



## Our Work for the Lord in Southern Africa -- June 2017

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Dear brethren,

### Thanks

First and foremost, we both want to thank everyone for their prayers. We have had safe travels for the past 4 weeks with only minor breakdowns of the camper that were easily fixed. We still have another 10 days in Zimbabwe, Lord willing. This is the first opportunity we have had to access the internet since July 1<sup>st</sup>, and so I thought I would take this opportunity to update you on our work for the Lord through the end of June.

### South Africa – Northwest Province

The congregation at Maboloka, started almost 40 years ago, has had many ups and downs over the years, but the Maine family: Father (now deceased) and mother and two of their sons and their families have remained faithful as well as a few others. They have recently been blessed with the addition of two men who obeyed the gospel recently and it was good to be with them on Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Drive to Bulawayo

On Monday we both went for a check-up to our old family doctor in Nylstroom and are thankful to the Lord for a good report at the time and the subsequent blood test results. (Since I turned 75, my medical insurance insists on a travel clearance every time I want to travel internationally.) On Tuesday we had some business with the local estate agent, having finally, after nearly 4 years, received an offer to buy our old house. On Wednesday we drove to the border and slept there. On Thursday we crossed the border (always stressful) and arrived in Bulawayo in the late afternoon. We wanted to give ourselves a few days to make sure that, if there were any hitches, we would still be able to collect David Maxson and his daughter Anna on the following Monday.

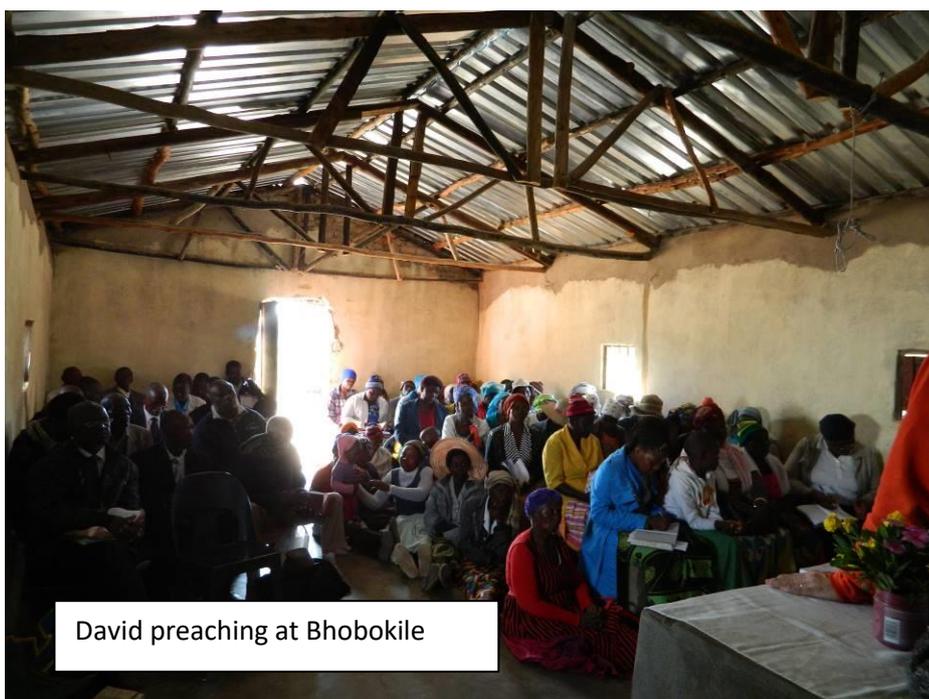
### Nketa and Hillside, Bulawayo

The congregation at Nketa has worked hard and has been blessed with some help to raise their building up to roof height. This building has been in progress for as long as we can remember, the main problem being that, being in the city, everything has to be built by qualified builders to municipal specifications. Linda and I taught Bible classes and I preached there on Sunday morning, June 18<sup>th</sup>. In the evening I spoke at the Hillside congregation and was greatly encouraged by the increase in their Sunday evening attendance.

### Bhobokile (Mberengwa) and

### Dadata (Gwanda North) – June 19-23

On Monday at noon, David and Anna Maxson arrived, right on schedule, and we immediately started off for Bhobokile, arriving at dusk. The brethren warmly welcomed them, and all got a lot out of David's practical lessons on prayer and Daniel. There were a few sessions each day when we broke up in to classes, Linda teaching the ladies and Anna teaching the children. It was truly a joy to see this young lady who had worked and saved so hard in order to bless other children as she had been blessed as a child. She also did a wonderful job of motivating the ladies to teach their children.



David preaching at Bhobokile



One of the sisters at Dadata arranged for Anna to teach a Bible lesson to children from the local primary school.

### Hogo (Midlands) – June 24-26

We dropped David and Anna back at Bulawayo airport at noon on Friday, bought groceries, and headed for Hogo (near Gweru) early on Saturday. (The Maxsons flew to Durban to work with the Kendall-Balls and the brethren there.) We were accompanied by Shepherd (an honors student on mid-year break from university) and Austin (who preaches near Plumtree). These two young men are dedicated to the Lord and eager to learn as much as possible. They will be a huge asset to the work in Zimbabwe if they continue as they have begun. Shepherd’s father, Alan Dewa, has

been faithfully preaching the gospel in Mberengwa for many years, and it is wonderful to see his and his wife’s impact on their sons and daughters. (Shepherd’s brother Comfort accompanied us to Bhubokile and Dadata.) The preacher at Hogo, Enoch Ncube, is now in his upper 80s and the steadfast rock he has always been. If we remember correctly, he and his wife have taken in 16 orphans over the years, and half of them have managed to remain faithful to the Lord. There are so many things stacked against spiritual success in Zimbabwe, but this man has made a difference.



Left: Enoch exhorting the congregation that meets at his home (about 25-30). Shepherd is interpreting to English.

Above: The collection. The bag on the left originally contained bread, but is now filled with shelled field corn kernels and will be given to a needy family.

### Nsedlwini & Zibungululu (Tsholotsho) – June 27-30

Nsedlwini is not that far from Bulawayo, but the roads are so terrible and the police roadblocks are so intense, that it took us 4 hours and \$35 in fines to arrive at Tholotsho business centre where we met one of the local preachers, Jabulani. We were fined for not having reflective tape on BOTH sides of two of our FOUR required emergency breakdown triangles as well as the “T” signs on our trailer not being made with reflective lettering. Jabulani guided us to the place where we picked up Linda’s interpreter and then to Nsedlwini where we met up with our long-time colleague and “son,” Darlington. Darlington, has recently moved to his original area of birth near Tsholotsho, and is doing some work to encourage the local preachers in the surrounding villages, but mostly concentrating on starting



new congregations between Tsholotsho and Plumtree. Two men came that Darlington had been studying with (one walked about 20 miles), and both were baptized the second day of the meeting in the baptistery that the brethren at Nsedlwini had built. The young preacher at Nsedlwini (Maxson), a crippled man, has really grown a lot since our visit last year. He seems to be studying and he is teaching the children as well. After two days at Nsedlwini, we travelled with Darlington and Jabulani to his home at Zibungululu. We both felt that our classes here went well, and a young

mother obeyed the gospel. My lessons have mainly focussed on the beatitudes, the Holy Spirit, and how Old Testament history points to Jesus.

### Personal

As I mentioned above, we were very hopeful that our house in Nylstroom had finally been sold. However, after an initial approval of the loan for the buyer by the bank, the bank changed their minds and everything fell through. The previous renters left after a couple of months of defaulting on payments, and the present renter, who has been there for 3



Preparing for evening Bible study around the fire at Nsedlwini.

months, hasn't even paid us enough money to cover his electricity consumption. (The electric account has to stay in our name until we sell the place – so we have cover that cost.) We cannot leave the house empty because of squatters, and so it seems that we will have to go there for a month or so, until we can, hopefully, find decent renters. We will use the time to visit the congregations that we used to work with in the area, but we would really like to get back to our work in Durban as soon as possible. Please pray for us as we struggle with these decisions. Despite these challenges that arise from time to time, we feel incredibly blessed to have the health and the support of you brethren, financially and in prayer, that enables us to work in the kingdom.

Your fellow servant in Christ, Les Maydell