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the Scheiwe family

Living to expand the Kingdom of God
in Stellenbosch, South Africa and beyond

About us

Austin and Britnie grew up in San Diego, California and became part of a community called All Peoples Church soon after getting married in January 2011. After a life-transforming time at a discipleship training school (School of Transformation), they found themselves on a short-term mission in South Africa as part of a support team. Little did they know a few short months later they would be invited to move to South Africa as part of a long-term team pioneering a church plant in the area of Stellenbosch. In the process of discernment, God made it clear that He was inviting them to take part in the story of what He is busy doing in this beautiful country — raising up witnesses to go into the nations to declare His goodness!

We've now lived in South Africa for a little over 6 years. Our son, Olsen Shepherd, was born in Stellenbosch in November of 2018 and our daughter, Scottie Hosanna, February of 2022.

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Our Purpose

Early on in the formation of our team God gave us a picture of a fire starting in Stellenbosch that went up the coasts of Africa and into the Middle East. It turns out this vision had been given to numerous people over the last several decades and even recorded on the web! Throughout South Africa's long history, the Stellenbosch area has been an area of incredible social and religious influence — often for division. We believe God's purpose for Stellenbosch is rather to be a powerful place of influence toward unity with Christ, a hub that will train up and send out church planters with the reconciliation message of the Gospel.

To this end, we are called to:

- 1) holistically disciple people into mature relationship with Jesus,
- 2) to raise up and build around local leaders who will form a strong local body, and
- 3) to establish a training pipeline that will empower locals to go and plant churches.

Additionally, we have remained committed to establishing a community that catalyzes unity in our area, both in relationship with other church communities as well as across the various social and racial groups: A community that is welcoming to all people (Rev. 7:9), introduces them to the life-transforming message of the Gospel, and unashamedly teaches them to obey everything Jesus commands (Matt 28:18-20). By the grace of God, a diverse church of people who are zealously pursuing God has formed!



Discipleship school class of 2021

Our Strategy

Holistically disciple people into mature relationship with Jesus

- We are intentional with building a culture of personal and group discipleship that empowers people to make disciples (2 Timothy 2:2). Discipleship culture is modeled first of all by our staff, introduced through sermons and Biblical exegesis, practiced in our cell groups, and reinforced through provision of resources and tools (DBS, literature, training)
- Church members are taught that being a disciple means following and obeying Jesus, not simply being a fan or a church-goer. Most of those involved in our community (60+%) are in a personal

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discipleship relationship, either peer-to-peer or with an older, mentor-like figure. We provide resources and regularly revisit this topic in order to encourage consistent engagement.

- Our 6-month discipleship training school (School of Transformation) has run 4 consecutive years so far and is currently led by Austin and a team of South Africans. The program provides in-depth discipleship on the foundations of faith, freedom in Christ, and developing a missional mindset. While primarily being a program for discipling students into maturity, it also forms the beginning of a training pipeline for those desiring to go to the nations. 55 students from our church have graduated from this program so far.

Raise up and build around local leaders with the goal of creating a local eldership team to direct and govern the church

- Our recently established eldership team consists of 3 of our American church planters and 2 South Africans. We are continuing to develop, diversify, and ensure that strategies are birthed from South African input. Our hope is for this team to eventually represent the diversity of our town.
- We regularly provide ministry and leadership opportunities for people in our community in order for them to gain experience and confidence in leadership. Many of our staff, key volunteer roles, preaching/teaching team, and cell group leaders are locals.



Local outreach to lead/host Discipleship Training

Establish a training pipeline that will empower locals to go and plant churches

- Several months ago we launched a Church Planting training school for those who have caught a vision to go and church plant or to provide support for church planters. There are 14 students of diverse background in that school led by our two South African elders.
- Many local and international short-term outreaches have gone out from our community. One recently arrived back from partners in Mozambique and another is currently supporting some partners in the Middle East.
- In the middle of 2023 we sent a couple to Malta as our first long-term church planters! They are pioneering a youth ministry and migrant ministry work. We expect to train up and send out several more church planters in the near future.

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FAQs

Where is your church located?

Sunday services are held at a small dinner venue in Kayamandi township, “a tin-shack slum” on the periphery of Stellenbosch. The venue capacity is roughly 150 people, and the outdoor amphitheater area is used for our Kids ministry of about 30 children. Our 8 cell groups meet at homes in the various neighborhoods of our community.

What is your family’s living situation?

We live in a single family home in Jamestown on the south side of Stellenbosch, roughly 8 min from the town center and about 5km from Kayamandi.

How is your family funded?

We are funded by personal monthly support raising. Most of our ministry partners are members of our family, missional church congregations, or friends at other churches in the US who believe in the call of God on our lives and the work that God is doing in South Africa.

What is your financial status?

We have monthly supporters for about 60% of our total need, which covers food, rent, and living basics. We are, however, in need of an additional \$3200 monthly support to get health insurance, cover school fees, ministry travel, savings for home visits, and to build a basic emergency fund. Additionally we are believing for \$14,000 to allow our family to buy a second vehicle for school and ministry transport.

What is your furlough schedule/plan?

In 2021 we took a 2-month furlough in the US to visit family and take part in a 3-week rest and renewal retreat. That was our first of that kind in the time we have been here. We hope to take a furlough of similar length once every 2 years in future.



Sunday Service in Kayamandi

What roles do you hold in the church?

Austin holds a key role in our leadership team as the Executive Pastor, one of the 5 members of the elders team. This means he is involved in the strategy and direction of the church while also managing many of the day-to-day of our staff. He is often referred to as the guy who “turns church vision into plans and action”. He leads out on many of our training and equipping programs and leads our yearly discipleship school, School of Transformation.

Britnie played a key role in establishing the worship and ministry culture of our church. She trained and lead our worship team until recently when she stepped down to be a full time mom.

Aside from these formal roles, both have personal discipleship relationships with various members of the church.

What length of commitment does your family have to this work?

We have recently discerned that God has called us to stay longer to further nurture and develop the work that has been planted. We expect to be here several more years in order to establish a missionary training and sending base here in Stellenbosch.

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