

# **SOUTH AFRICAN TORCH**



"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." --Psalms 119:105



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## **National Youth Seminar**

**By Michael Stanley**

As usual Caryl and I encouraged young adults to go to the National Youth Seminar. Since it was to take place in Wellington (in the Western Cape) it meant a very long trip for us. The return trip was nearly 2500 miles. This put a substantial burden on our finances as those who wanted to go could not contribute much for travel.

We believe it is important for KwaZulu Natal to be represented at the seminar so we made the trip with only two passengers. We stayed overnight near Queenstown on the way down and again on the way back. Our gratitude goes out to Bro. Cekiso and his wife who hosted us both times.

The Seminar went well with lessons by Steve Caulley, Jerry Kennedy, Roland Joseph, Caryl, and me. The facilities were comfortable and the food was well-prepared. We were, however, hampered by the heat. The main hall did not have a ceiling and by afternoon it was extremely hot indoors. Part of the time we held small group discussions outside. Caryl and I bought a lot of water. We found that we tended not to drink enough when we ran out of bottled water.

Everyone enjoyed the outing on Monday. It was a trip to the beach (Indian Ocean side of the Western Cape). Caryl and I did not get in the water, but we did do some



*Michael and Caryl led a small group at the National Youth Seminar in Wellington (Western Cape).*



*Caryl and three of the ladies who helped with cooking enjoyed the outing to the Indian Ocean coast at Strand.*

window shopping and we walked along the beach. The afternoon ended with a braai (barbeque).

Not everything went as smoothly as we would have liked. Before the seminar one of the committee members was dismissed and another was asked to resign. This meant that the Annual General Meeting started on a somewhat uneven keel. It was difficult to get a quorum so that business could be transacted. In the end a new committee was chosen, but only after a volunteer was

criticized for taking on too much responsibility. We trust that this year we will see things run more smoothly under the new committee.

In spite of these difficulties, we want the National Youth Seminar to continue. It is the most effective teaching program for young adults that we have in South Africa. This is important in a church with a declining number of young leaders. At the next elections we would like to have a representative of KwaZulu Natal on the committee.



*Michael went outdoors to lead a group discussion as the afternoon heat was not quite so oppressive under the trees.*

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## Tragic Deaths of Minister and Wife By Michael Stanley

On November 13 I attended the funeral of Mrs. Mabaxa in the Eastern Cape. She was the wife of a minister, Sam Mabaxa, and they had only been married for about three years. She had been ill for some time and from conversations I learned that she had attended the annual conference but had not participated in its activities because of her illness.

The funeral was attended by a large crowd from the four corners of South Africa. The community hall was filled to overflowing, and as usual it was an all-day event.

At her funeral already some commented that Sam did not look well. But it was still a shock when we received word that Sam had passed away. He died January 10, 2011. He was a younger minister who was well-educated and this made his death particularly tragic. I was not able to attend the funeral, but I was told it too was well-attended.

This is not the first younger couple from the church where the husband and wife have died in relatively quick succession. It seems to me it is time we addressed a couple of very practical issues in the church. Biblical standards of morality need to be impressed on youth in

the church. Issues of long term health also need to be discussed openly, especially among young people who are training for the ministry.



*Sam Mabaxa (Center) served as an interpreter for some of the conference sessions. Here he translates for Deputy Secretary, Dungmore Stemela. It was a shock to learn that he passed away in January.*

# Ikusasa Lethu (our future) by Caryl Stanley

Ikusasa Lethu Creche was established at Umzumbe Bible Institute in the late 1990s by ladies from the community who wanted to provide early childhood education for the preschool children in the area. Over the next few years many children passed through the hands of some dedicated teachers.

A few years ago a “soup kitchen” was opened under the crèche committee. The government provided quite a substantial amount of money for the establishment and running of the soup kitchen. It seems that the money proved to be too much of a temptation for the committee members. Soon the soup kitchen closed because the money was

gone. Last July the crèche teacher left because she hadn’t been paid. It seems the crèche money was also gone.

We met with some of the community members, crèche committee members and parents of preschool children late last year and offered to help get the crèche started again. We have come across several obstacles – including non-cooperation from the crèche committee.

In January we found Nomkhosi, a young lady from Umzumbe who said she was willing to run the crèche, but she has no training. Parents have brought 16 children and Nomkhosi cares for them from Monday through Friday mornings.

The children pay a small fee (less than \$7 per month) and we collect the money. We will use it for Nomkhosi’s salary and to buy some toys and equipment for the children. When we can get all of the necessary papers and get a new committee in place, we should be able to get some money from the government and training for Nomkhosi. We also want to train someone else to handle the finances.

Pray for wisdom for us in dealing with the old committee and the government and for finding a reliable person to handle the money. We believe it is a valuable asset to the community and are anxious to get everything running properly.



*Above: The crèche teacher has learned to read stories to the children and now gets a good response from the children. It seems most of the children are not exposed to books until they go to “big school.”*

*Right: No, the children did not all die. “Lie down and sleep” is the one instruction that the children obey immediately. The children become quiet and many go to sleep. Michael usually waits until rest time to talk to Nomkhosi.*



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## **Family News**

**by Caryl Stanley**

In mid-January the nurses at the frail care called to say Mom Stanley had bronchial pneumonia. They got medication and she recovered in about a week. Now she is back to normal – quiet but contented and not in pain. She says she doesn't feel well, but she can't pinpoint any specific problem.

Sean's work is going well so he got some bonuses early this year. Dina is working more hours than she wants to and is feeling frustrated. Rebecca and Gabriella are busy and active with school and Girl Guides. Erin turned one early in March. Unfortunately, we were away at that time, so missed the birthday party. She is quick so we all have to be alert and keep our eyes on her.

John has settled well in his new job. Diane keeps busy with her job. She has had to make a couple of trips to run training programs. She loves the training, but hates being away from home!

JP continues with his job at Genesis. Dawn is teaching grade 1 again. There is a lot of flu going around and she seems to be picking it up from her class. Chayah is 2 and keeps us all entertained with her chatter and antics.

We are very excited to announce that we are getting

two new grandchildren this year. Dawn and JP will have their second baby in July and Diane and John will have their first baby in October.

Michael and I are doing well. The summer has been miserable this year, but we are coping. We will not travel as much this year. Fortunately, Ministers' Week will be at Geilima (just 30 miles from home) and Easter services will be at Umzumbe.



*Monica Mvuna has become a member of the family. We helped to prepare her for university and kept close contact with her as she trained as a doctor. It was with joy and pride that we attended her graduation in Cape Town in December. Her mother traveled to Cape Town for the first time to attend her graduation and created memories that became her favorite topic of conversation for the next month. Monica is now doing her internship at the hospital in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape.*