

SOUTH

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

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Annual Church Conference 2019 by Michael Stanley

The annual church conference took place from 20 to 25 September 2019. It involved a long car trip for Caryl and me and that is something we try to avoid. (The alternatives were complicated and expensive.) Fortunately, the roads were good highways and that made the trip reasonably comfortable. We were informed that housing for the conference was in short supply and even then the housing was not ideal. We therefore made arrangements to stay at a nearby B&B. Ibis Nest was comfortable and it gave us a place to relax when we were not needed at the conference. It was interesting that another family at the Ibis Nest was also attending the conference. The meetings went well but not all the messages were interpreted so we missed out on some of the content.

On Tuesday a grass fire broke out near some of the accommodation. Quick action on the part of some drivers ensured that none of the vehicles were lost. In the end the fire burned for two days before it was brought under control completely.

Meals were well prepared (and that has not always been the case). Servings were generous so everyone was satisfied. One matter that could not be changed was the size of the dining area. People were packed in quite tightly and this made it difficult for the servers. (In spite of this the serving was well handled.)

I felt that the conference went well. We still have to find out what will be done to implement plans and decisions. Hopefully the door has opened to see a year of growth to maturity. Younger leaders are stepping up to the plate to join the ranks of the older men. This is encouraging. We continue to pray that God will send new laborers into his harvest field.



Augustine Leve preached and his interpreter was Brother Klaas, a young leader from the Western Cape.



Between meetings people often gathered in small groups to visit and share with one another. Everyone seemed to enjoy these times of fellowship.



Sarah Stemela, a minister's wife, offered to provide some activities for the children who attended the Conference. One day she brought them into the hall to recite Bible verses they had learned.

Honor to Whom Honor is Due by Michael Stanley

It was good to honor two long term ministers during the annual conference. It was good to hear the tributes to these heroes of the faith. The families of both men received a monetary gift as a token of appreciation from the church.



Brother Ollfeet Mkhundlu was a faithful minister for many years serving in Kathehong and White River. Unfortunately, he passed away in May this year (October 28, 1948 – May 25, 2019)



Maart Joseph, who has served as minister in the Graaff Reinet area for many years, and Ollfeet Mkhundlu were honored at Conference for their long service to the work in South Africa. Brother Mkhundlu's daughters were present to hear the conference acknowledge his committed work in God's service.



As a co-worker with both Maart Joseph and Ollfeet Mkhundlu, Michael was asked to share some anecdotes about these two men at the special service.

Bible Training

One issue that received a lot of attention at the National Conference was how to provide training for church leaders and aspiring ministers. This is a challenge which has faced the church in South Africa for nearly a century. The departure of Steve Caulley to America after many years in South Africa has pushed the church into another transition.

Pray for God's guidance as the church negotiates these changes.



Caryl distributed books to the younger men who have recently completed their studies or are attending extension classes from the South African Bible Institute.

Vacation in the United States by Caryl Stanley

Early in July we learned of the death of Michael's niece, Amber. She was Duane and Kathy's daughter. She broke her ankle and had to have surgery. As the result of complications from a life-time with muscular dystrophy, she passed away shortly after the surgery. Michael's sister, Debbie, who lives in South Africa, decided she wanted to go to the US to be of support to the family. We thought that it was a good opportunity for all of the family to be together on one side of the ocean so we also decided to make the trip.

We left South Africa on August 12 and returned on September 12. We stayed in Duane and Kathy's travel trailer parked in their driveway. We were very glad to be there to spend some time with Duane, Kathy and Ryan during a very difficult time.

During the month we joined the Stanley clan for a 4-day camping trip to Ironwood Springs, had a nostalgic visit at Duane's with the Stanleys who had been at Normandy in May, spent an evening viewing old family photos with the siblings, spent Labor Day with the Stanley clan at Larry's, and celebrated the 50th wedding anniversaries of Michael and me (who were married on June 7) and Duane and Kathy (who were married on September 6).

We also spent a few days with my sister and her husband (Sharon and Dave Huggett). We got to see my two nieces and two nephews (children of my late sisters, Juanita and Nancy) and my step-sister and her husband (LoAnn and Jim Hanson) while we were with Sharon and Dave.

While we were with Duane and Kathy, their son, Nathan, fell and broke his ankle. He and his wife and children live in a three-story house. Nathan couldn't access any floor without using steps so he moved in with Duane and Kathy where he could access a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and dining room on one level.

We also took care of one major mission task. We had a telephone meeting with our mission board. Larry Moore and Bill Gossett were together in Roseville Illinois, Bill Weber was in Cincinnati Ohio and Duane, Michael and I were in Minneapolis Minnesota. We are so grateful for the advice and counsel these men give to us. We were able to share our plans for the future and they have approved our semi-retirement. As of the 1st of October, 2019 we will be limiting our ministry to our local area. Over the course of next year we will continue to down-scale and move to full retirement.

On our own we spent a day at the Minnesota State Fair and did a bit of shopping. We returned home with our suitcases full of goodies to share with the family. All in all it was a good trip, but, of course, it is always good to be home and sleeping in one's own bed!



The campfire is a highlight of the day. There are always smores and lots of snacks to enjoy while we chat.



My sister, Sharon Huggett (on the left) and me (on the right) with Juanita's children, Perry Miller and Paula Miller Niosi, and Nancy's children, Jessica Miller Stolle and Ben Miller.

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Family News

Rebecca has settled in well at her job in the ambulance call center. Ruahn has stepped back from some of his responsibilities with National Sea Rescue Institute and has gone to work for his dad who owns a building construction company.

Gabriella is no longer working as a volunteer at the baby home and she was able to get a paying job as a waitress in a small coffee shop. She is enjoying the regular wages and tips. She is still planning to work as an au pair sometime in the future.

JP has expanded his business. He now makes pendants and key chains from unused computer parts. He has also been kept busy with computer and cell phone repairs. If you want to see his work go to

<https://www.facebook.com/upcyclinit/>.



Matthew built a sand (mud) castle and Michael did his best to tear it down. This was just another activity for Grandpa Day.

Michael and I are enjoying our time with grandchildren. On Tuesday afternoons we take care of Matthew and Michael while Diane prepares orders for Jolly Fresh. On Wednesday afternoons we pick up the three little girls from school – Seanna, Erin and Chayah. We all enjoy these times together.