

NYLSTROOM NEWS

March 2009

ZIMBABWE

Since my last newsletter, two more 30-ton loads of maize meal have arrived in Zimbabwe. Reports are that the rains have been good in most places and that some crops will be harvested. We thank God for those of you who contributed money for seeds, for without those seeds, there would have been very little. Now there may not be enough, but there will be something. Because the rains have continued late into the season, the crops are all still in the fields, and brethren are supplementing their diet with "green" maize. However, it is only when the crops are dried and harvested that they can be ground into maize meal and eaten as their staple food. Therefore the brethren are requesting that the drought relief extend into May, at which time they will be able to accurately determine how much food they will need in the months before the next harvest, compared to how much they were able to harvest. Lord willing, we will be traveling to Zimbabwe in about 2 weeks, at which time we can make an assessment of what is happening on the ground. We also hope to return with all the delivery slips so that they can be posted to those of you who have sent money for relief.

Thanks to the wonderful love of you brethren, there is already enough money in hand for the April shipment. However, we are lacking an estimated \$19 525 for the May shipment. The reason for the extra high amount is that the money set aside for Gwanda South is finished and now we need to ask for money for those Christians as well. (More details at the end of the newsletter.) We are so thankful to those who have written and offered further assistance should it be necessary, and to those we now say, "Yes, please send for May!" After that we are hoping drought assistance will not be needed for at least a few months, and that Bigboy and Gumbo can have some well-deserved rest. They are extremely tired from all the hard physical labour needed to deliver the maize meal – may God richly reward them. At the end of this newsletter is a list of all who have contributed towards the drought relief since my last report.

USA

Immediately after our Zimbabwe trip, Lord willing, we hope to fly to the USA to visit family and congregations who would like to hear about the Lord's work in southern Africa. Below is an itinerary, but it is very susceptible to change, depending on when Baby Harbig arrives. (Congregations in bold type are those we have heard from. Other congregations are those who support us, but who have not yet contacted us about a visit.)

April 29 - arrive in Atlanta

May 2 - Cahaba Heights, Bhm, AL (morn)

- Hartselle, AL (eve)

May 6 - King's Hwy, Murfreesboro, TN

May 10 - Jackson Heights, Columbia, TN

- Lanton, TN (eve)

May 13 - Westview, Athens, AL

May 17 - Trenton, FL

May 20 - Lake Gibson, Lakeland, FL

May 22 - Baby Harbig's due date.

May 24 - Riverview, FL

May 31 - Hercules, Clearwater, FL

Depending on when Baby Harbig actually is born:

June 7 & 14 - St Louis area

July 5 - Newburg, AL

July 12 - N.Beach St., Ft.Worth, TX

July 17 - Depart USA.

NAMIBIA

We have just returned from a good journey to Namibia. Darlington was with us and did most of the driving (1000 miles over 2 days). On Friday, Feb. 20, we had a joyous reunion and a joyous singing session with the brethren at Donkerhoek, a suburb of the capital city, Windhoek. These brethren really sing from their hearts. The next day we fetched Marvin and Becky Voyles of Madison, IN, from the airport. We were happy to find that they were younger than we had thought as it was good for the brethren at Donkerhoek to see how Christians their own age who hold down secular jobs can also develop into knowledgeable workers in the kingdom. (The Donkerhoek congregation is made up of approximately 20 members ages 30 and under.)

Each morning for two weeks, Monday - Friday, Darlington, Marvin and I studied with the three men at the Okahandja Park congregation and various other visitors as they came off the night shift of their security jobs. This congregation is in the squatter camp nicknamed "The Hill" – a place overflowing with immorality. Most of the visitors faded out after a masterful lesson by Darlington on sexual purity, but I have high hopes for Immanuel. He comes from a Pentecostal background and had many questions. He attended each morning session as well as the Sunday services. On our third and last Sunday, brother Sheya from the Donkerhoek congregation accompanied Darlington to The Hill to meet Immanuel and arrange for further studies with him as well as to preach for the Okahandja Park congregation once a month.

While the men were studying at The Hill, Becky was teaching Emily, the 17-year-old daughter of Pius (one of the first converts there) as well as a few other women and children who came sporadically. It was the first time anyone really had an opportunity to give extensive teaching to Emily who had a child out of wedlock about 18 months ago. (At the time she did repent and confess wrong before the congregation.) We pray that she will now remain committed to the good confession she made in her early teens.

Most afternoons Darlington had studies with various men of the Donkerhoek congregation as their shifts allowed. The other afternoons were spent speaking to Zimbabwean street vendors in downtown Windhoek about the gospel in their native language. Some mornings and most afternoons, Linda studied with women at the home of one of the Donkerhoek sisters. Most of the studies were mainly for the benefit of the next-door neighbour, Maritjie. Maritjie has had a relationship with a man for the past 6 years, and has a son by him. After hearing the gospel, Maritjie approached her boyfriend about marriage, and it seems he is willing to marry her. It also seems that he is willing to study with one of the men. We pray that both of them will soon be saved.

Almost every evening the Donkerhoek brethren met together, and most of those evenings we had separate men's/women's classes with all of us taking turns teaching. Linda and Becky also taught children's classes before the main classes. One Friday night all the sisters gathered at one house, spent the night, and spent up until 5 pm the following day, singing and studying. The brethren would let us know each day what their concerns and questions were, and then the next day we would teach accordingly. The emphasis was on how to treat one another in Christ. Because the members are physically and spiritually young, they experience hiccups from time to time. Darlington, Marvin and I gave the men some practical ideas as to how to prevent future problems: a bank account with at least 2 signatories and regular men's meetings with input from and feedback to the ladies. We were impressed with their spirit of humility and love, and we feel there is real potential for spiritual and numerical growth.

We want to say a special thanks to those who contribute regularly to finance our trips to Namibia and Zimbabwe as well as to buy Bibles and songbooks for those

who cannot afford them. We will try to get an itemized financial report to these brethren in a few days.

We also want to thank those who helped Marvin and Becky travel to Namibia. They were a great help to us and the brethren.

SOUTH AFRICA - Orange Free State

Directly from Namibia, Darlington used public transport to get home while Linda and I drove down to the Eastern Cape to visit with Ashley Goosen, a gospel preacher in that area who recently lost his wife to cancer. Ashley drove up with us to the Orange Free State where I introduced him to three congregations that we have been working with, but have not been able to spend as much time with as we would like. As a single man, Ashley feels he will be able to spend a lot of time travelling to isolated congregations such as these. Please remember Ashley in your prayers as he is truly grief-stricken. That trip took us a week, and we arrived back home Wednesday.

On a personal note, John Maydell, my brother in the flesh and in Christ, has been diagnosed with prostate cancer and is due to have a prostatectomy early in April. The doctor thinks the cancer is in an early stage. We would appreciate your prayers on his behalf.

On a happier note, our daughter Gloria and her husband Sam welcomed a healthy boy into their family on 21 February. His name is Noah Leslie White. I am a very proud grandfather!

We praise God who has worked through you to provide our needs and the needs of many.
Your fellow-worker in Christ, Les Maydell

DROUGHT REPORT

Details about drought relief expenses:

Estimated costs, April:

Maize meal for 2300 Christians @ \$580/MT = \$13 340. Petrol & maintenance: \$2425. Western Union: \$200. Total for Apr: \$15 965. Plus an unknown amount for truck repairs.

Estimated costs, May: (For ALL 77 congregations, including Gwanda South.)

2850 Christians @ \$580/MT = \$16 530. Petrol & maintenance: \$2770. Western Union: \$225. Total for May: \$19 525.

Drought relief is running a bit more expensive than our original estimates. This is because three congregations have been added to the list and because petrol has continued to increase in price in Zimbabwe, even though it has gone down in price in the rest of the world. Two congregations were not on the list originally because they are in a remote area and Gumbo wanted to first visit them to make sure they were continuing in the truth before adding them to the list. The third congregation of 20 members was started about 2 years ago by a member at Hillside, Bulawayo, and has never received drought relief in the past. Another problem is that Bigboy's truck is "finished" and often needs extensive repairs. Because all the expenses are only estimates at this time (since we will only receive the delivery slips and invoices for car parts, etc. during our April trip), I am not going to list the expected shortfalls. I am hoping it will not be too much and perhaps the extra money received from the Cahaba Heights brethren will cover it.

Contributions to drought relief:

Since my last report, we have received money from the following brethren for drought relief:

T family, IN (via Foy Short) \$100

J (via Foy Short) \$100

L.G., PA (Feb) \$ 50

A family, AL \$200

T family, IN (Feb) \$100

T family, IN (Mar) \$100

Adam's Place CofChrist, TN \$1000

New Hope Cof Christ, Athens AL \$400

LG, PA (Mar) \$ 50

Hwy 29 CofChrist, SC \$6000

New Hope Cof Christ (Mar) \$400

TOTAL: \$8500

Money reported last time \$8660

TOTAL available for April/May \$17160.

Estimated expenses, April: \$15 965 plus an unknown amount for extensive repairs on Bigboy's truck.

There was also a special contribution from members of the Cahaba Heights Church in Birmingham, specifically for helping me with the logistics and helping the brethren with a bit of extra maize meal. What happens is that we get a special price for transporting an entire truckload. There is about 2 or 3 tons of extra maize meal each time, and so these brethren have a desire to help pay for that extra maize meal, which is distributed to different congregations each month as a one-time gift. It is distributed in such a way that the brethren will, over time, each receive an extra 4-5kg of maize meal. This contribution was \$13156.

Then there were other deposits made into our account from unknown donors:

December: \$25, \$50, \$50, \$25.

There was also an amount of \$1000 which is usually given by a family at this time of year to help with our go-see-grandbabies fund. They have not contacted us, so we do not know for sure. If someone else has sent the money for another purpose, please let us know.

January: \$50, \$50, \$600. This money from unknown sources will be used for maize meal if necessary, or for other benevolence (for example, Mountbatten Brewer's niece is again ill and needing hospital treatment in South Africa).

Words cannot express our thankfulness to God for you kind brethren.

Les Maydell

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