



Our Work for the Lord in Southern Africa -- June 2017

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Dear brethren,

Thanks to God

I want to first of all give thanks and praise to God that we were able to do all our planned work: the camper only had minor problems, neither of us got ill, local brethren were organized and prepared for our work together, and we arrived safely back at our home on Friday evening.

July 1-2 -- Mashula, Tsholotsho

We had visited here for the first time last September. The preacher was very ill at that time with cancer of the face, and he passed away a few months ago. The preacher did not have very much Bible knowledge, and everyone else had even less, with the result that this congregation lacks a lot of teaching. Mountbatten Brewer, a preacher in Bulawayo, had managed to get them some Bibles, and as a result Linda found that the ladies did seem a bit better able to understand her lessons than last year. The men were very eager to learn and were able to answer the questions that I asked after I taught them. I taught on the difference between the church and denominations.



July 3-4 Gwalubha, (near Lupane)

Driving to Gwalubha was quite a challenge. We picked up Solomon and Charity Chikombo in Bulawayo and passed through 10 police roadblocks before taking a dirt road, and then no road at all across "waves" of mud of a dried up riverbed and up a sandy bank. Solomon, who ran a marathon in May, and another local man, ran in front of us to show us the

way and we were very warmly received by about 25 brethren. This is a new congregation so I taught on changing your life using the beatitudes, leadership, and the Holy Spirit. Solomon also taught on the Holy Spirit until late in the evening when quite a few visitors were present, and Charity also took some time teaching the ladies on Proverbs 31. It is wonderful to see a young couple such as they are who are already so effective in teaching. Charity is the daughter of Mountbatten Brewer.

July 6-9 -- Penemene, Beit Bridge

On 5 July we drove to downtown Bulawayo to get our visas and temporary import permit (for the car) extended. (Visas are strictly for 30 days only, and it is a fairly time-consuming yet simple process to get them renewed for another 30 days.) We left early on the 6th for our 300km trip, and experienced our first car trouble: a total loss of power. After 2 breakdowns, we managed to reach Penemene, but it took me a few more hours to discover the fault: wires on the engine had simply jiggled loose from all the bumpy roads. Members from about 5 congregations gathered at Penemene. Congregations, which are mostly made up of women, are definitely smaller than they were

as some had gone to denominations promising them a better life here on this earth. Linda always feels like she struggles to awaken enthusiasm for the word of God in the women of this area, but this time there was a noticeable difference in the two women from Gongwe, where Elias preaches. Elias has been attending David Beckley's courses on Bible history and geography (4 sessions that each last for 2 weeks), and has been teaching it to the congregation where he preaches. Learning slowly in small increments with lots of review has produced the joy that comes from learning and more hunger and thirst for the word. If more preachers would do that, then the "boost" that the meetings have would be greatly enhanced. Two visitors from Lupanini, who had been taught by Mabuthu (another preacher in the area), were baptized.



July 14-16 -- Nyororo, Mberengwa After a few days in Bulawayo to take care of washing clothes and buying groceries, we picked up two young men (Christians) in Bulawayo and drove to Gwanda on the 13th so that we could have an early start to Nyororo on the 14th. Nyororo is a congregation made up of new Christians, and the purpose of this meeting was to give them a boost. Newart Ndlovu, Alan Dewa and other local men have been travelling to Nyororo to help them out, and several have been baptized. I was really struck by their love for learning. They reminded me of babes who really desired the sincere milk of the word. Their meeting place is high up on a hill under a huge tree and looks out across a fertile valley surrounded by beautiful mountains. There are no roads, just donkey cart tracks, and sometimes not even that. The scenery is unspoilt by anything modern, except cell phones, of course! However, one virtually had to climb a mountain to get reception! The brethren had gone to a lot of trouble to prepare for the meeting. They built toilets (long-drops), made benches, and built the most rock-solid (literally) pulpit stand I have ever seen. The meeting was supported by many brethren who made sacrifices to come. There were many visitors from the community, lots of good questions, and two were baptized. In my heart, I was sorry to have to leave. I am keen to go back there for a longer time if the Lord permits.

July 17-18 -- Guyu, Gwanda South Bigboy accompanied us to Guyu, where about 3 congregations came together for this meeting. The men asked me (and the women asked Linda) to teach about Christians who leave the church and

go to “the prophets.” I asked them to turn to Hosea 4:6 and asked them to answer the question for themselves. It took me quite awhile to convict them, at least I hope they were convicted by the Word, that THEY (the preachers) are the problem because they have not been properly teaching the congregations. Linda discovered that among the women no one was reading their Bibles and no one was giving Bible classes to the children. On a positive note, these brethren were blessed with a good harvest for a change, and supplied most of the maize meal as well as meat for the meeting. Bigboy has been working hard to encourage brethren in Gwanda South as well. If they do not change and start working hard, the church in that area will die.

July 19 -- Colleen Bawn, on the main road about 40 kms south of Gwanda It was encouraging to us that the brethren (who work during the day) were willing to come together in the evening, and some brethren who had transport even came from neighbouring congregations of Matabo, West Nicholson and Gwanda. The brethren are working hard, molding their own bricks to build a meeting house. Game Moyo, their main preacher, has been transferred by his secular job to Harare, but it was good to see that there are other men who are growing in knowledge so they can be able to carry on the work.

July 20 -- Nswazi The encouraging thing about this meeting was the number of young men that were in my class from the Sinkukwe congregation who had walked about 15 kms to attend. Several ladies also came from there. Women at both Sinkukwe and Nswazi have more Bible knowledge and have worked hard to teach their children. We had classes from 10 to about 3, at which time people needed to leave so they could walk home before dark.

July 22 - August 10 -- Nylstroom After a 1 ½ day journey we arrived back at our old house in Nylstroom. While there we visited the congregations at Loding, Soshanguwe (where we used to work) and the new congregation 150 kms north of Nylstroom at Polokwane, which was started by Peace Rangoshe (who originally came from one of the congregations I used to work with) and David Beckley, who drives 100 kms (each way) twice a week to help them. Every other waking moment was spent fixing up the mess our previous tenants made so that the house would be appealing enough to be bought or to be habitable by the next tenants. Last week someone I know came up to me in the parking lot of the grocery store and offered to pay me a year’s rent up front with the option to buy at the end of the year. From my experience with him in the past, I believe he will be a good renter.

Durban: We are now on our 11-hour journey to Durban, and we look forward to being with our brethren whom we haven’t seen in two months.

Prayers:

Paddy Kendall-Ball has been having some medical problems, and for insurance reasons, needs to go back to the USA to see to them. Please pray that Paddy and Sandi will travel safely (they leave on Tuesday), that Paddy will have a speedy recovery and that they will be able to return to their work among us in a few months.

Sithengeni Mangena is a hard-working and respected gospel preacher in Mberengwa who is a subsistence farmer and gets very little support (\$50/month). He developed a painful lesion of some kind on his wrist that has caused him to lose the ability to use his hand, and he is not able to sleep without strong pain medication. In South Africa, government hospitals are not very good, but they are free. In Zimbabwe government hospitals are not good at all – and they are not free. Because he is such an excellent worker and preacher, and because the government doctor thought it was cancer, we felt it necessary to get him to a private doctor, who sent him to a specialist. After spending about \$600 in doctor’s fees and tests, there is still no diagnosis, and no easing of pain.

Otto Moyo, one of the men who was baptized at Nsedlini at the end of June, returned to his village; and with the help of Darlington, 4 more people have been baptized. Please pray for this new congregation at **Jalume**.

Brethren, we thank you so much for your support and especially your prayers. It was a comfort to us to know that many were praying for us. Please pray that our work here in Durban will be pleasing to God and bear fruit.
Your fellow-servant in Christ, Les Maydell