



WHERE HAS TIME GONE

TEXT BY **CONNIE HALLOWELL**
CULTURE MAGAZINE **ISSUE #61**

"Where has time gone?"

A question often asked and certainly one that leaves most dejected and thinking of missed opportunities. I heard a saying recently: "The wealthiest real estate is your local cemetery. There lie songs never sung. Books never written. Holidays never taken".

Oh God, may that never be the case with us.

Ten years ago, Cath and I were having so much fun running a life group. Wow! We had the best people that came to ours in Hillcrest Christian Fellowship (aka CityHill Church, Hillcrest). And at that time, God planted a seed in our hearts that one day we would start a church in Umkomaas.

It started with Ezekiel 47:1-12, which stirred something inside of me as I felt God tell me that East was where we should move to ("a river that could not be crossed" and one that "flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea" and where "there will be a very great multitude of fish", which spoke to me of Aliwal Shoal), and to me Umkomaas was the only option. This excitement was soon "checked" by Cathy who only felt the call of God for our beautiful "Village" later in October of that year when she had a dream confirming us moving here. Until then, her response was an emphatic "No!"

Just a note to married couples - if God stirs something in one of your hearts and not the other, wait. Romans 8: 25 "But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently". God wants you together on mission.

Well, clichés are imminent, but nothing happened. Not until some years later. Which tells us this about the amazing God we serve: He's not as interested in our achievements as He is in our journey. It's a journey we should enjoy. The day we get to heaven should come after we've waltzed our feet tired, laughed our rib cages sore and wept out all our tears from joy as we fall into His arms living every minute we've spent in this amazing adventure called life.

We have had some amazing moments starting up here in Umkomaas. God has blessed us with amazing people and He continues to breathe His life into our sails through quality folk who are seeking His face above all else.

There's so much we would do differently if we had these ten years over. But we don't. And we can't. So we will live the next ten and the next and the next fully engaged in what He has called us to. We "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3: 14).

What a privilege to serve Him in such a time as this. God won't call us all to plant churches, but I want to encourage you to find what excites you in Him and stir up that gift. Wherever you are, your local church needs you more than they could ever express.

Thank you for reading our story. We hope the next years will see many of you writing your own stories as you allow God's passion to permeate through you.