

the church of Christ in **MALAWI** the warm heart of Africa!

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Jerry's Report

The month of March was been very busy for me. Keith Thomson and his wife Anne came over from Perth, Western Australia, during this month. While Keith was here, he consented to going with me into Tanzania to check on the work there. Tanzania is the country mostly north of Malawi, and a country which the church had asked me to try to expand into. However, until recently, I could not see how this could be done. There are two congregations in Tanzania, just over the border from Malawi, but those churches are over five driving hours from where we live, and neither is close to a city where lodging would be available.

However, last fall brother Tony Melton made a contact through the Internet with a brother in Tanzania, and it was this contact that Keith and I went to check out.

Keith and I flew first to Dar es Salaam and then on to the city (a large city with nearly one million population) where this brother we were looking for lives. The name of the city and of the brother will not be given in this report. What we found is pretty exciting. The brother speaks English (plus three more languages), has been educated in a church of Christ preacher training college, and has preached for several years. He is 34 years old, has a Christian wife, but they have no children.

Last August this brother, through his own studies, determined he could not worship with



more than one cup and loaf in the communion. This occasioned his putting a note on the internet that read: "Church of Christ - one cup what do they believe in?" It is this notice that brother Tony Melton responded to.

This brother preached for the largest church of Christ in the city where he lives, but pulled away and is meeting with his wife (a very pious person), his sister, who also speaks English, and a few more members, and a few non-members.

Space will not allow me to elaborate, but

Keith and I worshiped with these Christians on the Lord's day. Everything done was according to the Bible pattern. And as far as I can determine, this is a solid beginning for a viable work in Tanzania.

Keith and I held studies while we were in this city and we could not go anywhere where this brother was not known. We held as many as six studies in one day. Interestingly, most of those we studied with were Lutherans. I am sure this is because of the German influence up until after World War I when Tanzania was a German colony (remember Martin Luther and Germany). After the first war, the country became a British colony but gained independence from Great Britain in 1961. The country has a stable government.

I am sure the Lord handed us a work. The question now is, what are we going to do with it? Of course, Keith and I discussed how best to begin, but, as with any work, some time will be required to get everything sorted out. What I feel pretty certain of, though, is we don't have to put a missionary in the country to begin with. We can commute in and out. The brethren need a building. Where they now meet is so difficult to find that many we had studied with could not find the place. The preacher will also need some financial assistance. More in later reports.

Thank you for your confidence in us and your continuing prayers.



THE MALAWI BRETHREN

"How beautiful are the feet of those that preach the gospel of peace . . ." Rom. 10:15

I would like to thank God for having life with my wife and family. The year 2007 was a difficult year for me because I was sick. I thank Bro. D. Edwards for helping me pay for

a 6 hour operation at the Malamulo Hospital in Thyolo.

Even though 2007-08 was difficult for me, the Lord guided me to plant 6 churches. On 8th June 2007 I received Muonekera church which was a Christian Church with 96 members. The problems which they have this time is lack of

hymns and Bibles and also hunger, but the church is growing.

The Mponyera church started on 12th August 2007 with 42 members. They were with Namikango church of Christ (cups). Mabala 2 church was started on 18th November 2007 with 25 members. Many of these members were of Catholic origin. I met them during a funeral of one of our members. They came to my house where they asked me to start the church at their village. A lot of people know me because of preaching at the funerals. When a Christian dies, people come to my house and tell me their problems and we discuss about the church of Christ.

On 18th August 2007, I went down to Nsanje and Thyolo with our missionary Edwards where we traveled a long distance to a meeting. The fol-

lowing morning I and brother Jonas White went back to Nsanje at Muona where we baptized about 275 people from three churches: 1. Muona church, 2. Chinolo church, 3. Namisololo church. All of these were of New Jerusalem Church.

I also went to teach at Mango church of Christ where brother Sinonsi called all people to gather together with us where I taught them the topic of the beginning of the church. They understood very well. They sent brother Sinonsi to me saying that we should go back again to receive them. A problem the Christians of Nsanje are facing is poverty and flooding. Therefore people are not settled. They are moving here and there because of water. Another problem is when a preacher arrives at Nsanje, they think that he has taken something to help them. To my view the work of God is moving good at this time.

Doug's Report

March began with the coming of visitors from Australia. Keith and Anne Thomson from Perth arrived in Blantyre on the 3rd along with Jerry and Linda. Cutter. The Thomson's had been scheduled to fly into Blantyre on the 1st but the airline cancelled their flight so they later flew into Lilongwe where the Cutters met them and brought them down here.

I had scheduled an English study for March 3-4 so that Keith could be a part of it. He missed Monday but was able to take part on Tuesday. I try to have a Bible study with English speakers every year. It is good to keep up with who can speak English. This year we had about fifteen to attend. Our theme was the life of Jesus Christ. We started with the key events that took place during the period of time between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. Then we looked at some of the Old Testament prophecies foretelling the coming of Christ. The last part of the study dealt with the life and death of Jesus. The study went well and the brethren indicated they enjoyed it. Next year, Lord willing, we will cover the life of Paul and his letters as well as the rest of the New Testament.

The second week of March (9-15) was spent in Lilongwe. A few weeks back some preachers visited from Lilongwe and asked that I spend some more time there. They wanted me to stay a month, but I told them that was impossible because of my work load throughout Malawi as well as a lack of living quarters in Lilongwe. I did tell them that I would try to



come up and spend a week and try to visit two churches per day. During the week I visited ten different congregations. I enjoyed meeting all of the brethren at that time. The work in the central region of Malawi is smaller than the work in the southern region. There are not as many congregations and the congregations themselves tend to be smaller in number. I think a lot of good could be done in the central region if a missionary was stationed there, but at this time it is not possible. I have scheduled one preacher study in the Lilongwe area and a few Saturday and Sunday meetings for this year.

I conducted my first regular preachers' study here at Blantyre March 25-27 with the Blantyre area preachers. We are studying two themes this year: Biblical Authority and the Life and Mission of Jesus. Forty men attended. I have printed a booklet which contains the studies along with some tests covering each lesson. I always approach these first studies with a little apprehension, wondering if the material will be helpful and understandable. There is usually a little "fine tuning" that takes place during these initial sessions.



LINDA'S EXPERIENCE

We have had a month of "Well, this is Africa" to "Wow, this is Africa"! Keith and Anne Thomson from Perth, Western Australia, arrived on March 3rd. They had some problems arriving on time because Air Malawi had some flights cancelled. I wondered at that time whether Jerry and Keith would fly out to Tanzania on March 5th, as scheduled, as they were booked on Air Malawi. Well, on the 4th the travel agent called and said all Air Malawi flights had been cancelled and they could not fly out until the 9th. Due to the delayed start, Jerry and Keith did not return until the 17th. Keith was scheduled to preach in Karonga in the far north on the 16th and I know those Christians were very disappointed not to meet and hear Keith preach.

Debbie so kindly asked Anne and me to stay in Blantyre and keep her company while Jerry and Keith were in Tanzania and Doug was in Lilongwe for the week. We had a wonderful time, having "experiences," as Debbie termed it. On the morning of the 18th, Keith, Anne, Jerry and I left Blantyre

and decided we would drive the road that goes by Lake Malawi so Keith and Anne could see the beauty of that part of Malawi. BIG MISTAKE!! We had an "experience" we didn't anticipate. As we neared an area near the lake, I began to notice and commented that there must have been lots of rain because I could see flooding in the distance. We didn't go much farther until we could see a little water going across the highway. Jerry proceeded further and the water got deeper...and swifter. Keith offered to get out of the truck and walk in front just to make sure we still had highway to drive on, and some young men offered to walk with him. At one point, I am sure the water was at least 15 inches or more deep and running very swiftly. Anne was terrified for Keith, and I was terrified we would be swept off the road. Jerry just kept following Keith. We made it through that area, plus three more which were not

Treading High Water



I would like to ask you to remember brother Bill Davis at this time in your prayers. He is back in the U.S. preparing for treatments of esophageal cancer. He is greatly missed in the Mozambiquean work. We are trying to help them take care of their business while they are gone. The work will slow down without Bill. He leaves some pretty big shoes to fill, and there is no one to fill them.

Thanks for your continued interest in the Malawian work and may God bless you.

quite as deep and swift, before we got on higher ground.

We had a wonderful time with Keith and Anne. We drove to areas such as Livingstonia where a mission was established in the name of Dr. David Livingston, Nkhata Bay which is a resort area on Lake Malawi, and a historic area south of Nkhata Bay where Dr. Laws from Scotland tried to establish a mission before moving to Livingstonia because most of the people died of malaria and other diseases. The church that Dr. Laws built in 1888 at that location is not only still standing but is used every Sunday for worship.

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