



Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church

IN TOUCH MONTHLY

1 January 2006

As we begin the New Year, dare to ask yourself, “How will I walk with God this year?” Just how important is one individual? If the whole world goes in one direction, while one man and his family goes in another direction, does it really matter to the Lord? Would it have any impact whatsoever on the history of planet earth? Ask Noah – he *walked with God*. Genesis 6:9 “Come...let us walk in the light of the LORD.” Isaiah 2:5

Trekking in the footsteps of David Livingstone

Zambia

The 8-week trek across Africa by Steve and Tim began in Cape Town. It followed generally the route first pioneered by David Livingstone and ended 5,000 miles north in Southern Sudan. This month we are highlighting their experiences in Zim and Zam. Stay tuned for their adventures in Sudan next month.



Joyce Jere and Baby Lydia

Steve and Tim had a host of opportunities to meet the great needs of both believers and pagans, first by preaching Christ, then by encouraging (sometimes rebuking) and delivering vital supplies. Some examples:

While eating in a small *café* in Kasane, Botswana, they felt the Lord leading them to witness to the waitresses who were serving their table. By asking the girls questions about how their lives measured up to the Ten Commandments, they were soon under conviction about their sin. The men were able to help each girl see her need for Jesus. After leaving work, both girls prayed

with Steve and Tim to receive the gift of salvation through faith in Christ.

Later, our missionaries were attempting to photograph Victoria Falls before the Park closed for the evening. Boyd, the night watchman, allowed them to join him as he made his final rounds before closing the park. As they walked, the Lord led our guys to ask Boyd some questions about the Ten Commandments and his life. He soon realized that he fell sorely short of God’s holiness. Boyd received Jesus that night in the parking lot at Victoria Falls.

In Zambia, Steve and Tim visited Samaritan Community Orphanage, one of ITMI’s newer projects. Steve’s report was glowing.

From the directors Rev. John and Joyce Jere, to the smallest child, Steve had something positive to say about them all. “Joyce has an infectious smile. She smiles all the time,” he reports. Steve was also impressed with the children’s respectful behavior. “They are being brought up well,” he affirms.

SCO, now home to 40 double-AIDS orphans, is more than a place to *stay* for these kids, it is a family and a home. John is not just their guardian, he is their “Daddy.” In addition to his family responsibilities, John pastors a church. His civic activities include helping Par-

liament to resist the trend toward becoming a secular nation and to keep “Under God” in their constitution. Although the needs John works to meet in Zambia are great, he recognizes that needs elsewhere are sometimes greater. Thus he makes frequent missionary trips to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



John Jere

John is a visionary constantly working toward the future growth of his ministry. Like Jabez, he is asking God to enlarge his sphere of influence so that more lost souls can be reached for Christ. He does not bury what God has given him, but seeks to multiply it.

With the help of ITMI missionary Charl van Wyk, John purchased a brick-making machine which is currently being used to build an auditorium where his Church will meet on Sundays. When it is finished, he plans to use the brick-maker and the auditorium to earn money by renting them out in the community. He is planning

(Continued on page 2)

Love Boxes for Zimbabwe

Robert Mugabe is systematically starving the citizens of Zimbabwe.

ITMI's Director **Steve Evers** and 8-year veteran missionary **Tim Keller** have just completed a trip to communist Zimbabwe. Their mission: to deliver "Love Boxes" containing dry food products, soap and other basic personal survival items that cannot be purchased in the country. These urgently needed supplies were a gift from our sister mission Frontline Fellowship and specifically designated for the elderly of Zimbabwe. They ignored the great personal risk involved for the joy of sharing with fellow believers, suffering severe persecution under communist rule in Zimbabwe.

The state of affairs in Zimbabwe is disturbing to say the least. Poverty is everywhere, the economy is in shambles and the citizens are destitute. The government cannot afford to pay its bills or to provide basic services for the people. Thus, folks burn their trash because it's never picked up. The few who have cars leave them in line on the road hoping for gas stations to have supplies by next year. Under the guise of paperwork or permits, and in an effort to pay its bills, the government shuts down businesses that sell something the government wants to sell. The communists *legally* raid and loot people's homes after having passed a law that gives them ownership of all private property!

A retired educator in Zimbabwe receives approximately Zim\$400,000 each month from the government as *pension*, the equivalent of \$5 (US)! President Robert Mugabe is systematically starving selected people-groups in Zimbabwe. The elderly suffer most. Senior citizens must choose everyday whether to eat or to buy medication. Few have the means to do both. Zimbabwe is chaotic and dangerous, but the Lord saw to it that Steve and Tim made it in and out safely. He allowed them to cross the borders without difficulty and deliver their precious cargo into trusted hands. They will distribute them to the elderly of Zimbabwe who need help so desperately.

(Continued from page 1)

to build a school on his property where the children can receive a God-centered education, instead of the humanistic education that they receive from the state. John visualizes opening some shops on his land as well, allowing the children to learn a trade and to survive in the world. ITMI is privileged to be a part of God's work through the Jeres in Zambia. It's a joy to partner with them as God allows their vision to be realized.

ITMI's newest project, **Kanyama Bible College** is located in the poverty-stricken township of Kanyama, a suburb of Lusaka. Steve and Tim were on hand for the inauguration. The school seeks to train current and future church leaders and ministers serving the 300,000 residents of Kanyama. Of the 160 churches in Kanyama, only five of the pastors have *any* sort of Biblical training. Even these have no access to proper study tools needed to present accurate, Biblically based teaching to their congregations. Most of the township has no electricity so there are no lights to read by.

Kanyama Bible College will ad-

dress these needs by offering evening classes for students, most of whom have daytime responsibilities. KBC also has a well-lighted library for studying.

It would have thrilled your heart to see how the leadership of the college held, savored and appreciated each book Tim presented – there were three boxes from Frontline Fellowship donated for the library. "They were like children at Christmas," Steve said.



Bishop Bwanali Phiri receives books from Tim Keller for KBC library.

Bishop Bwanali Phiri, founder and director of the World Baptist Evangelistic Association and overseer of Kanyama Bible College, shared with Steve that some of the school's needs include scholarships for students in the amount of \$20 per quarter per student. Supple-

mental support to help with teacher's salaries amounts to \$20 per month. Additionally, they need quality books for the library. Phiri is a dedicated servant of the Lord, who according to Steve, "has a zillion balls in the air," – which translates into a zealous evangelist who has pioneered many ministries in Zambia and neighboring countries.

From Lusaka, Steve and Tim pressed on to Kabwe, Zambia, home of Excellence Christian Academy. ECA's Principal, Eugene Kalunga is another African national with several irons in the fire. In addition to his responsibilities at the school, he is involved with local Christian leadership and a prison ministry. He had arranged for Steve and Tim to speak to a group of local pastors and church leaders. At Tim's suggestion, the ITMI team taught on the topic of personal evangelism using some practical suggestions from their earlier experiences. The pastors were very excited about what they had learned. One, in his broken English exclaimed, "This new way to share Jesus-it will work!"

(Continued on page 4)

President's Page

January 2006

Dear Team,

Update on the "death threat" situation.

The hearing for the death threat to Dr. **Peter Hammond** took place as scheduled on November 24. The man, Rashid Kara, pleaded "not guilty" so his trial was scheduled for December 21. (Our deadline is the 16th to get this to the printer, so we are unable to give you the results, but we will keep you posted on the developments.) Please pray.

We are so grateful to each of you who wrote a letter or e-mail to Detective Inspector **Estelle Kotze**. She was greatly encouraged. "I've never had anything like this happen," she told us as she pointed to a large stack of letters. "My office is very impressed."

Harriett and I visited her several times in hospital as she recuperated from surgery. Her face was aglow with the glory of the Lord and the joy of her newfound faith. The doctors were able to find and remove most of the cancer, but there is still some left. Please continue to pray for her complete healing as a testimony to His grace and mercy.

Lenora Hammond continues to improve health-wise and is able to drive again. Her strength and stamina are still limited and after a busy day she feels exhausted.

Last month's pre-Christmas highlight was the annual summer Youth Conference at KwaSizabantu, with some 5,000 teenagers in attendance. Peter and I had been invited as guest speakers. His daughters **Andrea** and **Daniela** traveled over with us to eastern Natal. There were teens from all over South Africa and several foreign countries including Europe and America. This year's harvest was unusually abundant with several hundred young people trusting Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior. What joy!

One Saturday evening last month we drove out to Somerset-West (about 50km east of Cape Town), to a *Carols by Candlelight* service at the Baptist Church. It also doubled as a picnic and Sunday School prize giving with about 200 family members present.

For several months, active Christians in the Church had encouraged the Pastor to have some kind of evangelistic outreach. He is a man of God and has a Bible expository message, but lacks the gift of evangelism. They said, perhaps too simplistically, "It's easy. Even a 6-year old boy could do it."

"Find me a 6-year old boy that can do that," he jokingly counter-challenged.

The program organizer knew about **Calvin Hammond**, Peter and Lenora's youngest son, and his ability to memorize Scripture, so he was asked to "preach" the closing message. He did an absolutely superb job! OK, I'm his grandpa, and I am definitely very biased, but he gave the entire "Evangelism Explosion" presentation flawlessly. He had excellent delivery, paused for emphasis in the right places, used appropriate gestures to make his points and handled the mike like a "pro." At the end, he gave an invitation and led them in the sinner's prayer.



Calvin Hammond

It was really stunning when you stop to think that he's only 6 years old and only just learning to read. The chairman of the event was so impressed that afterwards he came up on the platform, put his arm around Calvin and prayed a dedicatory prayer that he might grow to be a mighty servant of God and win thousands to Christ. We hope you'll join him in that prayer.

Yours in His grip,

Bill Bathman

(Continued from page 2)

In addition to delivering school supplies donated by school kids in the US, Steve was able to serve the ECA workers by taking family portraits and printing copies for them. While photographing the family of Mr. Banda, the Assistant Principal at ECA, Steve heard firsthand the story of Rachel Banda, his 14-year-old daughter who had been abducted earlier in the year.



Rachel Banda with her family.

Rachel had gone to a friend's house one afternoon and never returned. She was held captive in a house across the street from her own for a few days before being transported to Lusaka. Her captors tried to brainwash her in preparation for entering sex-slave trade. Miraculously, a student at ECA found out where Rachel was being held. Kabwe and Lu-

saka authorities set up a stake-out to catch her captors and rescue her.

Rachel told Steve that the whole time she was in captivity, she knew that people were praying for her and felt the Lord's presence with her. Now she wants to help other children like herself who have endured traumatic experiences. Before her abduction, Rachel was a regular 14-year-old. This horrible event in her life turned her into a modern-day Joseph, who was kidnapped in an act that was, "intended to harm...but God intended it for good." Genesis 50:20 Praise the Lord for Rachel's safe return and for her desire to serve Him!

Poland

What happened on Saturday, November 5, 2005 was a simple miracle. A group of volunteers from ITMI and PROJECT C.U.R.E. gathered at PROJECT C.U.R.E.'s warehouse to load the container headed for Maranatha Baptist Church in Swinoujscie, Poland. The container (packed so incredi-



Packed Container

bly full that a forklift was used to wedge it closed) was scheduled to arrive in Poland on December 23, 2005. This will allow the Church to repay their debt to the city, thus saving their property. That was the simple part. The miracle part is that it happened.

Since the beginning stages of this project, Steve has acknowledged that there are a thousand ways for this *not* to happen, and it could *only* happen if God intervened. Therefore, God has made it obvious to all that the credit belongs to Him.

Please continue to pray that those who receive this container will be pleased with its contents and that the transaction between Maranatha Baptist and the city of Swinoujscie, Poland will go smoothly.

Compiled and written by Summer Kelley

Breaking News:

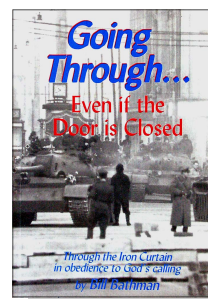
Please go to our web site to see John Jere's latest word on baby Lackson who was turned down by other orphanages.

See how God is using Samaritan Community Orphanage to love on the most needy children of God.

Going Through...Even if the Door is Closed by: Bill Bathman

Going Through contains incredible true stories of missionary exploits in Europe, East and West, during the dramatic events of the Cold War. Spanning the time of the Berlin Wall, Going Through includes many never-before-published stories of Christian courage under Communist persecution in Eastern Europe.

"To travel with Bill Bathman was an experience, an adventure, danger, intrigue and spiritual ministry all tied into one... You're in for a great adventure in reading this book." Rev. Guy Davidson



For Praise . . .

1. Wonderful blessings at the KwaSizabantu summer Youth Conference last month.
2. Calvin Hammond's first evangelistic sermon at the *Carols by Candlelight* service.
3. Safe and successful African trek by Steve and Tim across 8 countries.

Authorized to Accept  

For Prayer . . .

1. Complete healing for Detective Inspector Estelle Kotze following cancer surgery.
2. Justice at the 'death threat' trial and protection for the Hammond family.
3. "Summit Worldview Youth Conference" January 5-13 in Cape Town.
4. Safe arrival of the sea container for Maranatha Baptist Church in Poland.

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 **In Touch Mission**
INTERNATIONAL, INC.

P.O. Box 7575 • Tempe, Arizona 85281 • (480) 968-4100 • E-Mail: itmi@intouchmission.org
FAX: (480) 968-5462 • www.intouchmission.org • Outside Arizona: 1-888-918-4100

