, patience and love through all the ups and downs of life

How did I find myself at the "Y"?

I was brought up in a Christian home with my dad opening up churches in South Africa. Sadly my mum passed away when I was 11 and my brother Stuart was 9. We were then living in Port Elizabeth. Shortly after, my dad took us on a long drive from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town so we could spend time together to heal. As we arrived in Cape Town, for the first time I saw the magnificent red roof tiles of UCT. It was then in this moment, that I dreamt this would be where one day I would want to live and study. Knowing though it was unlikely we could afford to do so.

I finished my matric in Queens High School Johannesburg at the age of 16. We could not consider affording the opportunity of going to UCT. However I believed that if I could just get to Cape Town that it would be one step closer to achieving this dream. My mum had once stayed in The YW in her young adult years, and my dad suggested I do the same in Cape Town. On arrival, I was greeted by such a wonderful family. I was shown my room, which was beautiful and overlooked Table Mountain. There were clouds over the mountain, and it felt as though God was right there with me sending me a signal He would be there to protect me in the presence of the safety of the mountain and clouds.

The YW was my place of safety and refuge, but also a place of wise council and meeting good friends who taught me more of what life had to offer. To pay for my first year of studies I worked a few jobs from the Spur in the Waterfront through to an Italian restaurant. Some of the girls went to His People church at UCT, and I used to tag along mostly because they were based in UCT. Being in the building felt that one-step closer to achieving my dream. The girls at The YW helped me complete my UCT application form, and helped me over the initial fear and excitement of the first

few days of University. They also got me into doing volunteer work for homeless boys near Seapoint, whilst also learning new skills from one another. I will never forget that I learnt how to knit at The YW. I stayed at The YW for 12 to 18 months, which provided the opportunity to help me believe that going to UCT was indeed very possible.

In common with so many people's lives, the journey hasn't been a straight path, but one that has meanders with ups and downs. Throughout, no matter how far I strayed, God has been the constant. God's forgiveness and blessings have been immeasurable.

I work in Banking in London, and it is a place that I feel God uses me as His voice. I am blessed with an amazing husband, and 5 year-old son, Hamilton. We are part of the Church of England worshipping in St Peter's Limpsfield, and Hamilton is going to its Christian school, as I too hope that he will fall in love with God's love as much as my husband and I.

That day as I walked on the beach in May, I looked back at my life so far and it all came together how God had been there for me as a constant, sometimes when I hadn't realised it or wasn't obvious. All of a sudden I was overwhelmed by his Graciousness and everlasting love. Realising that when doors closed, it was God that had a better plan for my life by opening the windows. When I failed, it was God that taught me to forgive myself most of all. When I succeeded, it was God that blessed me with humility.

The "Y" was the sanctuary and fellowship that God provided! I am so very grateful, and remain so to this day.

Thank you YW for all you provided and continue to provide to young girls in South Africa.

FALON OLDFSEN.
I WAS A 'Y' GIRL FOR 4 YEARS.
2009 -2012.



My story starts with a conversation between a 2-year-old girl and a surrendered dog, through the cage bars at SPCA in Durban. This is my earliest memory. The desire to help animals was deeply rooted in me, a part of my creation.



After finishing matric I pursued my dream of one day practicing as a veterinarian. The start of this journey was full of rejection. Veterinary was unexpectedly different to get into as there is only one Vet School, which has a small intake of applicants.

It was suggested that I study an Animal Science degree at UKZN PMB to make my Veterinary application more attractive and increase my chances of being accepted. Unfortunately, I was rejected by UKZN, rejected by Vet School, and rejected by 2 other institutions.

God has created me for this, it was my purpose. Knowing this I leaned on Gods faithful character. It was not made easy, but I put in the work and God opened the doors. God is faithful all the time.

I was accepted at UKZN the following week, 2 weeks after classes started. A win I shared with family, friends and our church community. Everyone followed my journey, praying and assisting me with advice. It was good to be part of a Christian family.

With all accommodation surrounding the UKZN PMB campus full at this time, a friend from church suggested The YW. She had managed to secure a room in one of the houses. With great hopes we went to The YW but unfortunately it was full. No

room at this inn. A week later The YW contacted me, offering the newly renovated garden-tool room in the backyard. I was thrilled. If a barn was good enough for Jesus, then a garden-tool room was good enough for me.

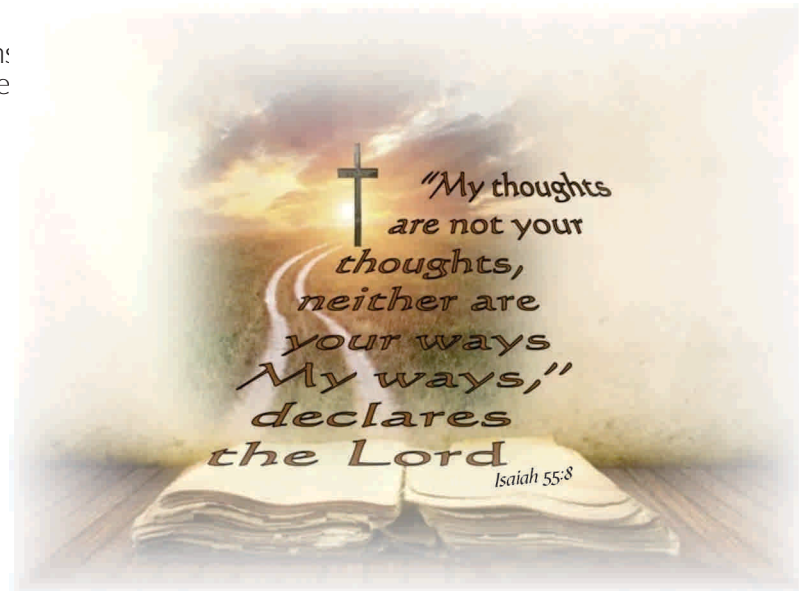
God is faithful all the time.

I loved my time at The YW. Some of the best years spent. I embraced the Monday night meetings, eager to learn and grow in the Lords word.

It gave me eyes to see the daily actions of the Lord in my life. The protection in unsafe situations young adults find themselves in, and in moments of weakness. Gods caring provision allowed me to learn gently in these teachable moments. I have carried these lessons through all my studies and into my businesses.

My advice to a younger me: Life is made up of a series of season: Seasons of change, challenges, sowing and reaping. Trust in the Lord with all your heart in all seasons. Delight in the Law of the Lord and meditate on it day and night.

Be blessed
Dr Falon Olfesen
BSC Animal Science,
BSC H (Animal Reproduction & Nutrition),
Btech Epidemiology and BVSC.





JAYNE DEWSNAP (FOXCROFT). 2015-2017. BENDS IN THE ROAD.

I have a brown leather journal from my university years with Jeremiah 29:11 engraved on it. The verse was meant to be a reminder that no matter what, the plans God had for me were for good. There are many moments in those years that I didn't believe that. Looking back today as some dust has settled on that journal, I do believe that God's plans in those years were for my good. The road was definitely not what I thought it would be, yet I wouldn't have it any other way. For my "A type" personality that sounds amazing, I have come to realise though, that in most of the time that is not the case. And whether I like to admit it or not, it's usually for the better.

My life at the "Y" started with an unexpected bend in the road. After finishing high school, my plan was to take a year off and join a missions organization. A few weeks before University started in 2015, I got a very generous bursary from the University of Cape Town. Coming from a single parent home, this was a massive answer to prayer and an offer I could not turn down. The sudden redirection in my well-established plans led me to start my frantic search for somewhere to live. Thanks to Google, the modern hero, it led me to the Y. Coming from a small town to big city, the sense of home with shared values was vital for me. I don't have a lightning bolt moment in my life where I can say that's where I became a Christian. Rather, God has always been there, something I don't take for granted.

I believe that your university years are a critical point in your relationship with God. For many, this new season of freedom can either lead them closer to the Lord or completely away from Him. When I think of how the "Y" helped me on my spiritual journey, a few things come to mind. The "Y" was a place of peace – a strange thing to call a res full of young woman. The start of my life at the Y was a rocky road. Thankfully the staff and some of the girls in the house stepped in. They stood by my side and encouraged me and walked a road with me until the rocky road became smooth. I call the house, a place of peace because it allowed me a space where I could honestly and openly express my faith. My place of peace, my city on a hill that could not be hidden. My favourite way that the Y helped my journey was the people I got to do it with. I was and am still so blessed to call some of the ladies friends. As I stated earlier, the university years are critical in your faith. I believe that having a community that shared the same values made it so much easier. These ladies did life with me, they encouraged me, corrected me, helped me and loved me.

Matie (a friend from the Y), played a big role in me realigning my call into missions. As I said earlier before moving to the Y, I was originally planning on doing a gap year in missions. When my university plans didn't seem to work out, missions did. The university-sized bump in my road changed my plans of doing a missions gap year. During my second year, I was praying that God would give me direction on my future. In my mind, I was thinking more along the lines of post-grad plans (That A-type personality shining through once again). One evening, Matie suggested that I volunteer with a mission's ship (MV Logos Hope) in the June Holiday. I didn't want to do it because I was already doing a youth camp in those holidays, clearly my good Christian deeds box had been ticked. Thankfully, Matie is pushy, and I ended up volunteering with this ship.

On the exact halfway point of my degree, some people shared on the ship. I unfortunately don't remember what most of the people shared, except one person stood out to me. To my surprise, one of the people that shared was the same man I had done my missions interview with two years earlier. To my shock, he remembered who I was and said that his



team and him had been praying for me for the past two years. In my heart, I knew with everything in me that God was calling me into missions. He had graciously blessed me with my university degree (which I now use in missions) but had bigger plans for me than my post-grad. From that moment on, I was focused on finishing my degree and not do a missions gap year, but rather a missions life. The Y supported me financially, prayerfully and emotionally in my missions journey since then.

As I look back on my life and specifically my university sized bend in my road, a few things stand out to me. God did have good plans for me in 2015, they weren't mine but were so much better. The bends in the road are critical, for they may make the journey seem longer but they make it easier in the long run. The shortest distance between two points is still a straight line, but short distances don't produce endurance. "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." Romans 5:3-4

I thank God for the detours, the bends and the uphill (that felt a lot like suffering) as they led me here. After five years serving as a missionary, there have been many more bends in the road, but I am slowly starting to enjoy it in small doses (as much as my A-type personality can handle). I realise that you can't predict or change the sudden bends, but they will come. Thankfully they do come as they change our paths, they change our views and they change us for the better! I wouldn't be a full time missionary on my way to Poland, married to a blonde haired, blue eyes farm boy (The Limpopo version of a surfer) if not for that university sized bend in my road. It's an adventure in His Kingdom and this is my part in it! All thanks to Him and the bends He has allowed in my road!

NEWS and VIEWS :

THE NEW NORM - DEBRA MABOTJA

Being in lockdown was one the scariest thing to happen. What made it worse was that my family wasn't under one roof. Seeing what was happening all over the world, our backyard, in the news felt so surreal. Having my dad lead the troops to help with the quarantine, the lockdown and only seeing him over the phone was just something that was tearing me inside. Having a newborn baby under the roof whose parents were in the front lines helping fight this whole thing was just too much. Imagine having to quarantine before holding your child. It wasn't an easy moment for us, but we managed to pull through by Gods grace. I remember when dad was allowed to come home, I didn't even wait for him to get out of the uniform. I just had to hug him because seeing the bodies, death tolls rising by the hour while he was out there, was terrifying.

And then online schooling was introduced. Okay what is this now? I must do the studying by myself; classes are done online but only for a few minutes because data and network issues. Practicals are put on hold because we haven't been briefed on how to handle patients with Covid 19. At the back of my mind, I was like this is not happening. I am one person who prefers having my lecturer in front of me but now there's a zoom app, teams app where all these classes are going to take place. The frustration, the pressure, the fear took over. At least we have understanding lecturers that understood that all this online thing was new to all of us, and everybody just needed a little patience.

until the Minister said health students can go back to practicals. My parents were like you are not going anywhere. You are not going back to work. I had to. I have to. I chose to work with people and am I going to run every time there is an outbreak? Got back to Bloem around July and continued with online schooling. First day back at the hospital, we had a meeting. Teaching us about the disease, how to wear proper PPE when going to isolation ward. Hearing that almost all our supervisors had this disease and in my head I'm like you still want us here. Most of the week I was working in the department, minor symptoms and low-grade fevers, nothing hectic. Then I had to go help in isolation. I dropped tear when I saw the effects of this virus with my own eyes, in front. Every bed had an occupant. All ventilators occupied. Breathing, a mere taking a breath was a marathon for those patients. Sleeping wasn't easy for those people. Today a patient is here, tomorrow she/he isn't. Soon we had to learn that we can't save everyone but what we could do is pray for them to get better and for others, we had to hope their souls are at peace.

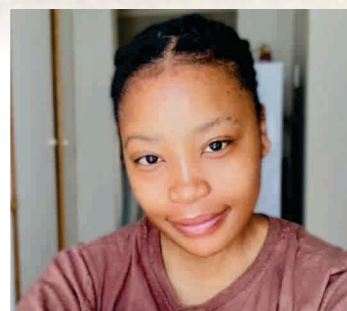
Two years later, no more masks, no more lockdowns and it is highly rare to find a Covid 19 positive patient in the hospital. Not saying that it isn't there anymore, but it is not as hectic as it was in 2020. Now it's back to beds filled with broken bones from accidents because every weekend, is a drinking weekend.

School is back to normal. Well at least for those that had online classes and exams because we have been back at it for some time now. It feels good to be sitting in a class full of people, hearing laughs and seeing our lecturers, all of them face to face and no longer on a laptop screen. Some even had babies and others got married. It is really amazing to be back to some sort of normal. One thing I have learnt from this whole Covid 19 virus is that we should appreciate life. Celebrate and truly be grateful for it because we knew that tomorrow is not promised but we woke up and we were in a pandemic. Everything and the world as we knew it changed.



: BLOEMFONTEIN

Hi, My name is **Masego Motlathledi** and I am from North West, currently a final year student studying towards BEng Tech in Civil Engineering. I always start my day of with the following scripture from the Bible, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11-13). This scripture reminds me every day that God always has a purpose for our daily lives and that he can use whatever situation you may be going through to make things better and give us hope. I value respect, honesty and loyalty. I was raised in a Christian household and when I started staying at The YW I became more in touch with my spiritual self and I have grown closer to God ever since. The YW has become home away from home, my stay here has been one of the most fulfilling things to ever experience during my varsity life, I have learned to interact more and slowly come out of my little shell. The YW has instilled large amounts of growth and substantial amounts of confidence, it has been a journey of self-discovery throughout my stay here, and I will forever hold that dear to my heart. -Always remember that God is Love and love is kind, patient, and unconditional and does not judge.



Lebo Thobela UFS (Bachelor of Education, Final year)

In 2020, South Africa was impacted by the pandemic (Covid 19). Most people lost their jobs, which resulted to a significant increase in crime. Thus, Bloemfontein became an epicentre to criminality students being targeted the most. As a victim of attempted house robbery, I felt insecure especially because my former landlord was negligent.

Ever since I came to Young Woman Residence (YW), I have a peace of mind. The YW residence is one of the few outstanding accommodations in Bloemfontein I know with regards to safety, hygiene and service delivery with affordable prices. Tenants are treated with utmost respect. I would recommend it to any woman I know and if I were to cross paths with this residence again, it would definitely still be my go to place.



Sinethemba Zulu

A time that we thought was never going to arrive due to the likelihood of Covid 19 prevailing but today we are able to interact with other people without a fear of having to contract or pass the Covid 19 virus, no social distance rules that we have to comply with, no visitation limits and curfews, no restriction on the number of items one wants to purchase, the list goes on however we are grateful for our new normal. Even if Covid 19 had negative impact and restrictions in place but it taught us that there are some things that are not necessary to human survival or to human happiness. Our world is technology orientated but the pandemic forced individuals to be knowledgeable about the various platforms of communication. We survived a deadly disease that took more than 15,000+/- souls and because of that we'll forever offer prayers of gratitude to the Almighty for His grace that abounds forever.

Karabelo Mogotsi

A new academic year's beginning has been different from what I had anticipated, but nothing I can't handle. I had no trouble adjusting to the Covid 19 rules during the first half of the year because it was my first time attending university. However, now that the Covid 19 rules have been relaxed, it's a new experience that requires adjustment as well. The tranquility I have from having my own room is unsurpassed, and I couldn't have wished for a nicer stay during my time at The YW. I value how responsive the staff is to any problems that need to be fixed. The house has several amenities that make life easier and more convenient for us. I cherish our sessions the most because they allow me to see thoughts and opinions that are different from my own through the dialogue that takes place, and I leave with knowledge that can help me become a better person.

Message: Whenever a new journey emerges and you feel uncertain remember to

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6



: Harare Zimbabwe

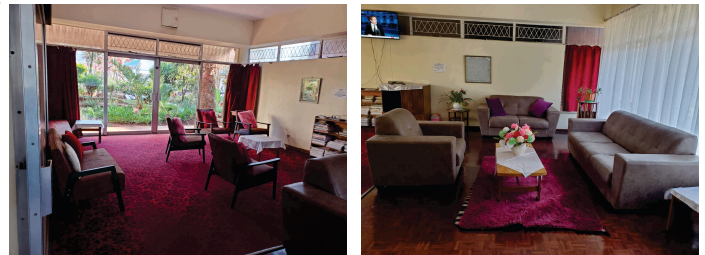
Message from Bromley House Administration

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
We thank God for His protection since the beginning of the year up to now.

For the residents of Bromley house and its staff members, thanking God for the management who have managed to make improvements around Bromley house such as painting the kitchen and the dining room area. Two new stoves and a fridge have been bought so far for the kitchen.

Our reception is looking more beautiful than ever with the new sofas and chairs for the girls to sit comfortably with their visitors or when they are watching television.

Our garden is still looking colorful with the flowers blossoming as we approach the summer.



Message from **Nokuthula Dube**

Bromley House is a wonderful place to belong. It has good principles and values that have helped me through my journey as a young lady. This month I will mark a year here. I am a journalist by profession and a young lady who is enthusiastic and always eager and willing to learn new things from other people. I have learnt a lot from Bromley House to love one another and share with those underprivileged every Monday, we attend chapel and we are blessed with snacks. This devotion has encouraged us to keep our faith. We have loving aunts and uncles who keep our environment clean. Thank you for all that you do! I love being a part of your "team" in the small way that I can. You all are playing such an important role in the lives of so many people, and will continue to do so. I really appreciate each and every one of you.



Message from **Kundai Mabviko**

I am a film director, scriptwriter, actress, a production designer and also a Joyful Praise Choir Member. I joined the Bromley Family in March 2021, it's been a year full of joy and happiness. Bromley taught me to live in harmony with the ladies, it taught me to be respectful to my elders which are the aunts and sekuru. Above all it taught me to be loyal to my parents' teaching even in their absence, I don't jolly around because I stay alone. Bromley has made me mature faster, since now I can cook for myself and wash my own laundry



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Bromley House,
182 Herbert Chitepo Avenue,
Harare, Zimbabwe.
Tel: 00263 4 724 072

*"I will instruct you and teach
you in the way you should go..."
Psalm 32:8a (NIV)*