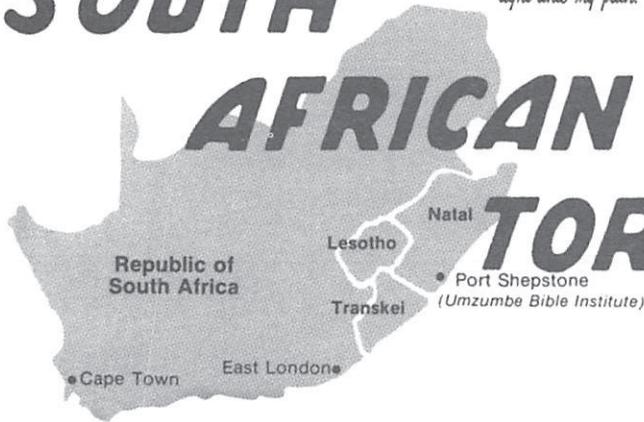


SOUTH

AFRICAN

TORCH



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



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Conference 2014 -- Margate, KwaZulu Natal

Because the annual conference was held in our area (just 20 miles from our home) we were responsible for a lot of planning before the conference including finding and paying the deposit for the venue and organizing where to get the groceries. During the conference I spent a lot of the time with the head cooks - driving around to buy the food.

Michael was able to be involved in some of the executive meetings. He also taught a class one morning on worship. When he gave his financial report, he had to give the report for two years. Since we were not here last year he had left the report for the finance committee but they didn't feel competent to respond to questions so they didn't present the report.

There was a farewell service for Brother Mazibuko, who has retired from ministry. He originally came from KwaZulu Natal, but has served as minister in the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. Unfortunately, his wife is not well so she was not able to be at the conference. A highlight for me was when the choir from the church he served in the Eastern Cape sang. He was their minister when they were teenagers and they live in various parts of the country now, but they came together again to provide entertainment for the program.

Although there were a few hiccups at the beginning of the Conference, they were quickly sorted out and the reports we have heard have been that people felt it was a good conference.



Elijah Gontsana (center) commended Shadrach Mazibuko (left) for his many years of service as a minister in the Eastern Cape. Shadrach's wife is no longer in good health and was unable to attend the ceremony honoring her husband.



As teenagers these men and women formed a choir in the circuit where Shadrach Mazibuko ministered. They came together to provide music at his retirement celebration. (Two are now ministers -- Augustine Leve [left, rear] and Dugmore Stemela [center, rear]).

Another Term as Treasurer by Michael Stanley

This was an election year for the Church of Christ Mission (South African national body) and I was again elected as treasurer. My work as treasurer has become increasingly complex, so it was with mixed feelings that I accepted responsibility for another three-year term as treasurer. I enter data and give oversight to those who collect money during the conference. When it comes to compiling reports, I rely heavily on Caryl. Mine definitely is not a one-man job. Fortunately I have reliable people to help me.

I am making Thulani Maki, a young accountant who has helped with treasurer's responsibilities for several years, a kind of shadow treasurer. My goal is that he will gain experience with all of the record-keeping that the treasurer does and that he will be able to take on increasing responsibility in the future.



Michael read his Treasurer's report at the annual conference and John Kokwe interpreted everything in Xhosa. Michael has said this will be his last term as Treasurer.

Funerals

Brother Nyawo

Brother Nyawo was the minister in Ingwavuma in the far north of KwaZulu Natal. He was a student at Umzumbe Bible Institute in the 1980s so Michael had taught him. He did not speak very much English, but he was a diligent student. He taught his congregation well and the youth from that area always shone at youth camps.

Brother Nyawo had recently been honored as he had decided to retire from ministry. There were special services both at the national and provincial level. Unfortunately, his health deteriorated and he passed away in September.

Sister Ncanana

On our way to Brother Nyawo's funeral we stopped by the hospital in Ingwavuma to visit Sister Ncanana, wife of the minister at Gingindlovu. She suffered from diabetes and had not been well for some time. She was admitted to the hospital when she arrived for the funeral because her diabetes was out of control. She passed away a few days later. Unfortunately, her funeral was the day before the annual conference started so we were not able to attend.

Magog Senior Citizens' Club

The seniors have planted some vegetables and are keeping them watered and weeded. We are enjoying more vegetables with our meals.

The main activities now are the worship and prayer service which we have each time we meet and the lovely meals we enjoy together. One activity everyone enjoys is the birthday party which is held every other month. In October we celebrated the September and October birthdays. Since Michael's birthday was in October he was amongst the

honored guests. Each person who celebrates a birthday is given an opportunity to speak. Then we enjoy cake and treats and we have a nice meal with dessert.

One of our members who had been ill for most of this year passed away in September. She was a gracious lady and an active member so we will miss her a lot.

We will be celebrating Christmas with a dinner at a hotel in the village of Umzumbe early in December and then meeting together to exchange Christmas gifts before closing for the Christmas holidays.



Michael added his hand as the club members with birthdays in October performed the official cutting of the cake. We then had to feed one another (wedding style).



September 24 was Heritage Day and many of the ladies dressed up in traditional attire for our Magog Senior Citizens' Club gathering.

Sinothando Creche Up-date

We learned about Brain Boosters several months ago. Brain Boosters is a program which uses educational materials to teach counting, colors and shapes. There are programs for parents and also for day care centers. We had hoped to be able to provide the training and material for Sinothando Creche, but the cost was prohibitive. Recently Thobeka, our teacher, was invited to participate in the training program at no cost to us. The lady who runs the program was able to get sponsors to pay for the training and materials for rural crèches. Thobeka will attend three sessions this year and three more sessions next year. She was given a bucket of materials to use in teaching the children.

Unfortunately, right after she got her bucket someone broke into the day care center and stole several items from the bucket. We have contacted the lady in charge and she is checking to see if the company can provide us with the missing items.

The day care center closes at the end of November and they hold a graduation program for those who will go to school next year. That program is to be held on December 5.



Toys at the creche get extremely hard use. After a year of use the blocks show their age. Paint has been worn off through pushing the blocks around on the carpet and cement. They love Duplo, but we restrict the amount of time it is available. We want it to remain a desirable toy.

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*We wish you all a blessed and Merry Christmas.
We pray that we might all be witnesses to those
around us of what Christmas is really all about.*

Family News

The Thorncroft family has some exciting things to share with you at this time. They have settled into their new house and are very happy to own their own home! Unfortunately they have discovered that it needs quite a lot of work, but they will do it as they have time and money.

We are very pleased to announce that Dina has completed a university course so she is now a Nurse Educator. She continues to work as Clinical Manager for South Coast Hospice and she provides training for care-givers.

Rebecca has been busy with a Girl Guides (Rangers) effort to raise funds so she and a friend, Kathleen, can go to Switzerland for three weeks at the end of the

year to visit a World Guiding House there. They spent a lot of their weekends on the fund-raising activities.

We have been able to do quite a lot of grandchildren-watching lately. We always enjoy having the children and grandchildren at our house. Diane and John both had to go to Cape Town, so we had Matthew for a few days. He is three and full of energy, so he kept us on our toes. Dawn and JP have been here a few times when Dawn needed to use a computer to do end-of-year reports for school. We have also attended the end-of-year prize-giving programs for the grandchildren who are in school. We are all looking forward to the holidays.