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# The South African Report

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Sponsored by: **West End Church of Christ, 8301 E. Walker Springs Lane, Knoxville, TN 37923**

## On The South African Side

HOME is a most wonderful word! For most folks, probably no other word in our language conjures up such warm fuzzy feelings in our hearts. Ann and I are fortunate in that we enjoy the blessings of being "home" in two places: Benoni, SA and Knoxville, TN. So, whether we're coming or going, we know that our arrival is anticipated by loving people who have known us for years and welcome us HOME! Just to make a point in how people feel about us on each side of the globe, we will tell you these two incidents:

1) Prior to our departure from the West End church in Knoxville, some close friends asked us to meet with them after our last Sunday evening there for special prayers. This had never happened before but we were glad to go and pray with a group of Christians in a specific room. I don't know the exact number who gathered, but it was quite a crowd of elders, deacons, friends from our bimonthly Bible study group, and others. Some very touching prayers for our safety and success were offered up that made us feel the West End church really cares about us and our mission efforts in South Africa. This prayer session will long be remembered and will perhaps see us through some difficult days ahead. Thank you, West End.

2) One brother at Benoni made a statement to me after our arrival that I hesitate to repeat, perhaps because it might sound like bragging, but I wanted to share it with you to show how people on this side also feel about us. This brother often brings up biblical discussions when we're talking and we share ideas about what the Lord means in certain passages. In referring to the "letters" in Revelation, my friend here said, "If the Lord decided to send a letter to the angel at the Benoni church, we would have to give him your address, Brother Jerry!" What a compliment he gave me in trying to express how he and his family feel about my being here among them! I really appreciate the love and special bond that we have with the Benoni church. As I said, we have 2 homes. Rest assured, we are among friends no matter on which side of the Big Pond we reside!

### **BENONI SENDS WORKER TO SUDAN**

The Benoni Church of Christ, located on the Great North Road that runs from Cape Town, South Africa

to Cairo, Egypt, has been mission-minded since its early days in the mid-fifties. Having encouraged early missionaries to establish the Bible School nearby, they have had contact with students, and therefore graduates, over the years, becoming the second-largest supporter of the school and providing for special needs of the students. They have helped establish congregations in many places by supporting graduates to go back home to teach among their own people. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, the Benoni church once again showed their true colours by supplying travel funds to send SABC graduate, Joseph Bali, back to his home area in southern Sudan. Joseph fled from Sudan in the mid-90's because of the civil war that devastated his village. When he arrived as a refugee in the city of Johannesburg, he didn't know the status of his family. Staff and students at SABC made contact and taught many Sudanese refugees living in South Africa. Joseph was baptized and enrolled at the Bible School (as it was then), graduating about the year 2002.

Now that a peace-treaty has been signed in Sudan, Joseph wanted to fulfill his "mission" and take the gospel to his people in Sudan. He is a brave soldier of the cross to give up his refugee status and return to a land that has known tribal conflicts for many years. Our prayers go with Joseph and all other Sudanese workers who are returning to their homeland to teach their families and friends about the Jesus they have come to know and love in a foreign country. We think of the return of the Prodigal Son who enjoyed a great welcome by his father. Pray that Joseph will also be welcomed and will establish the Lord's church in the once-hostile environment of Sudan.

### **VISION 700 SEMINARS IN 2006**

For several months now, I have been in communication with churches throughout South Africa about our training seminars, from Pretoria in the North to Cape Town in the South. This large metropolitan city lies on the very tip of Africa where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet.

During our 2005 SABC lectureship in September, one of our speakers, Milton Wilson from Austin, TX, expressed to me his desire to team-up with me in

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presenting seminars in April-May of this year to help reach our goals of training 700 for the Lord in Southern Africa by the year 2010. Milton's specialty for many years has been evangelism and helping churches train members in the pew to reach their families, friends, neighbours, and coworkers. The emphasis in our SABC seminars so far has been providing leadership training. So, each of our seminars this time will be entitled: *Leadership/Evangelism Seminars 2006*.

Milton arrived in Benoni on April 20<sup>th</sup> and we started the first of four seminars at the Centurion church in Pretoria for Sunday morning, 23<sup>rd</sup> April thru Wednesday evening the 26<sup>th</sup>. Centurion is where SABC graduate Gordon Uys (pronounced as "Ace") preaches. Gordon is also on staff at the Bible College and teaches courses here each week. As this report is being written, we are in the third day of this wonderful meeting and have been pleased by the attendance and their interest in all the lessons presented thus far. Several other congregations have been represented.

The remaining schedule during Milton's stay in South Africa looks like this:

**East London church** - Sun-Wed, April 30 to May 3;  
**Port Elizabeth church** - Fri-Sun, May 5-7; and  
**Bellville church**, Cape Town - Fri-Sun, 12-14.

Former missionaries and visitors to South Africa will know that all these congregations are in the Cape Province near the coastal waters of the Indian Ocean. In correspondence from each minister: Bill Elliott from Knoxville now working in East London, SABC graduate Reg Branford in Port Elizabeth, and also SABC graduate Dereck Beukes at the Bellville church, we hear excitement is building for the classes to help churches reach out. Area congregations have been invited and promise their support and participation in each location. Pray for safety in our travels and success in the meetings that God will be glorified and Christians blessed by the knowledge and enthusiasm gained to help them serve the Lord in a better way.

After completing these 4 seminars, Milton will return to Texas on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May. As you can tell, Ann and I will also be traveling a lot during the next few weeks, greeting old friends and making new ones. If anyone needs to reach us, please contact Larry York at (865) 947-9478 or cell phone (865) 207-5717. His email address is: [larryyork@comcast.net](mailto:larryyork@comcast.net). He almost always knows where we are and can make contact with us. We will be checking our South African email which is:

[jvhogg@xsinet.co.za](mailto:jvhogg@xsinet.co.za). My new cell number here is: 011-27-76-978-3465 and I will carry the phone on our travels if you need us urgently.

### ON CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

At the time of our arrival March 28<sup>th</sup>, we met the 27 new students just as classes were winding down for the first term of the year (January to April). Then, students scattered to the "four winds" almost literally to visit families and churches back home. Nine of our international students were not able to leave, possibly due to visa issues or lack of funds, and contrary to previous policies, they were allowed to remain on-campus. This was made possible because we now have a resident couple, Roy & Thelma Lothian, who moved up from Cape Town in January to occupy the flat directly below ours on the first floor. Except for a couple of days to visit their daughter on the west side of Joburg, they did not travel out of the area during this school break. Other staff members tell us that the Lothians have made a real impact at the college since their arrival to assume the position as Dorm Supervisors. Never before has there been such clean bathrooms on the guys' side nor strictness in observance of curfew hours. We are proud to have them onboard to perform these necessary tasks. Also, Roy will be covering for me in teaching my classes a couple of times during the out-of-town seminars.

### OTHER CAMPAIGNS BY SABC STAFF

Chris duPreez called me shortly after classes resumed the 19<sup>th</sup> of April saying he had "qualified" several participants in campaigns he has conducted during the break for the *Vision 700* program. He will provide us with the names and location of the seminars. Ann and I have designed a certificate with the college logo for such participants. In many of Chris' campaigns, he takes current SABC's students to help in door-knocking, passing out literature, and teaching Bible studies. One day during the break, we encountered 3 or 4 of the 9 students who remained on campus returning with Bibles in hand, saying they had been out in the neighbourhood door-knocking. They are diligent about spreading the Gospel whenever possible.

Whenever we reach the end of each month and reflect back upon all that has happened here, we cannot help but praise God for supporters, friends and family on that side who make it possible for us to live and work here. Any success realized is a tribute to the Father and to you who faithfully support the work. We are at home here and enjoy being a part of it.

**Your missionaries in Africa, Jerry & Ann Hogg**