

JANUARY 2022



Dear friends and family,

Happy new year to you all!

2022 for the Tomalins is a year of new starts, new chapters, new beginnings and all the cheesiness which follows. It's all true though. For all of the years I've been writing these updates I have been facing change, but it's all been confined to my role Hope Church. As I write this update, Nomfundo and I have left Hope Church and we're both in a period of transition as we await our flight to Cape Town on Saturday 22 January.

This year is going to bring many changes. We're newly married and we'll be moving to a city that's new to both of us. Cape Town will be the first place where we'll be able to settle since being married. We calculated that over the last two months we've stayed in five different places (including staying with family). Also, studying a bachelor's of theology at George Whitefield College (GWC) will be the first degree I've worked towards. These changes will bring so many opportunities and we're trying our best to view this as a new adventure which God has in store for us.

But I'd be lying if I said we weren't feeling nervous about the changes. For both Nomfundo and I, Jo'burg has been the place where we feel most familiar in South Africa. Most of Nomfundo's close family are in Jo'burg. Adjusting from working in full-time ministry to studying full-time will also be a huge adjustment. However, despite the enormity of the changes, we can certainly testify to God's faithfulness in countless way to us, particularly over the past few months.



Washing Nomfundo's feet as a symbol of a pledge to serve her in our marriage.

Since my last update, Nomfundo and I got married and we praise God for bringing us together and enabling our families to be able to witness this great celebration! It was such a beautiful day of being able to commit our marriage to God before family and friends and celebrate bringing in a mixture of Zulu and British culture. The pressure of a wedding day being the best day of one's life is something that I've always been sceptical of – but I can certainly say that this definitely did come top as my best day to date!

However, the run up to the wedding day was wrought with many tensions and heartache. The vast majority of weddings have their own dramas, particularly in the run up to the proceedings. However, it really felt as though we were under enormous pressure. I mentioned in my last update that Nomfundo was going to share with her family about her strong desire not to participate in acts of ancestral worship, which her family wanted her to be part of (as a way of sending her off and honouring their ancestors). It was an incredibly hard time for her and some family members said some really hard things, trying to push her into doing it. By God's grace and strength and with the help of church family she managed to stand her ground. We praise God that many of her family still came to the wedding. There were points where the situation was looking pretty horrible and intense though. We're praying that we'll both continue to reach out in love and service to her family, despite the hurt that many still feel. We're grateful that things have calmed down a lot since then and we're also incredibly grateful to the Lord for his faithfulness throughout the situation. The fact this all happened in the run up to the wedding and yet family still came, made the day even more special and moving for us both. Encouraging conversations have since been had with family members and we praise God for how he has sustained us both and given us words and wisdom to engage in love and also seek to shine Christ's light.

I thought it would also be helpful to give you a brief reason for why I'm going to be studying at GWC (pictured right). Over the time that I've spent serving in South Africa, I really feel that the Lord has laid the country and ministry of the country on my heart. I feel that studying at GWC will be beneficial because it will provide me with robust theological training and enable me do so in a context near to where I want to do longer-term ministry. When I complete my studies, my current aspiration is to pursue families ministry longer term. I want to grow in my ability to serve as a children's or youth worker and also to be able to train other kids and youth workers for ministry in South Africa.



Thank you so much for your partnership and prayers.

God bless,
Adam

Praise God for

- My marriage to Nomfundo and the time spent with some of her family over Christmas.
- A good finish to our time at Hope Church and opportunities to meet up with friends and family before leaving to go to Cape Town.
- Encouraging conversations with family in light of the tension running up to the wedding.

Pray for

- Being able to settle into life in Cape Town well – studies, building friendships, finding a church, getting into a routine, exploring the area and engaging with the community.
- Nomfundo and I to be intentional in seeking to grow our friendship in marriage and really use this opportunity to establish our new family and consider what it looks like to bring both our cultures together, with Christ at the centre.
- How we both consider engaging with family where there is still hurt due to the situation running up to the wedding.