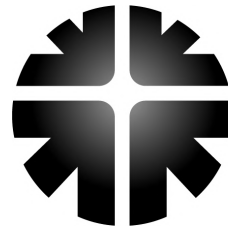


The Hunter Family To Knysna, South Africa

Church Planting | Theological Education | Biblical Counseling

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bmm
Baptist Mid-Missions

Dear Praying Friends,

July/August 2024

James 4:14 says that our life is like a vapor. It appears for a little time and then it vanishes away. This sobering thought keeps us active in ministry and reminds us of the need to be busy about the Lord's work. His grace sustains us throughout our ministry life here and we are grateful.

We arrived back in South Africa halfway through July and were immediately thrust back into a busy season of ministry. We had three unique opportunities to minister the gospel in the middle of some very trying circumstances. First, we were introduced to Bruce and Cynthia Weir from Ottawa, Canada. Bruce and Cynthia were on the trip of a lifetime in South Africa when Cynthia took ill. Cynthia was hospitalized in Knysna and a mutual friend thought it would be a good idea to reach out to us, since we're from Canada. So we visited Cynthia in hospital every week - sometimes more. We had Bruce, her husband, over for supper one evening and we struck up a bit of a friendship with him. Cynthia was heavily medicated and not able to communicate much, but we learned of their faith in Christ from Bruce. They attend a Presbyterian church near Ottawa. Cynthia was in the ICU in Knysna for a month and a half. They managed to clear the infection, but then they discovered cancer. She was flown by air ambulance from South Africa to Canada on Thursday, August 15. On Friday, August 23, after coming home from the hospital for 24 hours, Bruce contacted me to tell me that Cynthia had passed away. We tuned into her funeral online, and were encouraged by the testimonies of her faith in Christ. Pray for Bruce as he navigates life without his wife.

Not long after we got back, we also visited with Cynthia and Peter. They are the parents of a middle-aged woman in our church named Leigh. We have visited Cynthia and Peter many times, but Cynthia took ill while we were in Canada. She fell and broke her hip and had skin cancer. She was elderly (90), but her decline was quick considering that she had been well previously. We sat with Leigh on a number of occasions as her mom slowly deteriorated. Mercifully, she passed away on July 29, as she was in pain, but not taking any food or water. It's been hard on Leigh as she and her mom were very close. Pray for her in the midst of her grief.

Then, much to our surprise, our friend KG passed away in the night of July 31. KG's wife Devika called early in the morning to let us know that he had passed. KG had introduced us to the Rotary Club and was a good friend. He attended our church for a couple of years shortly after we first started the church. I spent hours with KG and shared the gospel with him on numerous occasions. To my dismay, as far as I know, KG died trusting his own goodness. The funeral was an unusual affair to me. KG had asked me a couple of year ago to conduct his funeral, but the family got involved and soon a Hindu priest arrived from the Eastern Cape. Floral garlands were prepared and the entire event became a Hindu funeral, complete with rituals and offerings to the false gods of Hinduism. I was given several minutes to speak, and I was grateful for the opportunity, so I spoke from John 14:6 how Jesus is the truth the way and the life. There is much more that could be said, but here's the request. Pray for fruit from that event. I heard from a lady in the Rotary Club who knows Jesus that she was emboldened to share her faith, so I am encouraged by that. Pray for KG's widow Devika. She needs Jesus too. We maintain a friendship with her and would love to see her come to faith in Jesus, forsaking the lies of Hinduism for the gospel.



Herb, and coworker George with Bruce Weir at the Knysna Private Hospital



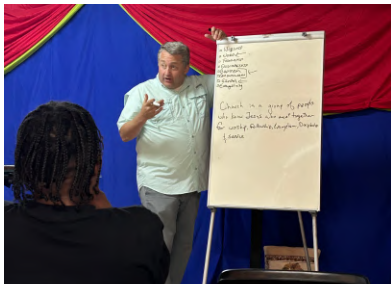
The "funeral" for Leigh's mom's held at her house in the form of a "high tea"



Janet, Devika and daughter Priyanka at KG's funeral



Lee-Zario was excited to find some monopoly money.



Herb teaching at the Friday afternoon Young men's Bible Study

The counseling ministry also continues. Janet has engaged with a teen girl we'll call L. She has been sexually molested by a boy in her community. Janet has gently come alongside her to share the Word and to help this young girl see her need of Christ as well as helping her heal from the trauma of abuse in her past. There have been some great gospel conversations as part of the counseling, so pray that the seed sown will find fertile soil in which to take root. Herb and Janet have spent some time with a pre-teen boy and then with his parents in the hopes of sorting out what is going on in the home. Pray for V and M, the parents and for C, the young man who struggles with intense outbursts of anger. Herb has counseled another man from a nearby community with a pornography habit. It's a help to know that where sin abounds, grace abounds more (see Romans 5:20).



Megan and Azola pictured at Faith Baptist Bible College

Our pastoral intern Jared is doing well. He is preaching about once a month, and he recently began online classes at Central Seminary. We're enjoying watching him get excited about all the things he is learning! Pray for Jared as he juggles work, ministry, family and now school responsibilities. We're asking God to strengthen Jared in his faith as he learns.

We have managed to get Azola safely settled at Faith Baptist Bible College in Ankeny. Friends and supporters in Minnesota pitched in to see that Azola had what he needed for school. He was overwhelmed with gratefulness at all the love that has been shown to him. When I spoke to him a few weeks ago, he told me that the first ten days on campus at Faith were the best ten days of his life. Please continue to pray for him as he learns to balance his on-campus job, academics and adjustment to his new culture. Thanks to all who have given and if there are others who would like to give to help Azola, you can give to Faith directly, or you can give to us and we'll pass it along to Azola at Faith.



Peter and Azola with Don and Amie Steinhart, Pastor Lee Peterson and Pastor Matt Morrell in Minnesota.

Peter and Antoinette are also actively working on raising the needed support to go to an undisclosed country in the Middle East. Peter accompanied Azola to America and had a couple of meetings in some churches in Minnesota. Peter has now returned to South Africa with stories of warm hospitality and God's working. Pray for them as they continue to strive to get the needed support to do what God has given them to do.

Unfortunately there is not much to report on a building. We continue to use the annex at the Brenton Hall, we even held a clean up day there a few weeks ago. We continue with conversations and meeting with anyone who might have buildings or property available, but as of yet God has not directed us to the right person. Please don't grow weary in praying for a place where our church can meet.



Liezal, Vanessa and Maria all helped at cleaning day

Back in April, we had planned a late August trip to Kruger National Park for some respite and connection time. We departed from Knysna on August 19 and spent a week exploring Kruger National Park and seeing God's beautiful creation. While in the park, we had occasion to meet up with fellow missionaries Mike and Marie Brunk. We had a great time with our co-workers George and Amy, eating, laughing and spotting African animals. We even had an indoor encounter with a bat, but that's a story for another time.

Our children are all doing well. Caleb, Juleah and our grandson Raymond live in Athabasca, AB where they are involved in a wonderful local church and Caleb sells real estate. Jared is working at the Regional Hospital emergency department in Saint John, NB as a nurse. Megan is a junior at Faith and Noah is selling jewelry at a local jewelry shop in Saint John, where he lives with his brother. He is planning to head to Faith in January 2025.



Azola and Pastor Sam Choi

You are so faithful in praying and giving...together with you, through the partnership of missions, God is building His church in South Africa!

Only by His grace,
Herb and Janet Hunter