



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

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Dear brethren,

We arrived safely back in Durban on the 11th of August. Again we are thankful for the prayers of everyone, including our Durban brethren who have all warmly welcomed us back. I took the camper in for a service – the bracket holding one of the rear springs had been completely ripped off, due to the rough roads in Zimbabwe, but fortunately that did not give us any trouble on the way back. Paddy and Sandi left for the USA on the 15th. Paddy has since had a successful double-hernia operation and is waiting for further medical treatment based on tests that are scheduled for the beginning of October. He and Sandi are greatly missed by the brethren here.

Sundays

My preaching schedule continues as before: first Sunday morning of the month, downtown Durban; second Sunday, Unit 9; third Sunday, Silverglen; fourth Sunday, Pietermaritzburg (a large town about 60 miles to the west). Each Sunday afternoon we attend the Pinetown congregation (which meets only in the afternoons). Paddy was teaching the Bible study in 1 Peter and I have continued where he left off. I preach there once a month and the other men take turns preaching the other Sundays. On the Sundays we are at Silverglen and Unit 9, I teach the men about leadership and marriage, and Linda teaches the women about raising godly children and marriage.

Classes

With the Pinetown group (Wednesdays) and the Unit 9 group (Thursdays), I am teaching a series on the book of Acts. The goal is not for us to simply learn what is in the book, but for our hearts to burn within us as we are impacted by Scripture and what it means to have a living Saviour. We will then be motivated live the holy lives that the early Christians lived and be on fire to reach out and give the gospel to others.

The congregation in Eshowe (100 miles north) pays for one of their preachers, Mzwandile Gazu to preach for an hour on a local radio station each Sunday evening. Much good has come from this. Some weeks ago a woman heard Mzwandile preaching, got in contact with him and asked for recordings. She then sent the recordings to her brother Oscar who lives about 25 miles from us. He listened to them and contacted Mzwandile who gave him my number and Paddy's. While we were in Zimbabwe, he started studying with Paddy, and the studies have continued with me each Thursday morning. Each Sunday morning he takes public transport to a place about 5 miles from us. We pick him up and take him with us wherever we go. Oscar comes from a group that calls themselves "the Church of Christ" and baptizes for the remission of sins. However, when they began speaking in tongues, Oscar began looking for another group to worship with. He had many questions about the Holy Spirit, and was delighted to find answers in the Scripture.

Simphiwe returned this month from student teaching in the rural areas. We were due to begin our studies this morning but we had to cancel due to a protest at his university which turned violent.

Births

A faithful brother in Johannesburg, Thamsanqa Ncgobo, visited his mother who lives near Eshowe and was able to teach three nieces the gospel. (They were on school holidays.) The one niece (Nonthando) lives in Durban, and her mother (Sizakele) was once a Christian, but fell away. The mother is delighted that her daughter obeyed the gospel and has attended Sundays and Wednesdays at Pinetown as her work schedule allows. We are praying that we can help her daughter, but also help her to make right with the Lord.

Deaths

Many of our brethren suffered grievous losses this month.

The Lukrajh family at Pinetown lost Prabhoo's brother and Shameen's mother due to illness. The Reddy family at Shallcross lost their brother who dropped dead of a heart attack. This loss was particularly painful to his faithful siblings since "Daddy," as he was called, was once a faithful Christian but turned back to the world. Girley Chetty, the wife of one of the elders at Phoenix, lost her mother to cancer, but she was a faithful Christian – and that brings much comfort to the family.

Thamsanqa, the very same brother mentioned above, his wife Jabu, and their son Thabiso are grieving the loss of their 13-year-old daughter Thabile in a tragic car accident. This happened about 2 weeks after the baptism of Thamsanqa's nieces.

Our deepest sympathies are with these families and we continue to pray for them to be comforted.

Births

Thabile's death had a huge impact on two young ladies: Thenjiwe and Kholokile Zuma. (Their family used to worship with us but now worship on their own due to transport problems.) The Zuma girls realized the uncertainty of life, even concerning those who are young, and made a commitment to follow the Lord. Their father baptized them in the Indian Ocean Sunday-before-last, and they are so happy and excited to have new life and Christ.

Prayers:

Hurricanes – We are praying for all, especially our dear brethren, who suffered because of Hurricane Harvey and those who are in the path of Hurricane Irma. Our son Joseph and his family have arrived safely at our daughter Gloria's home in the Birmingham area. Our daughter Melody and her family in Temple Terrace decided to stay.

Sithengeni Mangena is still in a lot of pain from the lump on his wrist, and, after several doctor visits, was finally able to get a biopsy. He should get the results on Monday. He sincerely appreciates and thanks those who helped with his medical bills.

We want to thank all our brethren for their goodness towards us, their prayers and their financial aid. We also give thanks to God for our health and strength to continue to do His work.

Your fellow-servant in Christ, Les Maydell