

The Seeker

"Seeking the Souls of Men and Pointing Them to Christ"

A Publication of
International Bible Teaching Ministries
International College of the Bible

September 2017

Volume 6, Number 5

Dear brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord. Our 2017 mission trip to Africa was a great success! Counting the meeting at Ngwezi and the BCC student and spouse being baptized there were 105 baptisms and 118 restored during this trip. Our thanks to Peter Masiya for meeting Barry & Jodi in Malawi and helping with the meeting there. A special thanks to Rusty & Laura Stark and Barry & Jodi Gilreath for going on this mission trip. Here are their reports on the campaign.

MALAWI 2017

My wife Jodi and I have returned from our mission trip to Africa and we are excited to share the wonderful news from the evangelistic effort in Lilongwe, Malawi. The Gospel meeting took place on the outskirts of the capital city on August 3rd-6th, 2017. The local brethren had done an excellent job in preparing for what would be a historic effort among churches of Christ in that African country. They had purchased air time on radio and television to promote the Gospel meeting. About 47 different Malawian congregations worked together to help provide for the impressive gathering, and their hard work paid off! People travelled from the city, countryside, and even neighboring countries to take part in the historic event, some travelling hundreds of miles, and many by foot.

The Gospel meeting took place at a rented property within walking distance of where the new Lilongwe School of Preaching will be built. There were approximately 5,000 people in attendance, and according to a local Malawian brother who has written a brief history of the churches of Christ in Malawi, this event was the largest attended Gospel meeting in the history of churches of Christ in his native country! My wife and I were very humbled to have taken part in such a memorable and historic event!

The theme that was selected was "The Doctrine of Christ". The local brethren chose most of the specific topics that were addressed throughout the effort. The faculty of the new Lilongwe School of Preaching helped to organize and coordinate the event on behalf of local churches. Sermons were preached by myself, local Malawian preachers, and teachers and students at the Lilongwe preaching school.



Africa Campaign Team – Barry & Jodi Gilreath, Laura & Rusty Stark, Webby Kenababiyama, an Instructor at ZSOBS and one of the translators

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My wife Jodi taught a ladies class and children's class. We were told that this was the first time they had had such classes during their Gospel meetings, and the brethren were extremely pleased with this new addition. At one point my wife had well over 500 children in her Bible class. The kids were well behaved and very interested in learning about the word of God.

Over the four day event, there were 55 baptisms and 15 restorations. The local brethren expressed continued appreciation for our efforts, and the support that was given to them from brethren in the United States.

During our visit we were pleased to be able to help provide funds for many needs that arose during and after the meeting. Approximately \$1000 was left to purchase Bibles and song books. Other funds were left to provide for needed clothing for the new preacher students in Lilongwe. Additionally, funds were disbursed to help the new school of preaching purchase a copy machine, refrigerator, cooling unit for students, transportation expenses for those carrying people to the meeting, purchase additional food for the large crowds attending the meeting, a few medical supplies, and funds were given towards the purchase of the new property for the school of preaching.



Parking in Africa is a bit more condensed.



Jodi Gilreath's Ladies Class

Jodi and I want to thank the congregations and individuals who helped to make this evangelistic effort such a tremendous success! Without your contribution and prayers, these historic accomplishments would not have been possible. You are to be commended for your sacrifice and willingness to help increase the borders of God's Kingdom!

Barry and Jodi Gilreath

ZAMBIA 2017

The trip to Zambia this year was great. We had good response and support from the local people, and we were busy with the work. The major problem with the work was that Ron Gilbert and his wife Carolyn were unable to make the trip with us. Ron has a great deal more experience with this work than we do, and we always rely on his advice and guidance. This year we had to do without. That also meant there were fewer people involved in the work. For most of the trip it was just myself and my good wife, Laura.

We arrived in Livingstone on Wednesday afternoon the 2nd of August. The first weekend (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) there was a meeting scheduled in Kazangula. We were able to hold the meeting in their new church building, which is almost complete. The largest crowd was 137. We had 3 baptisms and 3 restorations during that meeting, with 11 congregations represented. We hope to be able to repeat this next year with larger crowds.

On Monday morning we began work with Zambia School of Biblical Studies in Livingstone, speaking in chapel and teaching 1 Corinthians during class time.

On Tuesday, Barry and Jodi Gilreath joined us for the work in Livingstone. They had gone first to Malawi and had a record setting meeting in that country.



The teachers and students at the ZSOBS in Livingstone



Inside the new church building at Siamafumba

On Wednesday, August 16th, the school of preaching at Ngwezi had their graduation. Three students were awarded diplomas. In addition, each was given a bicycle for transportation as they go forth to preach. Pray for these young men and for the work they will be engaged in for the Cause of Christ.

Then on Friday we traveled to Misika for our yearly meeting there. The Misika meeting had much smaller crowds than usual. We are unsure of why this was so. The maize crops did very well this year, and the attendance may



One of the 18 baptisms at Misika

I wanted so badly to be there with these brethren but due to health reasons was not able to go. Our brethren had the opportunity to preach to over 8,000 people counting all the Gospel meetings combined. Funds were taken to purchase 455 Bibles in different African languages and forty-three bikes were purchased for preachers.

Before going on this trip 200,000 Gospel tracts were shipped to Africa, thousands of BCC booklets were shipped, over 3,000 pounds of books were shipped to 12 different preacher schools, over 800 Bibles and New Testaments were shipped. Just last week we shipped 118 boxes of materials to Africa. Our thanks to John Chowning who preaches for the Algood church of Christ for his help along with some other brethren from Algood who helped tape, load and unload these boxes for Africa.

Then on Friday we all traveled together to Siamafumba for our yearly meeting there. During that weekend our largest crowd was 2149 with 46 congregations represented. We had 26 baptisms and 70 restorations during that meeting.

We then traveled back to Livingstone on Sunday afternoon, and on Monday Barry and Jodi left for their trip back to the United States. Even though their time with us was short, their help and encouragement was extremely appreciated.

During that week we continued our work with the school in Livingstone, and finished our study of 1 Corinthians.



Rusty Stark and John Simwiza presenting diplomas to the graduating preachers at Ngwezi School of Preaching.

have been affected by people having to do extra work to get their crop to market. We did have crowds of up to 635 and had 18 baptisms with 24 restorations. 25 congregations were represented.

We left Zambia on Wednesday, August 23rd feeling fulfilled by the work we were allowed to do.

Rusty Stark

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While our men were in Africa 3 preachers graduated at Ngwezi. Currently with the 12 preacher schools we are working with there are 153 men enrolled in these schools. We have helped build buildings for preacher training for 3 of these schools. We have also recently helped purchase land for 2 more schools to build new buildings. We hope to start one of these new buildings around the first of the year.



The newly completed Ngwezi School of Preaching building.

Truly the Lord has blessed our efforts and for this we give Him the glory and praise.

There is still so much that needs to be done. We are needing to print several thousand more of our BCC lessons at this time. Some of our brethren at different preacher schools have translated some of our Gospel tracts and theirs into their local languages and we need to print these and ship them in order to help with their local evangelism.

We want to thank all our supporters for your help and your prayers. Please continue to help us as you can to take the Gospel of Christ *“into all the world.”*

In Christ,
Ronald D. Gilbert
Director of IBTM

Things You Have Helped to Accomplish

Baptisms	8,597
Restorations	8,261
New Congregations	169
New Schools of Preaching	7
BCC Students	34,793
ICOTB Students	341
ICOTB Graduates	85

Jimmie B. Hill Memorial Library

Donations to this library should be sent to:

**New Hope Road Church of Christ
PO Box 1334 • Dacula, GA 30019**

Office News

One of the privileges I have at IBTM is helping to locate local brethren when a BCC student tells their teacher they want to be baptized. But that can also be one of the hardest things I do because in some parts of the world there are no congregations. Recently we were having trouble finding help for a student in South Africa, but it turned out that Rusty Stark was actually stopping in that area on his way back from Zambia so he knew a congregation. It was exciting to get a text message from Rusty that not only had our student been baptized – but her husband also!

It is also exciting to see how this work continues to grow. Please pray for and be a part of this mission.

Linda Hill