

OUR WORK FOR THE LORD IN SOUTHERN AFRICA – JUNE 2010

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4100

***In this newsletter:
Teacher Training at Eshowe
Only 1/3 of Needed Drought Relief Received***

Checks for drought relief can be made out to me, marked drought relief, and sent to:

Mrs Melody Harbig, 9876 Morris Glen Way, Temple Terrace FL 33637

SOUTH AFRICA – ZULULAND

About 4 months ago Linda and I were invited to do an 8-day meeting at Eshowe, teaching men and women how to teach, and encouraging them to commit themselves to this great work. We emphasized teaching their children at home as well as public teaching. We developed lessons that focused on using question words (who, what, when, where, why & how) to outline passages. Finding out what question each phrase in the Bible answers, forces the Christian to think. Then he will be able to understand and apply the Scriptures to his own life. Then he can use the Scripture to change his life and the lives of his children / Bible class students. Surprisingly the great majority of brethren here have never been taught to do this at school. I tried the outlining method out in Namibia and Zimbabwe first, and got such positive feedback, that I prepared a work book with familiar, easier passages and then with a few more difficult passages that sometimes give trouble. About 30 men and 35 women came each night, some driving from towns 30 miles away. A good number of brethren came to me and expressed that they found the lessons very helpful. Several of Linda's students signed up afterwards to teach or help teach classes for the children. We really enjoyed visiting with our old friends: Paul & Helen Williams, and their grandson Joel, who also preaches full time. And we especially enjoyed getting to know some of our other brethren better. Many of them are doing great jobs of preaching and teaching already.



NYLSTROOM

We have a new couple who saw our advertisement in the local newspaper and have started worshipping with us. They were living in a small town on the coast where there was an institutional congregation and have moved to Nylstroom to work with their son-in-law. They are a lovely couple who are keen to learn and discuss spiritual matters. However, we still feel a big void in the congregation because of the loss of Jeaneth. Justice and the children seem to be coping OK, but it will be a long road. We and the family sincerely appreciate all the messages of sympathy and prayers. Thanks too for the prayers on behalf of my health. It eventually took about 2 months to be rid of the dysentery, but I think I am totally over it now.



Prayers are now needed for our brother David Beckley who preaches in Louis Trichardt (about 200 miles north of us). He is also a messenger for drought relief for several congregations in the eastern part of Zimbabwe. He has heart trouble and has been having some severe chest pains. He had a stint put in about a month ago and it seems to be working, so the heart specialist does not know what the problem is. It would not surprise us if the problem were stress related.

ZIMBABWE

Last month we mentioned that we were about \$3000 short of drought relief money. No more money came in before the end of the month, so we sent a lesser amount than usual – eight tenths of what the brethren normally receive, and they were thankful to get it. However, this month we are approximately \$10,500 short! After paying petrol and vehicle maintenance there is only enough money to feed about 1000 of the 3400 people needing food.

The brethren in Zimbabwe do have some concept of the global economic recession and how it affects the ability of you brethren to give. Organizations such as USAID and World Vision have had to drastically cut back on their aid. This is a pity since the crop failure this year was much worse than last year, and those organizations helped many Christians as well.

Unfortunately, the hunger is going to be an on-going problem because it seems that the weather patterns are changing. African nations blame the swing from normal weather to either droughts or floods on the depletion of the ozone layer by industrialized nations. However, cutting down trees in Zimbabwe without replacing them has also played a role. The large-scale farmers who in past years invested in irrigation schemes in order to produce enough for themselves and for the government to feed the hungry have been chased off their farms by the government, and their farms were given away as political favours. These farms are now almost totally unproductive: the infrastructure and equipment is broken and useless. These are problems that are not going to go away overnight, even if there was a change in government.



The brethren are basically asking for \$5 per person per month. Each congregation receives \$4 worth (10kgs/22 lbs) of maize food (their staple food) per *member* per month, excluding children. \$1 goes towards the cost of actually getting the food to them in their remote villages – petrol and vehicle maintenance. This excludes the original cost of the vehicles – and Gumpo's truck is falling apart. Paddy Kendall-Ball is having to help him transport mielie meal. Bigboy and Gumpo, supported preachers, work tirelessly

without extra pay to deliver the maize meal. Some brethren don't need their 22 lbs, but others with children need 50 lbs and more. Each congregation decides how much each member receives. For some brethren it is possibly the difference between starving or not. For many it is the difference between bad hunger and not-so-bad hunger. Very few are properly nourished – they would rather deprive themselves and send their children to school. (School is not free, and many brethren are unable to send their children to school.)

We have tried our best to encourage the brethren to show accountability in what they receive. Each congregation signs for how many kgs of maize meal they receive, and those receipts are mailed back to the donors, as well as a spread sheet listing all the congregations and the amounts given by each donor for that month, matching donating congregations/individuals to receiving congregations. Our daughter Melody has been a big help in receiving and banking the checks and putting the information in a spreadsheet which she sends to us periodically.

We sincerely thank the scores of congregations who gave extra money that they had for the drought relief, and we understand that perhaps they are now unable to keep giving, and perhaps that is why it is becoming more and more difficult to meet the need each month. We especially want to thank the congregations and individuals who have budgeted a certain amount each month and send it. We really want to appeal to as many of you as possible to budget a monthly amount, be it \$10 or \$100. In this way the need can be met.

Lord willing, we leave for Zimbabwe next week, and as always I will do my best to encourage the Zimbabwe brethren do their part in assuring that God blesses them with food: using the Scriptures to convict them to be honest about their needs, withdraw from immoral or unfaithful brethren, etc.

In closing, let us remember Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Your fellow-servant in Christ, Les Maydell

DROUGHT RELIEF REPORT

All the money listed in the last report was used in May. No other money was received for May.

Estimated cost for June:

Diesel and Maintenance, Bigboy = \$1421.50

Petrol and maintenance, Gumpo = \$1240

12.39 MT maize meal @ \$400/MT = \$4956.

21.68 MT maize meal @ \$411/MT = \$8910.48.

Bank fees \$173

Total needed for June: \$16,700.98

Money received so far for June:

\$2000 - Bagdad Church of Christ, FL; \$500 - D family, TX; \$51 - M, FL; \$50 - G family, AL;

\$90 - W family, AL; \$203 - A family, FL; \$50 - B, AZ; \$200 - Anon.,AL; \$80 - D family, FL;

\$400 - N Little Rock Church of Christ, AR; \$300 - T family, NC; \$50 - N family, LA; \$300 - A family, AL;

\$100 - H family, MS; \$500 - Riverview church of Christ; \$75 - G, PN; \$1000 - Westside Church of Christ, Casey IL; \$100 - family at Casey; \$100 - T family, AL.

TOTAL: \$6149.

Shortfall: \$10,552

AFRICAN ANECDOTES

Dear friends

Because it is urgent that Les's report go out today (because of the drought relief), I am just going to write a quick, brief letter.



At the moment South Africa is hosting the soccer world cup. Although soccer is not that big a sport in the USA, it is VERY big in the rest of the world, and nearly a million fans from all over the world have descended on South Africa to cheer their respective teams. South Africans themselves have spent millions, I'm sure, to cheer on their team: tickets, t-shirts, hats, flags, and last-but-not-least, vuvuzelas. *Vuvuzela*, I am told, means "to sound forth" in one of the African languages and it looks like one of those long trumpets that heralds used to blow. It was originally an animal horn (and I saw some Africans blowing kudu horns!), but a plastic version has been a part of South African soccer for years. Millions and millions of plastic ones were made in China, especially for the World Cup, and soccer fans from all over have joined the fad – and have purchased earplugs to go with

them! On TV, all the vuvuzelas in the stadium sound like a swarm of angry bees, but up close they are LOUD! On the day of the opening match, people blew them in the shopping malls and on the streets and even as they drove down the road! SA flags were everywhere! Cheering together for a common cause generally produced a great feeling of good-will towards all races. But to no avail – South Africa did not make it past the first round. However South Africa did "win" a lot of international respect for their first-class fancy new stadiums, hotels, upgraded major highways and other facilities. Amid the bright lights of South Africa, a tourist would never guess that just across the border is a country where people in

the capital city go many hours each day without electricity. Indeed, even in South Africa, within a mile or two of some of the stadiums, people live in tin shacks, or even on the streets. My heart really goes out to them in the bitter cold we have experienced in the past couple of weeks.



I really enjoyed being in Eshowe. They sing both Zulu and English songs beautifully with equal fervor – even the children. I learned the Zulu words to 3 children's songs we all know, and I can't wait to try them out in Zimbabwe (Ndebele and Zulu are very similar). One verse went,

“Qaphela izindlebe zami....” – look at the picture and I’m sure you will figure it out! :-)

I also loved the responsiveness of the women, especially the teens. I have always enjoyed teaching teens, but I keep expecting that one day they will decide I am too old for them! Not this time! Several women, even working women, did homework, including Halala, who made a lovely visual aid for her class. I was so proud of all their efforts! Fifteen ladies wrote down that they now felt they could teach their children/young siblings/neighbour’s children at home. This was MOST exciting to me!

The Zimbabwean women lack many material and educational advantages that Eshowe women have, but I am hoping and praying that on our up-coming trip I can motivate/enable some of them to begin teaching as well. Our children are SO important! I would appreciate your prayers that we will have the wisdom to use God’s word to touch hearts for obedience, especially in this area.

With love, Linda