

A FAMILY'S CALL TO SUNBURY

Dennis and Caitlyn Boatman

I (Dennis) was born and raised as a missionary kid in Zambia, and I lived there until I was 18. I cannot remember ever having thought of spending my life in a secular job – missions was always my expectation. In 10th Grade, the Christian school I attended did a class trip to the only Christian camp in Zambia – a place called Ndubaluba – and it was a life-changing week for many who went, both staff and students. I had been a believer for a number of years by that point, but the complete change in surroundings, structure, and intentionality that the camp provided challenged my faith and my identity in more ways than I could ever name. I left Ndubaluba changed, and already convinced of the power and beauty of camp ministry.

After school, I spent six months in India, volunteering at a Christian mission school there. Possibly the most life-altering time I've ever had, I had several opportunities to do camp-style trips with the students there, and I once again saw the incredible power camp has to challenge, change, clarify, and encourage young people. As a result, I headed off to Moody with every intention of doing missionary work, and hopefully back in Africa, but maybe – just maybe – getting to be a part of camp ministry along the way.

Caitlin grew up in Iowa, and from a young age she and her entire family attended a local Baptist camp every summer. She attended grade-oriented camps and girl camps, family camps and winter retreats. As soon as she was able, she began to work at the camps, as often as she was not attending. Not only did "camp" change and challenge her in her faith and love for the Lord, it was a highlight of her youth – she yearned for camp far more than she ever did for Christmas, and loved to watch lives change around her as she worked and served there. Caitlin was also greatly inspired by missions, especially several she followed in Africa, and as such she graduated Faith Baptist Bible College, and headed off to Moody with a longing to be part of camp ministry, but maybe – just maybe – getting to be a part of African missions along the way.

So when, several years later, our close friends from Spokane - Stephen and Jessica Langley – sent us a message from South Africa telling us about an awesome ministry (ZEMA) and a camp (Sunbury) in need of directors right there in South Africa, it intrigued us. And when they shared that the mission needed a young couple with some training in camp ministry and preferably some experience of African culture, we were hooked! Maybe – just maybe – the Lord had a rather awesome plan in mind for us.



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Aerial View of Sunbury Christian Camp



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Sunbury Christian Camp needs more missionaries to operate efficiently and share the load.

This was and is still true. Sunbury cannot function without a minimum of 2 couples. Ideally there should be three! Not yet to the ideal, we have good news to share! In March, Sunbury's need became urgent as the Hoffman family's home assignment approached (July 2021-January 2022). Mark Hugo, a SIM missionary and ZEMA Field Council member, told John and Janice Lewin about the work at Sunbury. In June the Hoffman's departed for 6 months in the USA and the Lewins arrived just before their departure! For now, the Lewins are committed to overseeing the work at Sunbury until the Hoffmans return. This year, Kevin and Christine Pinter will serve at Sunbury for 3 months (August to November). Geff and Katy Lee have also stepped up to the plate from October 2021 to January 2022. God is providing, and we are THANKFUL! Please continue to pray! Dennis and Caitlyn Boatman are raising support and hope, one day, to be full-time ZEMA missionaries at Sunbury Christian Camp.

How about you...?

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Who is Overseeing the Work at Sunbury While the Hoffmans are on Home Assignment?

DAN & BETH HOFFMAN

Daniel and Beth Hoffman have been a part of the ministry at Sunbury Christian Camp for the past 6 years they have been primarily responsible for the camp's operation. Sunbury has seen many changes over recent years, with upkeep and updating the facilities, networking with the local village, and building new relationships with new groups coming to use Sunbury to renew, refresh, and restore.

Having recently returned to the USA for a planned home assignment, the reins of camp have been handed over to John and Janice Lewin. While on home assignment, the Hoffmans will also have many changes: their oldest son getting married, their youngest beginning college and living independently, Daniel furthering his studies, and Daniel and Beth becoming empty nesters.

As with all things, plans happen only in God's timing. The Hoffmans are planning to return to Sunbury in mid-January 2022 to begin another term in South Africa. At present, they have applied for their passport renewals (which may take up to 24 weeks) and then will need to apply for a visa at the South African Consulate. Since the SA Consulate in Chicago has closed, they must travel to Washington DC to complete the paperwork. Please pray for Daniel and Beth, as they will be traveling during much of their home assignment. Pray as they trust God to lead as they make arrangements to go back to South Africa, meet with churches, supporters, friends, and family. And pray for God's perfect timing for their return and that God would raise up another couple to join the ministry team at Sunbury.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.



JOHN & JANICE LEWIN

While working for Serving In Mission (SIM) for the last 5 ½ years, Janice never considered her employers might second her and John to ministry with ZEMA. But that's precisely what happened! Learning of the opportunity at Sunbury, meeting with SIM leadership, and after much prayer with pastors, family, and their leaders, the Lewins have begun "the next phase of their journey" at Sunbury.

John and Janice are Capetonians. They have 2 adult children and 5 grandchildren. Janice works in the finance department as Finance Assistant for SIM. John was recently forced to retire from offshore work with SPT South Africa. They believe God has been preparing them for Sunbury!

With a history in community development through sport, as production manager, John coordinated community dialogues between contractors, religious institutions, local businesses, ward counselors, and government officials. Janice took care of the admin for these events and was the planner and cook. Working offshore with Eskom, John is keenly aware of keeping a team on task while being considerate of others and the challenge of living in a community.

At Sunbury, in addition to keeping track of the finances (budgeting, receipts/banking, staff wages, and UIF), Janice is responsible for the housekeeping staff. She sees that they have supplies, are fully operational, and that Sunbury is prepared to host guests that arrive each week.

John's role is to oversee the maintenance, keep Sunbury operational and in good condition.

Not only for those who visit, but also for those who are called and appointed by GOD, to further HIS will and ZEMA's vision for SUNBURY: to reach, teach, and divinely connect His people, AMEN.



"...Retrenched, scammed by bogus Eskom employees, COVID isolation, and out of necessity selling our home, we now have a vision for GOD's plan! —John & Janice Lewin

Meet the Volunteers Helping at Sunbury

KEVIN & CHRISTINE PINTER

TOBY, TITUS, & ELSA

The Pinters are not new to ZEMA's ministries. Kevin and Christine first arrived in South Africa in 2004 and have returned numerous times. Presently Kevin serves on the ZEMA board. This year, filling in for the Hoffman's as they did in 2018 for the Seghers, the Pinters will take part in hosting events at Sunbury and working on a maintenance list they have developed with Dan and Beth.

"We learned the ways of the trade at Sunbury when serving an 18-month term earlier in our marriage, hosting camps, and managing the bookings and finances. We love Sunbury because the amaZioni work comes to us; we can witness first-hand how beneficial it is to have a facility to host the many ZEMA events throughout the year. Our last trip was the first time we brought our kids on the mission field, and we all loved it. We home-school, so it was manageable to get up and go. It, for one, made for a great classroom with monkeys and lizards as class pets. And two, we loved sharing the ministry with them. Being at Sunbury, they could be part of the events and have their roles in helping, including laundry duty and tuck shop. We are honored to return."

~Kevin & Christine Pinter



The Pinters arrived in SA on 9 August. "We are glad that we can have a part in helping Sunbury these next months!"

GEFF & KATY LEE

Geff and Katy Lee grew up in South Africa and served for 12 years with the Mahon Mission, the mission organization Zion Evangelical Ministries of Africa (ZEMA) was born out of. They remained in close contact with ZEMA missionaries whilst living in South Africa.

In December 1997 the family moved to Zion, Illinois. By 1998 Geff joined the ZEMA Board while also serving on the Missions Committee of Christ Community Church in Zion, IL. They have joined several short-term mission groups going to South Africa to serve the ZEMA missionaries providing catering and child care during the Annual Missionary Conference in January.

God willing and enabling, they plan to go to again from the end of October 2021 to mid-January 2022 to help the Lewins work at Sunbury while the Hoffmans are on home assignment as well as cater the Annual Mission Conference for 2022.



The Lees are retired and reside in Greeneville, TN. They have 2 adult children and 2 grandchildren.

"Transitioned from secular work to ministry, and from trial & tribulation to blessing upon blessing. Truly God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." (Romans 8:28)

~John and Janice Lewin