

The Seeker

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



Dear Brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are back from our mission trip to Malawi and Zambia. We had a very successful trip. As most of you know much work goes into our mission trips to Africa even before we get on the plane to depart. Before going we shipped 200,000 Gospel tracts, 5,000 Tonga song books, several thousand BCC booklets, several hundred books to preacher schools, 3,200 New Testaments and Bibles.



A small part of the 200,000 tracts printed and shipped for this campaign.

Carolyn and I departed Nashville, TN on Monday August 6, 2018 for Malawi. Rusty and Laura Stark were going to Zambia first and would meet us in Malawi on Friday August 10th. Jerry and Edith Sullins were in Livingstone, Zambia and we would all meet up together in Livingstone after the meeting in Malawi.

We helped start the preacher school in Malawi just two years ago. The 7 full time students are finishing their two years of study at the school. They will be graduating December 15, 2018. The school is called Lilongwe School of Biblical Studies. We spent the night in Johannesburg, South Africa before going on to Malawi. We arrived in Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi on Wednesday, August the 8th. And we were met at the airport by bro Vinjero Gondwe and his father Austin. We were taken to bro. Austin's home for a fish dinner. On Thursday we went to the rented house where the preacher school students live and met the students.



Students at the Lilongwe School of Biblical Studies

On Friday we went to the school where we had rented the place for the big Gospel meeting. Bro. Vinjero and his dad met Rusty and Laura at the airport and then a brief stop at our hotel to get ready for the meeting. After the lessons we got back to the hotel around 11:30pm. Friday night we had over 3,000 in attendance at the meeting. On Saturday all day long the people keep coming in, some in trucks and some in vans. Sometimes 50 at a time and sometimes around 100 at a time. Over 1,000 came from neighboring Mozambique. Saturday evening the count revealed over 4,000 in attendance with people still coming. On Sunday many of the nearby congregations dismissed their services and came to our meeting. The count on Sunday was 5,748 people present. A sea of people surrounding us on every side. We had a tent structure that could seat around 3,000 but there were more people outside the tent than inside the tent! During our Gospel meeting in Malawi we had 16 baptized into Christ and 3 restored.



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Ladies cooking nsima . . .

. . . to feed the crowds at the gospel meeting in Malawi, an important service since there are no fast food restaurants around . . .



. . . unless you count the "Mouse on a Stick" vendors on the street.

We had the opportunity to meet with the teachers at the preacher school and other church leaders and discuss the building of the new school building there in Lilongwe. We have purchased around 6 acres of land in a good location which is about one half mile off the paved road. We have started the building project. The men have sent us pictures of the land being cleared and they have already drilled a well. We hope to start this building project in the next few weeks. The cost for building the new school building will be around \$100,000.00. Churches or individuals desiring to help build this much needed building to help train faithful Gospel preachers in Malawi can make their checks to IBTM and mail to Rock Valley church of Christ, PO Box 49494, Cookeville, TN. 38506, and mark for "preacher school building in Malawi"



Water tank and building materials for the new school in Lilongwe.

On Monday August 13 we flew from Malawi to Lusaka and spent the night there. Then on Tuesday, August 14 we flew to Livingstone, Zambia and were met at the airport by Jerry Sullins. For the past several years we have celebrated Rusty & Laura's anniversary August 14th and Carolyn's birthday August 16th in Africa together. We also celebrated Jerry & Edith's anniversary on August 17th.

I spoke in chapel at the preacher school in Livingstone on Thursday and Rusty & I started teaching our classes on Denominational Doctrines.



Laura Stark, Edith & Jerry Sullins, Rusty Stark, Ronald D. & Carolyn Gilbert



Inside the new building at Siamafumba

On Friday August 17th we started packing the truck to go to Siamafumba for the Gospel meeting there. Laura was sick and decided to stay in Livingstone. Rusty, Webby, Carolyn and I made the long trip to Siamafumba. Jerry would join us on Saturday. There had been several improvements since my last trip to Siamafumba including a bath house and a real commode that flushed! Welcome sights to see in the bush! The new church building is still not finished but getting closer. It is about 140 feet long and about 55 feet wide. On Friday night we had around 1,318 present and on Saturday 2,495, then on Sunday the count was 3,030. During this Gospel meeting there were 83 restored and 32

baptized into Christ. There were over 63 congregations represented at the meeting.

We saw more elephants this year than any year I can remember. One evening we went out to eat and when we started back to the hotel the elephants were feeding in the road and we were delayed around 45 minutes before we could pass. Elephants are fun to watch but each year several people are killed by elephants when people do not respect them and stay back from them especially when they have little ones.



Elephant crossing – not your typical road hazard in the USA.



A temporary baptistery in Kazungula.

We had a good meeting there but not the large crowds that we had at other places. There were 166 present for the meeting with 4 baptized into Christ and 3 restored. There were 18 different congregations represented at the meeting. We took some Gospel tracts and some Tonga Bibles to give to each congregation that was present.

In just a few weeks 12 men will graduate from ZSOBS and 14 will graduate from SSOBS and 7 will graduate in Malawi. By the end of this year 112 preachers will graduate who are attending the different schools we are working with. We are excited about over 100 trained, faithful Gospel preachers beginning their work as preachers of the Gospel. I hope you can see the need as we do for helping build these preacher schools and get faithful men in these school to train other faithful Gospel preachers to do the great work that needs to be done.

Looking back on this trip we had a great mission trip to Malawi and Zambia. There were 52 baptized into Christ and 89 restored during our trip and we had the opportunity to preach the Gospel to 8,944 people. We purchased 21 bikes for preachers and left funds to purchase Bibles in Local languages and to help 4 different preacher schools. Since our return from Africa the school in Malawi has conducted another Gospel meeting with the 2 instructors and 2 students helping with the preaching. They had 1,435 present with 26 baptized into Christ and 7 restored.

Brethren, please continue to keep our work in your prayers. Thank you for helping us to take the precious Gospel of Christ *“into all the world”*.



Bibles being distributed to representatives of each congregation present, done at every gospel meeting

In Christ,

Ronald D. Gilbert

Director of IBTM

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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



my husband, Jimmie B. Hill, joined **IBTM** and I began uploading the correspondence courses to our new website, Richard was among the first teachers to join us. I assigned him the second student to stumble upon our site (it wasn't totally finished yet) on January 2, 2011, and he has worked with 435 online students since. Then in October 2014 Richard was the first teacher to begin working with our new IBTM printed courses. He coordinates the postal program at the West End Church of Christ in St. Charles, MO, matching new students with teachers from the congregation, managing supplies and handling any record-keeping needed. For the first 7 months West End did all of our postal students until the program grew and we needed more teachers. But the postal teachers at West End include Marilyn.

I asked Richard to compare online with postal since he does both versions of teaching, but he told me that he enjoys both, although he does like that the Internet is fast. Snail mail can be expensive to the foreign students in particular so he is always looking for ways that cost can be reduced.

Richard and Marilyn have been married for 60 years now, a beautiful milestone that Richard described as "*never a dull life.*" It is obviously a very busy life as well since in addition to Richard's correspondence mission work he also preaches fulltime. But Marilyn is his great encourager. I am so pleased to have them both as two of our Valiant Volunteers.

Things You Helped to Accomplish



Baptisms	10,625
Restorations	9,184
Congregations Established	235
Schools of Preaching Begun	7
BCC Students	40,515
ICOTB Students	461
Preachers Graduated	361

Valiant Volunteers

Linda Hill