

THEMBINKOSI AND ZUSAKHE APLENI

Evangelizing in Eastern Cape, King Williams Town

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(Google.com/maps)

December 2014

The Church at Zwelitsha

Things are going very well here. Two more young men of the same family were added to the Lord's body on the first week of January. Both of them were part of my midweek home Bible classes. I just hope and pray that the negative attitude displayed by their family will soon change.

Unfortunately, I'm no longer able to transport all the brethren for Sunday and midweek Bible classes. I have urged the brethren to help one another and I will pick up those who come from the places where they cannot find or really can't afford to pay for taxis.

It is really good to see that all the brethren are beginning to grasp and understand the importance of regularly attending Bible classes. I have decided to take things slowly so that everyone can be on the same level of understanding.

Most of the younger brethren are now able to recite the Bible periods and they seem to have grasped the general information associated with these periods.

The younger men who study with me on Fridays are doing very well, especially brother Ayabonga and Zwelakhe. They are both such a great blessing for all of us here.

Other Bible Classes

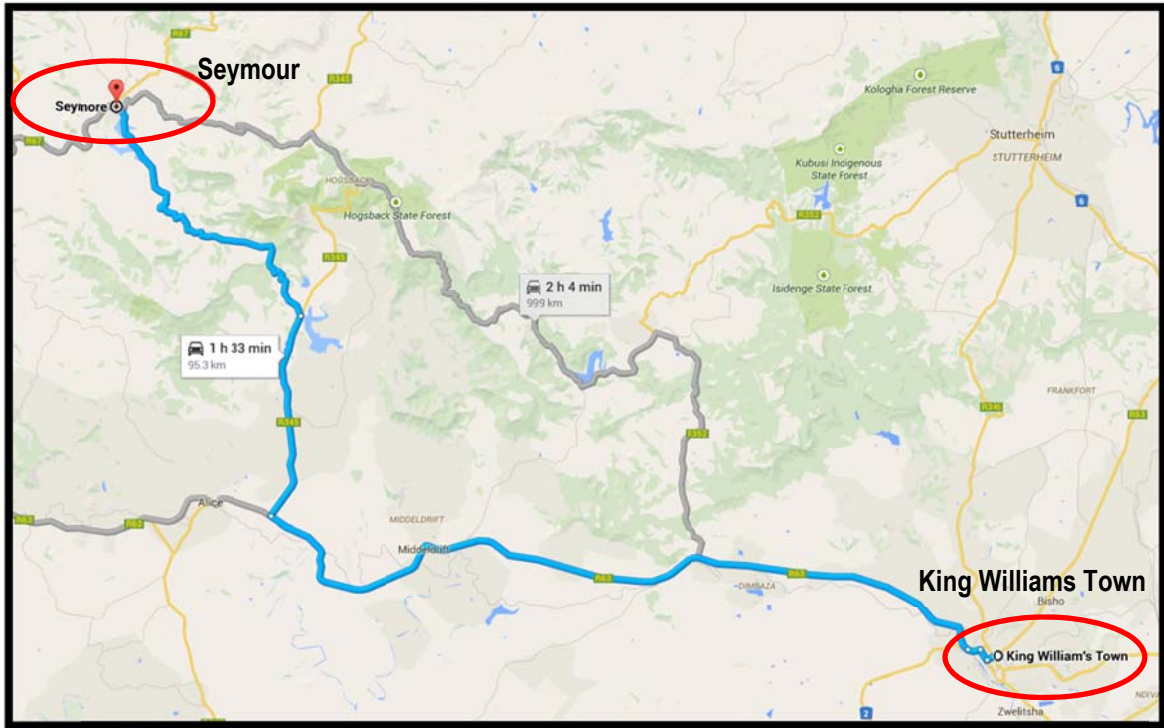
I've been busy drafting short lessons that I can present to school children around here. I requested the opportunity to present short Biblical lessons in various schools. It was made clear by those in authority that school premises and the hours in there are basically for learning school work and nothing else, so we agreed to introduce ourselves and just let the students know where they can find us and what they can expect from us.

My other home Bible classes have increased so interestingly. I'm hoping and praying that they will produce good results.

The Church at Seymour

I spent most of the December holidays at Seymour. Being there was so good for both me and the brethren there. Most of the brethren who are away during much of the year were quite pleased to spend time with their brethren again. I spent a lot of time studying with the brethren there, mostly the young men there.

One man, age 32, and two young women were baptized while I was there. I was very disturbed, though, to have heard that both of those young women have not been there for Sunday morning services since.



Financial Support

Dear brethren, I'm really humbled by your generosity and your love for the truth which is in you through Christ. I wish to thank you all, brethren, for continuing to support us both financially and through messages of support. I pray for God's blessings for you all. Below is our monthly support:

I'm in Christ,

Thembinkosi Apleni

Eshowe Church/Columbus Indiana Church	\$357.14
Port Elizabeth Church of Christ	85.71
Brakpan Church of Christ	89.64
Cape Town Church of Christ	71.42
Gary and Vicki Copeland/Foreign Help Fund	650.00
Old Wire Road church Arkansas	300.00
College Park Church of Christ	300.00
Bridgeview church of Christ	200.00
Bother Adam Berendt	60.00
Total	\$2,113.91



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January-March 2015

The Church at Zwelitsha

The brethren here are doing very well. Zola, who was at Seymour and got a job at Stutterhiem, fell from grace but has since repented and is now worshiping here at Zwelitsha with us. The brethren here are very pleased that he has repented from his sinful ways. Please keep him in your prayers.

In our Wednesday evening study we are in the middle of the second book by brother Bob and Sandra Waldron. It is a really interesting study and the brethren seem to be enjoying it. Everyone still shows much commitment and excitement for this class. The number of those attending this class is continuing to grow every week. We have been joined by Zola and had to do a bit of review to accommodate him. He seemed to be a bit lost. I guess that is one of the results of falling from grace; you find yourself ten steps behind those who came after you. We are really glad, though, that he realized his fate outside Christ and repented of his sins.

The Friday Bible class with the young men is progressing very well and it is really helpful to the young men here.

In the past few weeks I have been involved in several radio debates on Sunday evenings at the local radio station here with denominational local preachers, especially the Seventh Day Adventists. We still have a number of subjects lined up. This is an important opportunity that I'm really grateful for and pray to my God that I can use wisely. I really hope that it will help me have more opportunities to establish Bible classes around King Williams Town.

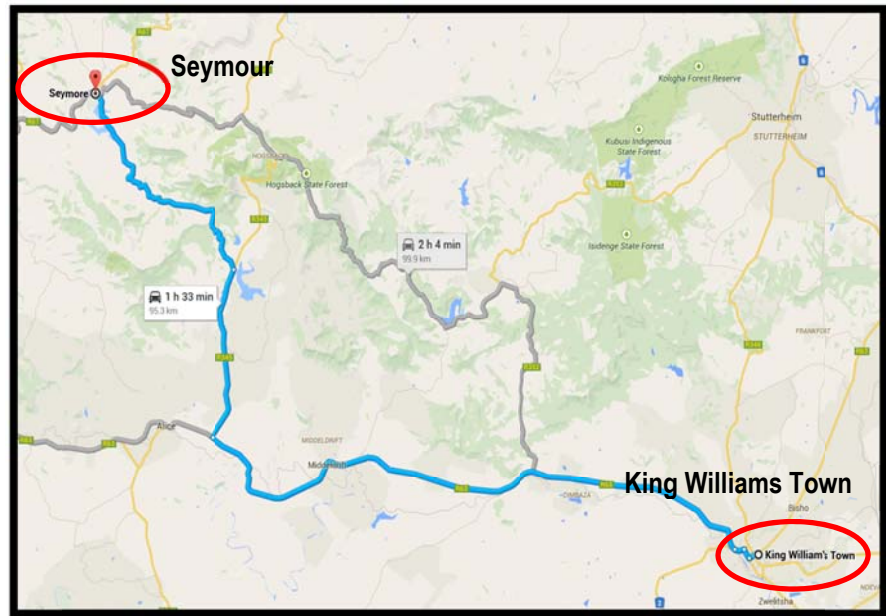
This week we started our two-week evangelistic meeting here in Sweetwaters. We are meeting in my garage. We made flyers and posters to invite the community. At present it is going very well. We have had a good number of visitors, with eight to ten adults on Monday, and about twenty-three on Tuesday. There were quite a few tonight, as well. Six young men from Seymour have come to support us. We are really happy to share our house with them. We are thankful to Sister Ntombekhaya Msadu, my wife's sister, for accommodating some of them at her place. The young men here, specifically Ayabonga and Zwezwe have been exceedingly encouraged by the presence of Zola, especially in singing. They are doing such a wonderful job.

Other Bible Classes

I now have a full time Bible class with the brethren at Bhisho every Monday evening. It is really fascinating as most of those at Bhisho have a better understanding of the Bible. A young man (17) from there and the daughter of an elderly man there have been worshipping with us the past three weeks and it looks like they are comfortable meeting with us here at Zwelitsha.

The Church at Seymour

The brethren at Seymour are doing very well. We are making frequent visits there and it looks like such visits boost the morale of the brethren there. We have noticed that most of those who had fallen away there are slowly making a comeback. Most of them are regularly attending the classes we hold there whenever we visit. We have often stressed the fact that we are not after high numbers but we seek to help people who realize that they have an obligation and the responsibility to save their souls from being eternally lost.



One lady who fell from grace two years ago came to us as we were studying there last month. She was thin and very sick. She told me how sorry she was that she chose to follow the things of this world over Christ. She begged for prayers and forgiveness in tears. We prayed with her and reassured her that unlike people, our God holds no grudges. Later that Saturday, as we were preparing to leave, we were told that she passed on.

The young men there are doing a wonderful job of keeping the brethren regularly meeting in my absence. I'm really glad to see that Athenkosi Apleni and Jabu Apleni, both 18, are now able to present short sermons with sound scriptural references. The parents of both of them are beginning to realize the results since these boys have chosen Christ over ancestral worship.

Financial Support

Brethren, I humbly thank all of you for your generosity and love. I really do not know where I would be right now had you not been this generous with us. I pray for God's blessings on you all and your children. May He grant you success in the good thing you wish. Please forgive me for not listing what I'm getting. There are no changes, though, from the previous months.

In Christ,

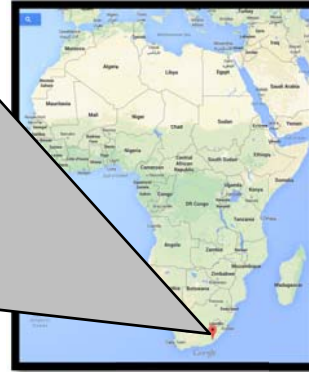
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April 2015

The Work in Zwelitsha and Sweetwaters

The church here continues to do very well. There have been some problems with brother Ayabonga, but it turned out that he was troubled by his situation at home. He comes from a destitute family and his mother is an alcoholic. I spoke with him and I have encouraged him to spend more time with us.

We are still going through the second book by Bob and Sandra Waldron. It is a really good study that is not just edifying us but it is really motivating the brethren here who wish to know more about the Old Testament and the Bible in general. The brethren are still really helpful; they attend the classes quite well and they are participating. I think their quest to have a better understanding of the Bible is growing day by day. I'm even more pleased to see that they understand that they don't have to come to classes all by themselves, but rather it is very important to invite other people.

The evangelistic meeting we had here for two weeks in April went very well. I was really surprised by the high number of people who attended. Traditionally people here would not attend a "church" meeting which does not have instrumental music, but this time people came in large numbers. Only two people were baptized: a young woman, Olwethu, who is 24, and a young man, Athini, who is 19. We have, however, made good contacts and I have established more home Bible classes. Olwethu has attended one service since her conversion. She works at the gas station. We have visited her out of concern and she was really worried that it would be hard for her to attend regularly because of her work schedule.

The Church at Seymour

I visited the brethren at Seymour on Saturday the 24th, with Zola and Ayabonga. We spent about an hour studying Examples Of Evangelism with the brethren there. The young men there are growing and it is my wish to see them taking preaching the gospel in their spare time seriously.

I'm happy to see that the young brethren there continue to be committed to the course of the cross. I think their recent visit here encouraged them to keep their eyes on the heavenly hope.

Financial Support

Our regular monthly support:

<i>Eshowe Church/Columbus Indiana Church</i>	<i>\$357.14</i>	<i>Old Wire Road Church Arkansas</i>	<i>300.00</i>
<i>Port Elizabeth Church of Christ</i>	<i>85.71</i>	<i>College Park Church of Christ</i>	<i>300.00</i>
<i>Brakpan Church of Christ</i>	<i>89.64</i>	<i>Bridgeview church of Christ</i>	<i>200.00</i>
<i>Cape Town Church of Christ</i>	<i>71.42</i>	<i>Brother Adam Berendt</i>	<i>60.00</i>
<i>Foreign Help Fund (through Vicki Copeland)</i>	<i>550.00</i>		

I wish to thank you all brethren for your generosity. It is hard I wouldn't lie but we are coping. I pray for God blessing to you all.

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July 2015

The Work in Zwelitsha and Sweetwaters

The brethren here are doing well. We had a two-weeks evangelistic meeting here at Sweetwaters in a public hall that I rented. The attendance was good on some days but the weather was really problematic. At one point we had to take a break for two days because of the bad weather. A 42 year old man was baptized and he kept on attending until we finished on Sunday. We hope to have another meeting during the summer holidays and we hope that things will go much better then.

I am encouraged by the commitment that the brethren here are displaying in our Wednesday night class. It is exceedingly cold here but the brethren are attending class regularly. I wish the same could be said about our visitors but they have all disappeared as if they told each other to stop visiting at once. We have covered most of book two (by Bob and Sandra Waldron), "You Shall Be My People", and there is a great improvement in understanding of the Old Testament amongst the brethren here.

The Church at Seymour

The brethren at Seymour are doing well. Whenever I go there I am really encouraged by their love for the truth. Few as they are, they just keep on doing so great. Last month when I was there we baptized a 26-year-old woman, Thenjiwe Koko, who visits and attends church services whenever she visits Seymour.

I am a bit concerned about the brethren at Seymour, though. I can see that since I'm no longer able to go there regularly they are not growing as much in the Lord. Unfortunately, I can't go everywhere I want any more. My car has over 450,000 kilometers on it and it is very problematic.

Financial Support

Brethren, you will recall that for the past two years I have not asked for any additional financial support. I'm sure you will understand that I'm not saying this because it is fashionable to say so, but I am in real financial distress. I hardly

manage my monthly financial responsibilities. My car is with a mechanic and I don't know how am I going to pay for it. The schools are reopening on Monday and I don't know how I'm going to take Emilhe to school.

I'm humbled by your continued support all these years, financially and otherwise. I pray for God's blessing for you all.

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<i>Eshowe Church/Columbus Indiana Church</i>	<i>\$357.14</i>
<i>Port Elizabeth Church of Christ</i>	<i>85.71</i>
<i>Brakpan Church of Christ</i>	<i>89.64</i>
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<i>Brother Adam Berendt</i>	<i>60.00</i>

Total **\$2,113.91**

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September - October 2015

We wish to thank all of you brethren for your support both monetary and in spirit. We are really humbled by your generosity. I pray for God blessings on you all.

The Work in Zwelitsha and Sweetwaters (Suburbs of King Williams Town)

Last month we had a very good weekend study with the young men from Seymour and here at King Williams Town. Nine young men attended and brothers Sam and Madondile also came. Their contribution to the study was immense. The young men from Seymour proposed that we study about the “role of men in the church”. We decided to have a formal study on that subject that would incorporate the brethren from Zwelitsha. I’m worried that some brethren missed the study but those who attended were really pleased to have been part of the study and they were motivated. I’m really thankful to my wife for opening up our house once again for studying and accommodating the brethren for the weekend.

Two people were baptized around King Williams Town. One was a 36 old man that we baptized on 24th of September from an informal settlement in Zwelitsha. He and his family have been studying with us since last year. The other one is Kholiswa, a woman in her mid-thirties. She was introduced to us by my sister in-law two weeks back.

The Wednesday Bible class is still going very well. The brethren here are attending it very well and they seem to be benefiting a lot from it. Their Bible understanding is developing very well.

The Church at Seymour

Brethren there are doing very well even though new converts are rare. Cultural barriers are the biggest problem. The brethren there are holding to the hope of the cross, though, and they are doing everything possible to spread the word.

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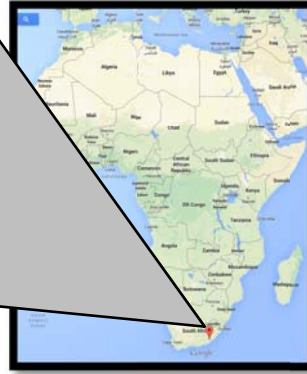
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November-December 2015

The Work in Zwelitsha and Sweetwaters (Suburbs of King Williams Town)

The brethren here are doing very well. They regularly meet at my in-laws' place at Zwelitsha or at our home in Sweetwaters. Most of the young people have left for December holidays.

We have made pamphlets to invite people to visit on Sundays and Wednesdays and we're working to instill the habit of personal evangelism in the members of the church. I think it is important to teach the brethren to sustain the church. I have worked very hard for many years preaching and teaching here, and it is my wish and prayer to see the church here standing strong and the Good News preached even when I'm no longer here.

Since I'm busy with a program of evangelizing and revival this month, we have asked brother Sam to teach the Wednesday night class. He is doing a great job and I've been told he has attracted other elderly people. I'm not going to form a part of this class this month, since I plan to visit a number of places around King Williams Town and other parts of the former Transkei area.

The Church at Seymour

Brother Ayabonga and Zwezwe spent a week with me at Seymour. We taught Bible classes every afternoon during the week of December 6th, and going house to house during the day. Twenty-seven people attended the service on Sunday, December 13th, most of whom are not members but rather people we invited from the community. We were quite pleased with the response from the community, especially from the young people. The brethren there are doing quite well and it was clear that the week we spent with them has really reenergized them.

I started a vegetable garden for them and bought them the seeds and we planted it together. I have encouraged them to look after it.

Financial Support

I wish to thank you all brethren for being there for us always. We are really humbled by your generosity. I pray for God's blessings on you all. This month, we received:

Port Elizabeth Church of Christ	\$37.80
Cape Town Church of Christ	31.50
Brakpan Church of Christ	40.32
College Park Church of Christ	194.06

Total	\$303.68
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December 2015

The Work in Zwelitsha and Sweetwaters (Suburbs of King Williams Town)

The church here is doing very well. The brethren are very supportive and are always available to help whenever they are called upon to do so. I feel really blessed to work with them.

Brother Zwezwe and brother Ayabonga were both stabbed by thugs who mugged them for their cellphones. Brother Zwezwe sustained some injuries above his left eye while brother Ayabonga was stabbed on his right arm. They are both recovering well but they are shocked.

Bother Sam told me that they are still doing very well in the Wednesday night class, though he was disappointed by the poor turnout from the younger brethren last Wednesday. I think it was because some brethren decided to join us in the class we had in Phakamisa Township and some of them are still away on December holidays. Phakamisa is just 10 minutes' drive from Zwelitsha. We will all be part of the class this coming Wednesday, so hopefully things will return to normal.

The Church at Seymour

The brethren at Seymour seem to have been really revived and encouraged by both the visit of those who came back for December holidays and by our regular visit there. We have kept on visiting Seymour to ensure that we encourage those who are often away from there and to ensure that those who always there take a prominent place in encouraging their fellow brethren to keep the faith wherever they are.

Next week I'm going to conclude the three-lesson presentation I've been doing for the brethren there. I hope it will help both those who will stay there and those who are preparing to leave back to their places of work and schooling.

Support

I wish to thank you all of you dear brethren for keeping on supporting us both financially and through the words of encouragement and the prayers you say on our behalf. I pray that our Heavenly Father may continue to bless you all.

This month, we received:

Port Elizabeth Church of Christ	\$38.57
Cape Town Church of Christ	32.14
Brakpan Church of Christ	40.32
College Park Church of Christ	197.98

Total **\$309.01**