

# NYLSTROOM NEWS

December 2007

## Zimbabwe Meeting

A few weeks ago, Elias from the Tongwe, Zimbabwe, area phoned us to let us know that the brethren had arranged a meeting for us at Village 3. We were able to go there because there was not yet so much political activity down in the south. Therefore, since we did not appear to the government or local chiefs to be interfering in the political situation, it was safe for us to go. We took Samson Musandiwa from Venda, South Africa, with us. He also taught lessons and taught the brethren more new songs. We thank God for his recovery from a light stroke. We delivered a bicycle to Edson, one of the men who is actively going around to a few congregations in the area and preaching.

We were there Friday afternoon - Sunday morning. I mainly focused on sermon preparation, using a very simple little booklet that I recently wrote, How to Preach to Change Lives. I took the men outside and set up a target a piece of rusted metal sheeting about a foot square. I drew a line about 30 yards away and asked them to hit the metal plate with stones. I said every verse and thought in the lesson must be like a stone flying to the target. Then we studied how to make sermons with good goals. The object lesson seemed to help them understand.

The deputy headmaster of the school where we held the meeting, Nyama, had been converted about 1 ½ years ago. Until his conversion he had a sideline of practicing witchcraft mixed with traditional herbs to heal people. Nyangas (witchdoctors that heal) typically throw bones which fall in certain patterns. This is supposedly the way the ancestors communicate the diagnosis and treatment of the disease. When Nyama had made the good confession, just before his baptism, he had publicly announced that he would no longer use witchcraft at all. Afterwards he went to the government and registered as a licensed herbal doctor, agreeing to give the government the results of his research in the effectiveness of certain herbs to help certain diseases. He showed us the document. Some brethren had a problem with this, but I think we were able to sort it out.

Another problem had to do with money. Although I am not a messenger for these churches, they complained to me about brethren who only attend worship when someone comes from America or someone comes with drought relief. I studied it with the men, and Alfred asked me to teach it to the entire group. I preached about unfaithful attendance. I asked them what they would do if they hired someone to work for them for a week and they only showed up on Friday afternoon just before pay time. Would they pay them? The men chuckled. Then they were ready to receive the teaching that those who only come when it is time to receive aid need to be disciplined, and if they will not repent, they need to be withdrawn from. This was mainly an issue with the women because they are very busy working both in the fields and at home. Then I preached about fornicators and drunkards also being unfaithful and needing to be disciplined. Then it was time for the women to grunt in approval!

Elias wrote the following on behalf of the brethren who were at the meeting, in thanks for the food for the meeting, the songbooks, the Lord's Supper bread and grape juice (the money for which was donated by individual Christians) and 9 boxes of clothing (sent by brethren in the USA and SA). Note: The third picture below is the men at Village Three. (Samson is in the front with the striped shirt, teaching singing.) The cardboard boxes contain clothes that brethren in the USA and SA sent to the brethren in Zimbabwe.

25 Nov 07

Dear brothers and sisters

We wish to thank you brothers and sisters for the gifts you send us. May God really bless you each day. We are even so thankful for the prayers you are doing for us. Our country is really very poor and in need of food and clothes.

Greetings to the brothers and sisters who really do love and care for us. May God really bless you. Remember us in all your prayers.

Yours in Christ, churches of Christ at Jopembe (Village 3), Penemene, Mugaladivha, Gongwe, Tongwe, Lupanini, Mazunga, Zwibwale, Matshiloni.

Rain

While we were in Zimbabwe, it rained – the second good rain of the season for the southern part of the county. I believe Bulawayo (central, west) has received its first good rains, and South Africa, which also experienced a drought last year, has had good rain. Our well, which was nearly dry, is now producing adequate water again. Brethren, we are very grateful for all your prayers and ask you to please keep praying for the rains to continue so that the brethren will be able to grow the food they need to survive.

## Botswana Meeting

About six weeks ago the brethren at Mahalapye, Botswana invited us to come there, and we made a date for this past weekend – Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Steve Buys used to go there once a month to teach these brethren, especially grounding them in how to establish authority and other related issues (they were using the building for a day-care center, which they stopped). However, the extreme heat in Botswana started causing Steve, a quadriplegic, some health issues, and he decided that he could no longer make the journey. Due to our schedule, we cannot go there often, but Steve has grounded the brethren well and they are doing very well. Shradrack, who is a pillar in the church and the one who has converted most of them, is now away a lot due to his work, so I taught on sermon preparation to help equip the other men who need to step in and start delivering lessons. Linda taught the ladies on how to love their children. The road to Botswana (50 miles of it was like this)

## Replacements

For some months (since our ancient photocopier broke down and no more parts were available to replace it), we've been looking into a replacement. After quite a bit of research we finally settled on a Bizhub. The I.T. man has not yet been able to iron out all the problems to enable us to print directly from the computer, but the collating and double-sided printing is working nicely – and that is going to save us a LOT of time. We sincerely thank the brethren of the Brown Street church of Christ who gave us the money needed for the machine.

A few weeks ago we also had our sedan car break down. We have a second car, a minivan, which we use when we need to transport a lot of brethren, but we used the sedan when driving alone because robbers are so fond of hijacking minivans and reselling them for the booming African Taxi business. When I used the minivan to tow the sedan to the repairman, the man in the sedan lost control and caused us both to crash into some trees. We thank God no one was injured. Both cars, although not that badly damaged, were written off by the insurance because they are 12 years old. I learned that last year Toyota began making an 7-seater family car that cannot be used as a taxi, especially for the South African market, and so we will be able to replace both old cars with one almost-new car. This is much better because, due to crime, it is really not safe to break down along the roadside, as older cars tend to do. We used quite a bit of money which we had been saving up towards replacing the 20-year-old camper, but the camper is still going strong and we hope to get some more good years out of it yet.

We thank you brethren for your prayers on our behalf and for your continued support which adequately supplies all our needs.

Brotherly,  
Les Maydell  
P O Box 2744  
Nylstroom 0510  
Rep. of S.Africa  
Tel. 011 27 14 717 4100



**Elias & Edson with new bike**



**Women at Jopembe**



**Men at Village Three**



**Road to Botswana**