

SOUTH

AFRICAN

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



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89th Annual Conference -- 2011 By Michael Stanley

Year after year we report on the annual church conference. This year was the eighty-ninth conference and it represented a significant departure from former practice. The conference was held at a convention center at Barkly West (near Kimberley) in the Northern Cape. Deo Gloria has housing that can accommodate many more than the 400 who attended this year. There is a huge hall and a well-equipped kitchen. A smaller hall was used for some of the business meetings. Having all the facilities in one place meant that people attended all of the sessions. People that stay at a distance from the venue tend to miss sessions.

Although there were many positive comments about the conference, there were also three areas of complaint. Two we could control and one we could not. Poor cell phone reception was something we could do nothing about (but it did mean there were less cell phone interruptions during meetings). The sound system that was hired did not

work well. Before the end of the conference we arranged for a better system. There were also complaints about the food. Especially during the first couple of days the kitchen ran out of food and often food was not ready at the right time. I tried to help in overcoming these issues, but it was well into the week before the issues were resolved. Next year we will put different people in charge of the kitchen. Better planning and better communication would have improved the situation considerably. I missed out on most of the teaching sessions because I was trying to resolve food issues.

As usual business meetings dominated the conference. This year was an election year which added to the business that had to be handled. The new constitution extends the term of office to three years. The old committee was re-elected with two changes. D.B. Stemela moved from being deputy secretary to secretary. Stephen Lesala



The conference was held at a conference center this year. What a blessing! There was a large meeting hall, some small meeting rooms, a huge, well-equipped kitchen, and plenty of sleeping rooms.



For the second year in a row booklets containing all the annual reports were compiled before conference began. Caryl was given the responsibility of distributing the reports to the delegates.



The new executive committee looks a lot like the old one as many of the officers were re-elected to their positions at this year's annual conference.



These men seem to be involved in a deep discussion.

moved from being secretary to being deputy secretary. I was re-elected (unopposed) as treasurer so I will oversee finances for another three years.

Most of the people returned home with a positive attitude toward the conference. The mood after the elections was almost celebratory. I trust that next year we will be able to place greater emphasis on teaching. I will work

with the catering committee to resolve the food problems right from the beginning. I will also keep more consistent financial records. In a situation where large amounts of cash are paid in and paid out, records have to be meticulously checked, especially since there were some who seemed to intentionally introduce errors into the records.

Day Care News

We have had our ups and downs with the day care at Umzumbe Bible Institute. We were able to send three ladies – the teacher, her helper and another lady from the community – for training with a Christian organization. They really learned a lot and we were very impressed with the things they were teaching the children after they had some training. We hope to have them go for further training next year.

We recently had to deal with a problem between the teacher and the helper. We decided to call in the three Zulu ladies who serve on the day care committee with us. We listened to both sides of the story and tried to get them to mend the rift. We knew when we left that the issue had not been resolved and arranged for another meeting with them. However,



Pretty Zamisa and Thulisile Zangwa are two members of the day care committee.

the helper left and found another job. We will close for the Christmas holidays at the beginning of December so we are managing with temporary help until then. We will have to make a decision about what to do next year.



Parents listened attentively to the reports on the day care activities of the past year and plans for the future. They chose the new name, Sinothando (We Love), for the day care.

We will have a Christmas party and “graduation” for the children who will go to pre-school next year. The mothers encouraged us to seek donations to help with the celebration. We have been able to get promises of gifts for the children from the police and from a Christian organization, a financial donation from a local Christian farmer, as well as some food from a large butcher shop in Port Shepstone. It looks like the children will have a very happy Christmas.

We are planning to reorganize the day care next year with a new name and new constitution. The previous committee did not fulfill their obligations so they lost their subsidies from the government. We cannot get cooperation from them to get those things finalized so we have been advised to start from scratch and we should then be able to get some government funding for the day care center. At a recent parents’ meeting the new name was chosen. It is Sinothando, which means We Love.

*Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas
and a blessed and healthy 2012.
With love from the
Stanley family in South Africa.*



Michael and Caryl Stanley

Family News

What an exciting quarter it has been for our family! It seems there is change in all of our children's lives.



*John, Diane, and Matthew (4 weeks)
Evans*

The biggest news is that we finally have a grandson! Diane and John's baby, Matthew Caleb, was born on 26 October. He weighed just over 8 ½ pounds. John was able to

take a two-week leave from work so he was able to be home with them. Matthew is growing and is a very happy baby.

Dina and Sean were disappointed to learn that the Christian school Rebecca and Gabriella have been attending will raise their fees next year by 20%. They really couldn't afford that, so they immediately started looking for alternatives. They have decided to enroll the girls in a private school where they use Accelerated Christian Education. The lady who started teaching from her home has decided to expand and move into a school building at a



*Sean, Dina, Rebecca (13), Gabriella (10) and Erin (1)
Thorncroft*

Lutheran church just outside Port Shepstone. It will mean a shorter commute to school for the girls, but they are not sure there will be a sport program. Erin is growing up. She is 1 ½ now and a very cheerful little girl.

Dawn and JP have had a lot of excitement in their lives. JP received a phone call one day in September asking him to go to the VW/Audi dealer in Margate for an interview. He had not applied for the job and didn't even know about it. However, on the 1st of October he began his new job there as IT Support. Because of his work hours, they decided they needed a second car, so they spent most of October trying to get that sorted out. They looked at several options and every sale fell through. They finally located an older car which they were able to get in mid-November. Dawn was on maternity leave until the 26th of October. Seanna was only able to start at day care on the 1st of November, so Grandma Stanley spent a week taking care of her. (Now we know why God gives babies to younger people! I did enjoy it, but I got very tired.)

Mom Stanley has some good days, but usually she is very quiet so we just go and sit with her. Michael tries to get her to talk and he tells her things that we are doing, but she isn't very responsive. The one thing that did catch her interest was Matthew's birth. About a week after we told her about Matthew, she asked about him.



*JP, Dawn, Chayah (almost 3), and Seanna (4 months)
Ferreira*

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Program to Honor Mrs. Josephine Ndamase

In recent years congregations have held programs to honor ministers or their wives. Usually this is associated with retirement. Several years ago such a program was held for Gerty Qwemesha and Anna Songo, widows of ministers. This year the Gauteng region decided to have such a program for Josephine Ndamase, widow of the former chairman of the Church of Christ Mission executive committee.

Mrs. Ndamase had a stroke before her husband died and this left her partially paralyzed. It also limited the role she played in the church, but this did not dampen enthusiasm for her special day.

What did impact on events that day was that it was the funeral of Mrs. Tsatseng, another minister's widow. In the end the funeral was held early in the morning on Saturday and then everyone drove the 200 km (120 miles) to Dobsonville. Caryl and I did not attend the funeral, but we did go to the program for Mrs. Ndamase. An unusual beginning to the program was that they served a meal and then went to the church. Usually the meal comes at the end. The rest of the program was typical of African culture and consisted of singing, a brief message by E. Gontsana and

then speeches by representatives of various groups within the church (local congregation, province, women's prayer group, and youth).

It was good to see Mrs. Ndamase looking well and responding well to the honor being bestowed on her. We did not stay for the entire program as the speeches continued for hours. Although the speeches were tiring, we really enjoyed the opportunity to visit with some people whom we had not seen for years.



Mrs. Ndamase, widow of minister Gladstone Ndamase, was honored at a farewell function at the church where she and her husband served for many years. She has retired in the area and still attends church regularly there.