

Y's NEWS and VIEWS 2023

CHRISTIAN RESIDENCES FOR YOUNG WOMEN NPC (RF)
formerly Young Women's Christian Associations of Southern Africa SINCE 1886

GOD OUR ROCK

The Oxford Dictionary defines rock as: “the hard solid material forming part of the surface of the earth, a mass of this standing above the earth's surface or out of the sea, e.g. the rock of Gibraltar”.

Isaiah declares: “Trust in the Lord for ever, for the Lord, for the Lord is the rock eternal”. In Deuteronomy 32:4, Moses states: “He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He”.

When you think about a rock, several things come to mind. You may think of something hard, tough, and durable. What is fascinating about God being likened to a rock is that He is all those things and yet at the same time in this Rock you find tenderness, mercy and compassion.

After many years of childlessness and many prayers Hannah brought little Samuel to the House of the Lord and prayed, “There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no rock like our God”. 1 Samuel 2:2

What does it mean for God to be our rock? It means God is our stability in times of trouble. God always remains solid and unchanging. Though the world shakes and crumbles around us, God does not wobble. He stands solid and strong as our rock and refuge. In Him we find salvation not only from our own sin but from the everyday troubles of this world.

After David had been delivered from the hand of Saul he sang, “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge”. 2 Samuel 2:2.

God is not only a rock for refuge, but He is also our protector. As protector, this means that not only will He fight for you but will watch over you. His protection does not give us license to be foolish, but it gives us assurance that He will be with us. When you walk in God's will and remain in relationship with Him you also walk in God's protection. “The Lord watches over all who love Him”. Psalm 145:20.

You have two choices as to how you live your life, you can run to the Rock and live in a place of refuge, rest, protection and hope; or you can live outside that. Through Jesus Christ, who said “I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6) we have access to God who desires to be the rock in our life. He wants you to hide in Him and be your place of refuge.

What an incredible Rock we are so privileged to have in our lives if we have invited Him in to it. When the storms rage, darkness surrounds us and we feel lost and helpless, all we need to do is cling to The Rock and remind ourselves of the truths and testimonies of those who have proved how immovable and dependable He is!

MARGRIT TEMPLE
NATIONAL PRESIDENT



News & Views



The YW residence in Cape Town had an extremely busy year with all our rooms in the main house at capacity and 6 of out of 9 studios occupied. We were also blessed to provide accommodation for many local and international visitors to Cape Town.



Welcoming Party

Our student committee helped plan and organise a Welcoming party, followed by karaoke in the lounge in February. It was a huge success and lots of fun. It is exciting to see new friendships forming, especially during mealtimes.



Ministry

Two praise and worship evenings of intercession, and fellowship were held in the YW's lounge.

The girls were encouraged to find a church for spiritual input and fellowship. Some of the girls are attending the Jubilee church on Sundays. One of our resident's home cell group meet in the lounge every Wednesday, which some of the other residents are joining. We are very excited that Sjah Ndaba, a pastor from the Jubilee Church, meets with our residents for Bible study twice per month.



Hiking

Regular hikes and walks on Table Mountain, Pipe Track and Deer Park are organised with the students, which they enjoy, especially at sunset.



Women's Day

Women's Day was celebrated in the form of an in-door picnic braai in the sun lounge area. Some of the girls helped plan and organise the event. Mike shared a little history about The YW and Cynthia spoke about significant women in the Bible.



Computer lounge

Students were allowed to paint and decorate the computer room to make it their own space.



Arts and Crafts

The students and staff often get together to paint (rock dotting) and connect. Phone lanyards were made for Women's Day.



Cape Town

Residents

I am **Lesego Mokgope**, a third year student in BA Fashion Design at Fedisa Fashion school in Cape Town, though I am originally from Johannesburg. I first found out about The YW from a friend who lived there and upon visiting it for the first time, I knew it was the ideal place to live for a young student. Being from another province, I am grateful for how caring and friendly the staff and fellow housemates are. Being around young women that are studying different courses and come from different backgrounds really opened my mind and worldview. Living at The YW truly brings a sense of peace amidst the stress that is tertiary education, as you get to come back to a safe, welcoming home, a lovingly made meal and people to build lifelong memories with.



My name is **Melani**. We found "The Y" through a family friend whose daughter stayed here for a few years. After looking into the place, we were immediately hooked. I was always that person that couldn't wait to spread my wings after school and leave my parents' house. When the moment that I was exposed to live away from home actually came, I grabbed the first opportunity to go back (10 days after I left). I hated leaving home, as I still do, but The YW has given me a home away from home. I feel like I can be myself here. I have a support system which is always willing to help when I reach out. I truly believe this has been the place God chose for me for the last 2 years and I know it shaped me into the woman I am today. Even though I've had many cries here, missing home and being overwhelmed by university, I've also had a lot of laughs and good times. The YW staff do a great job at ensuring that we have all we need, while doing it with a smile. I enjoyed my time here, and I think it is a good place for any young girl to start her journey. A home away from home.



My name is **Erin Damons**, I was born and raised in Oudtshoorn. I am currently completing my degree in Education at Varsity College. I started living at The YW Cape Town in 2023 and I am thrilled to share my overwhelmingly positive experience living at this residence. From the moment I stepped through the door, I felt welcomed by the warm and friendly staff, managers and fellow students. The sense of community here is truly exceptional – making it more than just a place to stay; might as well call it a home away from home.

One aspect that has consistently stood out to me is the incredible support I have received from the staff and managers, especially during times of illness. Their genuine concern and willingness to ensure my well-being were truly comforting. Whenever I was under the weather, they helped me and with caring hearts provided assistance and made my recovery smoother.

The beauty of this residence is unparalleled. The meticulously maintained garden, the pool and the views combine to create a serene environment. The convenience of easy access to stores and restaurants is a definite plus. One can't help but be impressed by the impeccable cleanliness and neatness of the building, both inside and out. Affordability was a key factor for me, and I am delighted to say that this residence offers exceptional value for the amenities and quality of life it provides. Lastly, I must mention the delightful pretty and friendly cat that occasionally graces us with its presence, adding joy to the already wonderful atmosphere. It has become a playful companion, brightening up my days with its antics and affection. In conclusion, my time at The YW Cape Town has been nothing short of extraordinary.



Special mentions

We are very proud of Danél van Tonder, who took part in the World Field Target Federation competition and came 1st in the Open Team event and 2nd in the Women's section.



We are also very proud to announce that Jana Basson placed Top 10 for the Anglo-American PlatAfrica competition for the second year in a row.



News & Views

“THERE IS A TIME FOR EVERYTHING AND A SEASON FOR EVERY ACTIVITY UNDER HEAVEN” – Ecclesiastes 3:1.

HISTORY – According to the book, “THE ROMANCE OF THE BLUE TRIANGLES”, the first mention of a Young Women's Christian Association in Pietermaritzburg was in 1896 by Sir Henry Bale, and the first Committee Meeting took place on the 30th March of that year.

The first YWCA House in Pietermaritzburg was on the corner of Chapel (now called Peter Kerchoff) and Pietermaritz Streets. In 1972 The YWCA moved into another House in Pietermaritz Street, and the original House was sold. The second building was sold in 1995 and the current property, at 31 Golf Road in Scottsville, across the road from the UKZN campus, was purchased. The purpose-built student accommodation was opened in 2000 – very few of our current residents were born at that time, which is a sobering thought!

SOON TO BE HISTORY - THE PARENTS: Penny and I came to The YW Pietermaritzburg at the beginning of 2011 and will retire at the end of 2023. We had taken the position without seeing the property as we had been interviewed in Cape Town, so it was quite a tense drive. We arrived in the evening and so it was really only the next day that we got to explore.

The best part was meeting the young ladies who were residing here at the time. Our eldest daughter had passed away in September of 2010, so the grief was still very raw. What a joy it was, and still is, to bond with all our additional “daughters”. At the end of each year, we say goodbye to some of them as they complete their studies and move off to take on the world, and at the beginning of the next year we welcome the new ones, many of whom have just completed their Matric and are venturing from home for the first time.

It has been a privilege to get to know all of the young ladies, some already bruised and battered by the harshness of life, and see them mature. It is always good to hear from girls who have become part of The Y family, although we have, unfortunately, lost touch with some of them.

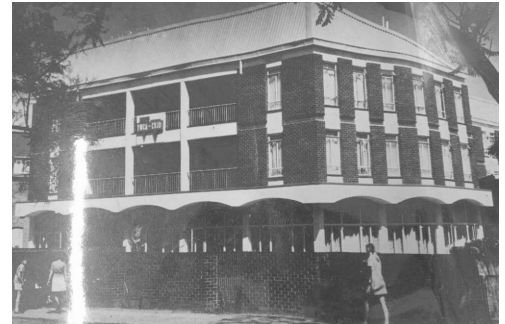
It will be a very emotional parting for us as we drive out of The YW Pietermaritzburg for the last time, but the Lord has been with us thus far and we look forward to what he has in store for us during our next season.



Penny & Fred



The first two YWCA Buildings in Pietermaritzburg – both are still standing



RECENT VISITORS:

Every now and again we get a visit from young women, most of whom are passing through Pietermaritzburg, which is not really a destination for the majority of people, on their way to or from Durban, and it is always amazing to catch up and reminisce about “the good old days”. Two recent visitors were Babongile and her very cute daughter, Lettie. Babongile left us at the end of 2014 and went on to get her Masters Degree. Babongile, her husband, and their two children, presently live in Hilton and Babongile is currently a stay-at-home Mom, enjoying her time with their two little bundles of joy.

Thando Maseko was at The YW Pmb from February 2014 until November 2019, having been awarded her BSc (Genetics). She is employed at a company in Durban and has submitted her thesis for her Ph.D. She has had several articles published and is awaiting the results from the last of three markers. On release of these results, we are absolutely certain that she will be awarded her Ph.D. Thando was, and still is, a very busy person, although during a visit last weekend she claimed to have started putting in boundaries. Whilst here, Thando was a leader in our Monday Night Connect Group, an active member in her church where she was involved, amongst other things, in the worship team, where she often played the drums. She also had an active social life. She is living proof that dynamite comes in small packages. Thando is an Elder in her church and was a speaker at the “Sparkle Women's Conference”.

The reason behind Thando's most recent visit was to introduce her future husband, Lindo to us. The Labola has been paid, but the actual date, place and time of the placing of the engagement ring on Thando's finger is a surprise – we are waiting with baited breath for Lindo to get down on one knee.

Lindo and Thando are a wonderful couple and we pray that God will bless them and use them abundantly in their life together.



Babongile & Lettie



Thando & Lindo

THE YW PIETERMARITZBURG, THEN AND NOW:

With the assistance of The YW Trust, we have been able to carry out a lot of renovation and upgrading.



The Grande Dame in need of a facelift March 2011



The Grande Dame of The YW Pietermaritzburg 2023 – absolutely beautiful!



This was the original house on the Golf Road property, and currently houses nine young ladies, most of them in sharing rooms, two girls to a room. The Lounge has also been given an upgrade:



Pietermaritzburg

OTHER PROJECTS:

The YW Trust also made it possible for us to totally renovate each of the five townhouses, inside and out:



The Townhouses



Nutec Cottage

Whilst renovating the townhouses we needed to accommodate the six young ladies from each townhouse whilst their house was being refurbished. A Nutec cottage was built for this purpose.



Manager's House

And build a Manager's House: The original outbuildings of the Grande Dame were very run down, with large cracks. For the most part they were demolished but the floor-plan was left intact. The walls were rebuilt and that part of the new building now accommodates two bedrooms and two bathrooms. The new part has a lounge, dining area and kitchen.

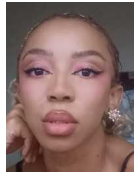
SPARKLE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Every year OneLife Church holds a women's conference and many of our residents have been blessed over the years. This year the theme was "RADIANCE", and seventeen of our young ladies attended, returning to The YW looking radiant. We asked some of them to let us have a few lines on their "Sparkle" experience - here are their comments:

NOSIPHO SHAZI: My experience at the Sparkle Ladies Conference was life-changing, it was such a radiant event where I got the opportunity to get to know other ladies who are on the same Christian path as me and connect with them. I felt so welcomed by everybody working there, the worship songs were amazing everybody was singing and the joy on every woman's face was something I will never forget. I enjoyed the variety of delicious food sold there and appreciated how lovely the church staff treated us and made us part of their community. The event was so impactful in my life that now I have made new friends whom I share my beliefs with, and it helped deepen my relationship with God.

MAKAZIWE PHEWA: Inspirational, empowering and radiant. These are three words that perfectly describe what was the Sparkle 2023 event. I had an amazing time and truly believe that it was a Spirit-led conference that was nothing short of female strength, celebration and good food.

MATHO MKHABELA: The Sparkle event was well co-ordinated and the venue was a bubbling sea of guests in pink. The stories shared by the guest speakers were awe-inspiring. It was wonderful to hear of how God used the women as vessels of change in the lives of His people.



HEAVEN'S GATES AND HELL'S FLAMES:

Sixteen of our young ladies attended a stage performance of the above production, a few of them for the second time. The Heaven's Gate and Hells Flames.



CANDY THEMBE: Speaking on behalf of every lady from The YW who attended the Heaven's Gate and Hell Flames event, I can confidently say that we were amazed and awakened by the production. I think it made a great impact on young people mostly, like myself. I gave my life to Jesus on that day, I made a decision that I believe will change my life completely. Witnessing everything happening and being able to relate it to real life situations was the scariest part. Realizing that the devil is real, and our Lord Jesus is also real was also scary in some way. Seeing that every decision you make on Earth can come back and haunt you when u pass on is the worst fear. The heaven gate made me want to seek Jesus and His Kingdom more than anything. It made me want to secure my place in heaven and live for God. I am very grateful that I got a chance to witness this life-changing experience.



SINEKE MTHEMBU: What I learned from the play Heavens Gates and Hells Fires is that the only way to know God is through Jesus Christ. Accepting Him in your life, allowing Him to lead you. I learned that opening your heart to Him is the only way to have a relationship with Him, and that is through prayer. I also learned life is too short, we do not know what tomorrow has for us, we don't know when we will be called and so we should accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour today. I have just started my journey of knowing Christ, and I know that it will not be easy but because I have opened my heart to the Lord, it will be done. To be a Christian you have to accept Jesus into your life no matter how good a person you are, to live with Jesus when our journey ends in this world you have to start living with Jesus now, accept Him and allow Him to lead you. That is what I learned from the Heaven's Gates play and I am grateful.



NONHLE MAPHUMULO: I am one of the girls from The YW who went to watch Heaven's Gates and Hells Flames. They produced an amazing play. What I adore the most is the lessons I got from watching it. I also realized that I could relate to some negative things that were acted out in the play. like thinking I still have time to live my life and I would only accept Jesus as my Lord and Saviour when I was old, and then I'd go to Heaven when I died. After watching this play, I realized that we have hope as people, and what is unbelievable is that we don't even realise it. We set alarms to wake up in the morning without certainty of waking up, but we have hope. That play needs the world, the world needs to see it. People gave their lives to Jesus straight after watching it. There is nothing more beautiful than seeing God's beloved, valued, worthy and beautiful children do His work, worship Him and praise Him. Lastly is that I am a child of God and I am honored to call Him Father.

THE NATURE OF WOMEN:

We managed to get 32 of our 50 young ladies together for a photograph.

After looking at the photograph Nosimilo asked me why I had taken a photo of her looking like that. I asked her why she had looked like that when I was taking the photo and she said, "We were talking, it's the nature of women," so here is a photo of "THE NATURE OF WOMEN".



News & Views

We had our first official event on Women's Day 09 August 2023.



It was an event jointly organised by Ps Esmeralda from Christian Revival Church and The YW Bloemfontein.

The turnout was more than we anticipated as there were about 120 young women attending. The highlight of the whole event was that 12 young women committed their hearts to our Lord Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.



The event was a huge eye-opener of the need which exists for young women students as they face huge challenges that are often never addressed or are swept under the carpet by society or educational institutions.

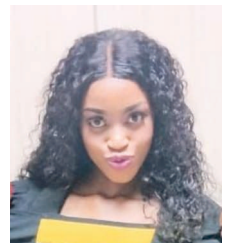
We thank God for the opportunity to make an impact in the lives of all these young women and the difference they will make in the lives of others and in their communities.



Valentine's Day was also a good reason to have some fellowship time together.



Tshegofatso Poss & Tlhompe Tote
who graduated this year.



Bloemfontein

TESTIMONIALS



My name is **Kgodiso Motheo** and I am a first year civil engineering student at the Central University of Technology (CUT). I am originally from Welkom and even though Welkom is only a short two hour drive from Bloemfontein, it was still a very daunting and challenging process thinking about and being away from home. I come from a tight-knit family and finding a place to stay that was safe and comfortable was a top priority for me and my family. In our journey of looking for a suitable accommodation we faced many disappointments, until a close family friend recommended The YW. Truly this was an answered prayer! My parents were able to leave their oldest daughter in a new city comfortably, because they knew my physical and spiritual well-being were both going to be well taken care of. The serenity and quietness and respect the girls have for each other here has truly been beneficial in my academic journey as the course that I'm studying is quite challenging and demanding. So the quietness and safety has truly been beneficial in helping me do my best in Uni. Also the ministry has also played an integral role in giving me encouragement and hope when I felt disheartened in both school and in my life. I was able to be fed spiritually and have any questions that I may have answered in fullness fueling my faith. The friendships that I made here at The YW with the other girls has also been beneficial in keeping me joyful and encouraged. I look forward to an amazing schooling journey as I know that I have found a home-away-from-home.



My name is **Caylen Strauss** and I am a first year electrical engineering student at CTU Training Solutions. I am originally from Pretoria and started living at The YW Bloemfontein at the beginning of 2023. The YW is a place where you build good relationships with your fellow housemates and God. The YW family is warm, welcoming and supportive. Coming to Bloemfontein and not knowing anyone or having friends, I met a few wonderful people here; friends that I am growing close to. The facilities are kept clean at all times and hardly any disturbances. The YW prioritise our safety at all times. Hearing that ministry was also part of staying here, I felt a sense of being home as my parents were at one time homecell leaders. Homecell brought me more clarity on how to live in God's Word, whilst being a young lady and how to grow stronger in His Word. Thus far school really hasn't been so stressful. The YW residence is one of the few outstanding accommodations in Bloemfontein for young ladies wanting to grow deeper in the Word of God. Tenants are treated with the utmost respect. I really would totally recommend this place to young Christian ladies.



My name is **Thando Mavimbela**, originally from Newcastle KZN. I'm an LLB student at UFS. I first heard about The YW from a friend in Cape Town who moved there early this year. She told me just how welcome she felt and how it's a home away from home. I was overjoyed when I found out there's a branch in Bloemfontein and very close to the Uni I'd be attending. When I came to Bloemfontein I had no relatives in the area and no friends. The YW family was very supportive, welcoming and loving. It was easy to acquaint myself with my housemates because of how kind everyone was. I even ended up making friends who became my sisters. The premises are always clean, beautiful and well-kept. The management prioritises our safety and security and I feel good knowing I can sleep without having to worry about someone breaking into my room or about my laundry that I left on the washing line. The facilities are quiet, there are hardly any distractions making it easy for me to study, even during loadshedding with the help of emergency lights that are installed in my room. The only challenge I encountered was travelling to campus. Although it was not very far, it was hard to go to campus every day and study as I would be tired by the time I came back. This negatively affected my grades, however, as soon as I learnt to create a balance in my schedule and not go to campus everyday I was able to perform well in school, while still attending all the necessary classes. I was very nervous when I heard we were going to have ministry. I thought it was going to be a lecture session. I couldn't have been more wrong. In fact, our Pastor made it a point to create a comfortable environment for us making it easy to ask questions for clarity. I got to learn about God, Christianity and how important it is for me to stop being a lukewarm Christian and have a relationship with God. Homecell and Church are the two things I look forward to every week. The YW offered me Ministry which helped me in my journey with the Lord and I will forever be grateful for the opportunity.

Harare

BROMLEY HOUSE

The year 2023 has been a good year for CRA Bromley House. We praise God that we have been protected thus far and we are thankful for His provision in our lives. There has been a full house since January and more students are in need of accommodation.

We have a group of young ladies who have been going around and visiting different orphanages. We applaud them for the great work that they are doing. They donate items such as food, clothing, sanitary pads and blankets.

We continue with our Monday night Chapel services which have helped the girls to stay in contact with the Lord on a regular basis. Psalms 133:1. They take turns to share the Word of God and lead the service.

Hello my name is **Ellain Qhawelihle Ncube** and I moved into Bromley House in May 2022.

I am a physical theatre actress and a graduate of the Zimbabwe Theatre Academy, a graduate of Fingers Modelling Academy and a diverse dancer.

Moving into Bromley House is one of the best things that happened to me in the sense of finding a safe place, convenient and close to school. Bromley has been a comfortable place to be in, as I have gained so many friends and it has helped me to socialize with people of different backgrounds, characters and careers. With all having been said and done I have learnt a lot.



One of the many amazing things about Bromley is that we have Chapel. There have been times when I felt very low but I would attend Chapel and leave feeling so much better. Also, staying in a place where prayer is our biggest strength, I find myself and my fellow sisters flourishing and achieving great things. Everyone who has the privilege to stay in Bromley gets to be disciplined to become prayerful and successful young women.

I am very grateful to the Aunties who look after us, making sure our environment is clean and friendly. Also, the security, that helps us relax, knowing they have our backs. I am happy because one of my dreams was to stay in Bromley House and God heard my prayers and it became a dream come true. I hope more girls can have the privilege of being part of the Bromley family, it is amazing!



Precious Gundu

I am writing wholeheartedly to recommend Bromley Christian Residential Association as an exceptional place of residence for young women. Having had the privilege of staying at BCRA I can confidently attest to the outstanding environment, facilities and support provided to its residents.

During my stay, I have a sense of security, comfort and community that surpassed my expectations. The rooms are well maintained, providing a comfortable and thoughtful design to meet the residents' needs. It is also a conducive space for ladies still growing in their career in terms of studies and work. The hostel staff play a crucial role in creating a positive and nurturing environment. Their dedication in ensuring the well-being and happiness of all us Residents, through Chapel services and group interactions is evident. Lastly, the hostel's commitment to promoting personal growth and holistic development was evident through various initiatives.

Bromley Christian Residential Association's support extended

beyond accommodation and played a vital role in shaping me as a confident and empowered individual as I have acquired my Bachelor of Science degree Honors in Computer Science during my stay at Bromley Christian Residential Association, not only limited to that, I managed to pursue my studies further and specialized in CyberSecurity.

I recommend Bromley House to any young woman still growing in their career and seeking safe, comfortable and supportive accommodation.

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THE YW MOTTO VERSE 2023

*Isaiah 41:10a -
"So do not fear, for I am
with you; do not be
dismayed, for I am your
God."*