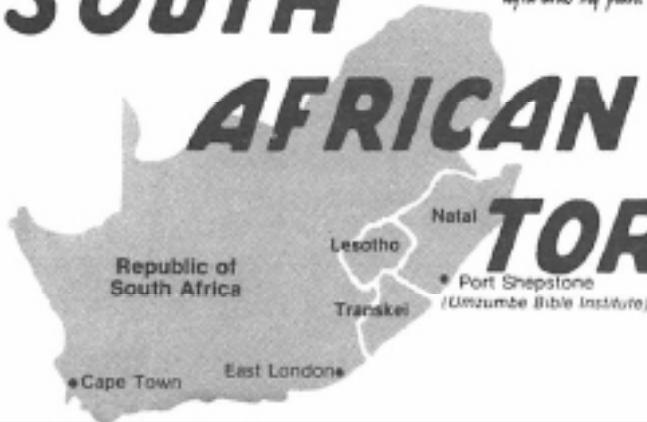


SOUTH

AFRICAN

TORCH



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



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Farewell

On November 28 we were invited to go to the church building at Nkothaneni, about an hour's drive from home, for a special day. We had announced that we were planning to retire at the end of the year and the Church of Christ Mission in South Africa planned a farewell celebration for us. There was not a big crowd as COVID-19 protocols do not allow big gatherings. They had invited people from the nearby churches and the ministers from KwaZulu Natal. The Deputy President of the Church of Christ Mission, Masupa Booyesen, and his wife and another minister, Daniel Jullies, and his wife came from the Northern Cape as representatives of the national organization.

There was a sermon, several speeches and presentation of gifts from the national organization, the provincial organization, the provincial youth, local churches and individuals. There was a beautiful cake and a big meal. We certainly felt blessed.



We were invited to cut a cake which reads "Farewell Bro. Mic Stanley". Everyone was able to enjoy a delicious meal and some cake after the service.



Fezile Solani presented us with a beautiful painting in appreciation of our work with the youth over the years.



The Deputy President of the Church of Christ Mission, Masupa Booyesen, preached a sermon and presented us with a framed certificate.

A Unique Year

Our goal for 2020 was to wrap up a lot of our ministry responsibilities and hand them over to the African leaders. We attended the annual Ministers' Week in March and were able to hand over a lot of materials including books and photographs. Then at the end of March COVID-19 hit South Africa and President Ramaphosa instituted a very strict lockdown. Suddenly we were not allowed to mix with others, attend church and special meetings or even visit family and friends. The only reason we were to leave our property was to get groceries or medicine.

As the year progressed the lockdown was eased, but we were only allowed to start holding church services in mid-September. The attendance hasn't been very good. I think some people got accustomed to worshipping at home and some are afraid of exposure. It has been good to be together again, but as the virus has entered the second wave, we are beginning to wonder how wise it is to be back in that environment.

At the beginning we didn't even get to see our children and grandchildren. Fortunately, that has now been allowed and we enjoy the times with family. We still are very careful about who we interact with and we are conscientious about wearing masks, hand sanitizing and social distancing when we do go into public places.



On one of the first gatherings of the Umzambe Church of Christ we were able to present these banners that Duane and Kathy Stanley donated to the church in memory of their daughter, Amber, who passed away in July 2019.



Mabuye Mnguni, a nurse who has been acquainted with the work of Umzambe Bible Institute for most of her life, was our main speaker at the Magog Senior Citizens' Club Christmas party.

Senior's Club

Our last meeting of the Magog Senior Citizens' Club was on March 18. That was when the Level 5 Lockdown was instituted. Fortunately, it seems that most of the members remained healthy and COVID-free. We know that it was not an easy time for them. They missed seeing their friends and getting together. In addition, the area had no piped-in water from late January. Some of the homes have piped-in water and there are communal taps, but the water has not been available for most of the last 10 months. Occasionally the water company sends out tankers, but the supply is not very reliable.

Senior's Club Cont...

On October 28 we had our first get-together since March. It was good to see them again, but not everyone returned as some were not comfortable with coming back. We had our last meeting of the year on December 9th. I think nearly everyone was able to come and we were able to celebrate Christmas. We had exchanged names and bought gifts for each other. There was a special speaker. She is a nurse and the daughter of a former teacher and school principal at the nearby primary school. She shared her memories of the Stanleys and Nicholsons and the impact they had on her and her family. She complimented Magog Senior Citizens' Club because she said that many areas started seniors' clubs, but most of them have not lasted. We enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by four ladies from the community. The food was delicious and beautifully served.

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from our families to yours!

Michael and Caryl are doing well. Because of COVID-19 we were not able to wrap up all the tasks we had intended to do so we could retire at the end of 2020. In consultation with our advisory board in the United States we have decided to continue our work in 2021 and then retire.

Dina and Sean have been kept quite busy during the lockdown. Dina is the clinical manager of the local hospice. Sean is in and out of the hospitals with his orthotics business. Gabriella was able to go back to work at the restaurant so she was glad to get out of the house. She also passed her driving test on December 11. Erin completed grade 4 in December.

Rebecca and Ruahn live on the same farm as Diane and John. They made us great grandparents on October 6th. Rebecca and Ruahn are great parents to little Lexi. Ruahn was recently hired to work on a farm and he loves his work. Rebecca is still on maternity leave so she is able to be home with Lexi.

Diane and John are doing well. John is keeping busy on the farm. Diane has started a small home business called Ethulo Creative (www.ethulocreative.com). Their two boys keep them on their toes. Matthew turned 9 in October and Michael is 2 ½.

Dawn had a hectic year as a teacher. They were not able to have in-person school for much of the year. Seanna completed grade 3 and Chayah was in grade 6. JP has been keeping busy with his independent business doing IT work and creating gifts (www.upcyclinit.co.za).



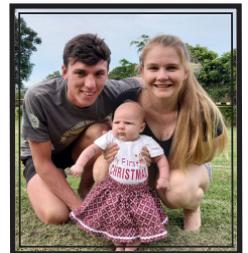
JP, Chayah, Seanna and Dawn Ferreira



Gabriella, Sean, Dina and Erin Thorncroft



Michael and Caryl Stanley



Ruahn, Rebecca and Lexi Beattie



Michael, Diane, Matthew and John Evans

South African Torch

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Water Woes

We are supposed to have water on the Umzumbe Bible Institute campus where the church, Seniors' Club and Day Care are held. There has been almost no water since January. In spite of that we continue to receive accounts each month which charge us for "Basic Water" and 6 kiloliters (nearly 1600 gallons) of water. I have been in many times, but I cannot get them to adjust the account.

Recently the water in our housing area has also been off for about 2 months. The excuse we get for the lack of water is that it is vandalism and sabotage. Recently we have been told that there are people who are trying to fight the battle for us. We are so glad that we have a 5000 liter (1300 gallon) rain water tank complete with a pump.



We erected the water tank in 2019. This year we added a pump so the water can be pumped into the house and we no long have to carry it into the house in buckets.