

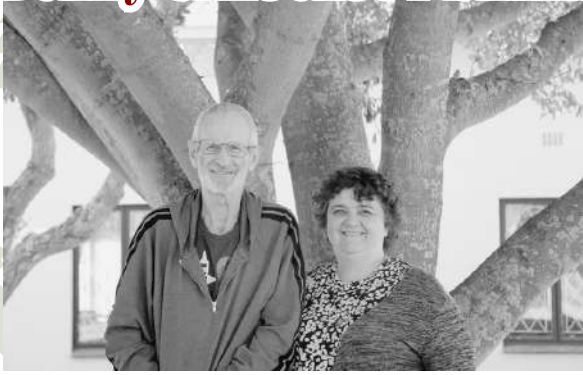
# Wishing you a Merry Christmas!

FROM THE ZEMA FAMILY TO YOURS



Focus Newsletter Christmas 2024 Edition

## Barry & Louise Adkins



A highlight for ministry in Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha) was to see one of our ZEBS graduates stand strong for Jesus during a very difficult time. His wife had been sick for months, she had so many things going wrong with her health. Her extended family came to see him to convince him that trusting God was not working and that it was time to visit the witch doctor, they all believed that as a family they needed to contact the ancestors so that she could get better. He was even told by a fellow believer they were surprised he did not turn from God because of the intensity of the suffering. It is such an encouragement to spend time with him and hear how strong his faith is as he remembers the Lord's faithfulness and goodness even though his life remains hard. Sadly, his wife has passed away and he is left with 3 adult daughters and 3 young children to look after. Whenever we greet him and ask how he is doing he replies, "God has been good, even though things are difficult, our creator lives". We find ourselves being encouraged by his faith during the hardship.

## The Goosen Family



May God bless you with a memorable & joyful Christmas celebrating the gift of God's Son. God continues to draw many people to Himself, and we are grateful to share some of the stories with you at this time. We rejoice in hearing about leaders who have come to Christ during the four-year Bible school program (ZEBS). Leaders who never understood the gospel and didn't know how to be right with God have testified to now knowing the truth. One of them said, "We have many gods so we weren't sure who to pray to. Now we know from the Bible that there is only one God, and He is the only one to be prayed to and worshipped, especially when we have troubles. Another student stood up after the "This We Believe" (TWB) doctrinal course and with great passion and sincerity explained that he felt like he grew up and was "no longer wandering around like a chicken with his head cut off." Others said that they were fighting amongst each other and harboring bitterness and unforgiveness towards one another but now realize that they need to live in peace. Luaan was able to teach the TWB course in both Uganda and Malawi this year as well as many villages in South Africa. We praise God for open doors and many new opportunities to spread the gospel.

## The Langley Family



Thank you for how you gave and prayed with us over 2024 as we labor and wait to see God's Kingdom come among the amaZioni as it is in heaven! This year was rich and rewarding for the Langley family, filled with all the highs and lows typical of vocational ministry. We thank God for the tremendous progress made in making BibleProject videos available in isiZulu. We thank God for the two ZEBS classes we are a part of, which continue to grow and thrive under the leadership of our Zulu partners. We thank God for an exciting new opportunity to start a podcast ministry. And we thank God for the arrival of our firstborn son, William! We head into 2025 with glad anticipation that God will continue his good work in this field, and we are so grateful to be a part of it. We look forward to the coming good times and throw ourselves on his mercy to carry us through whatever challenges the new year may hold."

## **Richard & Geraldine Akers**



As we approach Christmas 2024 it is amazing to reflect on the enormous changes which have happened in our world and in the Mission. We are so grateful to God for the ongoing open doors of ministry among the amaZioni. What is particularly gratifying to us has been the way that while the work began as a ministry TO THE AMAZIONI, seeking to bring light TO THE AMAZIONI, now so much of what we do is WITH THE AMAZIONI, working alongside our amaZioni brothers and sisters. God's gift from heaven, His Son, continues to bring amaZioni into His family and in that we rejoice this Christmas.

## **The Emanuelson Family**



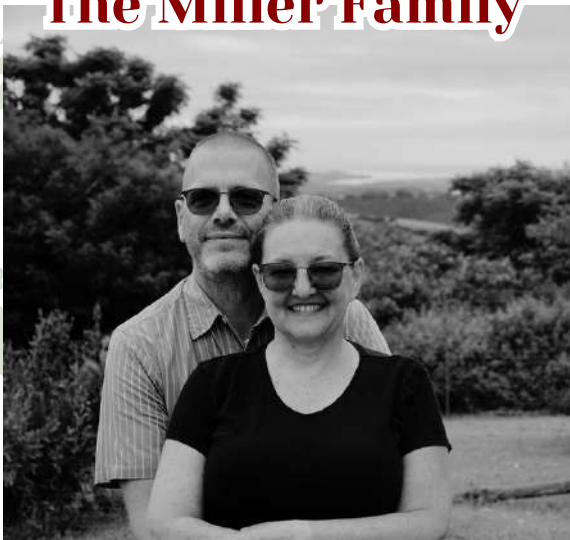
Greetings from the Emanuelsons! It is a privilege to be serving the Lord here in the East London region of the Eastern Cape. We are so thankful for the many provisions of God for our family, and for the amazing open doors of ministry that are benefitting many! Two Bible school training opportunities, and on-going Lord's Day gatherings, which now also includes a children's ministry, are some of the ways that God is working through us and those we partner with here in this ministry. Thank you for your continued prayers for our family and the ministry here.

## **The Hugo Family**



October edition 2024 News from Cape Town We are exhausted. And leaving for a week away tomorrow. The reason for this exhaustion? Pushing through since the beginning of Covid. The church is growing. The needs for ZEBS are growing. Our Mums and dad are also in the phase of life needing more of our help and encouragement. And extra things from this year... Term one – preparing the Bible study group to host the alpha course. Term two – running the Alpha course (three months). Term three – starting a new men's Bible study, having focused times on responding in love to the LGBTQ+ community, and, a special for couples. Also did three individual marriage preparation classes and one wedding. Term four –A new marriage preparation class and 2 weddings. A young marrieds Christmas get-together. And preparation for Christmas. our adjustment to Barbs rapidly deteriorating vision also brings its challenges. We are so thankful to the Lord for the many opportunities to reach into people's lives. We are also thankful for the number of people who reach into our lives being at Christchurch Srant Park has been such a time of putting into practice what it means to share life as Jesus followers. We are grateful to overflowing. There is an old gentleman in church on Sundays, who is a recovering alcoholic and has had several strokes. His home language is Afrikaans and Mark and Yolanda assisted his relocation to his daughter some time ago because of abuse where he was living. The church assists him to get to us on a Sunday. What I love is standing a couple of rows in front of him and listening to him worship. He doesn't always say the words, as they are mostly in English, but His honest worship always puts a smile on my face. I am not alone in this. We always think that it's the big things that encourage. But the small things mean so much to me on a Sunday.

## The Miller Family



In 2024, with your support, Zion Bible College transformed its approach to teaching the Bible. Previously, our primary method was lecture-based, which effectively imparted knowledge of the Word of God. However, we realized it was not as effective in fostering obedience to the Word. Since the Great Commission calls us to "teach them to obey," not just teach them to know, we re-evaluated our methods.

We began by training our teachers, equipping them with the skills to facilitate group discussions rather than relying solely on lectures. The results have been overwhelmingly positive. People are not only understanding the Word but also internalizing it, leading to genuine behavioral change. While works do not save us, we are saved for works, we felt we were not doing enough to equip, empower, and encourage the good works for which we were created.

## The Seelhammer Family



The Lord has been so faithful to our family this year. A family highlight for us is how we experience unity and love in our family even though our three adult sons are living apart from us. Our extended family and close friends continue to keep us close in heart even though we do not have much time to spend with them. A highlight for ministry this year is recognizing how the

is opening doors for new ministries amongst the amaZioni. Some of our missionaries are going into other African countries for Bible teaching and our Children's ministry team has created another Sunday School curriculum book for the amaZioni to use in their churches.

May the Lord bless you all with his grace and endurance in the faith both for going through the good times and the hard times. We pray your families will experience and recognize the blessings of God this Christmas season. Remember the Redeemer!

## The Steiner Family



Our vision for the amaZioni youth in our city is that they would become a vibrant fellowship of disciples, impacting their community with the gospel. But many don't even know Christ or the gospel. We continued this year to host youth events with a gospel message and encourage fellowship. One highlight was our annual Sports Revival tournament. We had over 300 people attend from ca. 10 different amaZioni congregations. Our gospel message on the day was "Jesus - the bread of life". Later in the year we were able to mobilize several youth groups for a hike on a nearby mountain trail. Many amaZioni

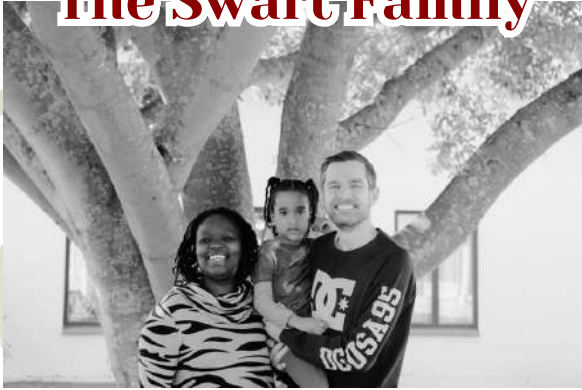
youth never leave the concrete and tin-shack jungle of the townships and so this was a great change of scenery for them. These events also strengthened our relationships with new youth leaders and churches.

## Greg & Carlene Seghers



May God bless and encourage you and your family this holiday season. Praise God that this year, we can honestly say we are feeling “at home” living in the USA! We have a feel for the rhythm of our ministry in ZEMA’s home office and have enjoyed networking and relationship-building opportunities that have come our way. Highlights have been The Table Podcast at Dallas Theological Seminary, interacting & developing relationships with students, ICETE, and GEN. We live with Carlene’s parents, not far from Amy and Ryne (& 3 grandkids). We enjoy visiting Corbin and Maddie (& 2 grandkids) in Oregon and Kyle and Maddie Grace in Indiana when we can.

## The Swart Family



Our family is doing well. Kayleen is going to grade 1 next year, time flies hey. Ayanda is doing good, just struggling to get a job. TK, our niece who lives with us is doing well. In 2025 we are going to explore finding a new spiritual home (local church). Please pray for that. We are still involved in Zebs. Nozipho is still working at the church and involved with the Bible Project as a translator. Our ministries, Couples and the Lady's ministry are growing. We had our annual ladies camp in October, we had 28 ladies. We had 14 couples at our couples camp. One of the ladies, Mandisa, gave her life to the Lord. The amaZioni pastors

the Empangeni area have approached us to discuss the possibility of opening a Zebs school there next year. please pray for that.

## The Livingston Family



Jeff managed to go to 3 all night amaZioni services this year after only attending one in the last three years. He really enjoyed the experience and the opportunities to connect and share with the hearts of the very people that our Father God has called ZEMA to minister to. Taking part in a foot washing ceremony at a Zion church gathering was also something which he has not taken part in for many years and was a special experience which created more ministry opportunities and discussions. The ZEBS schools under Jeff and Michael Ngobo's care are still going strong, with a further school opening on the

KZN south coast. This school will start in earnest in 2025, although we have had a teaser teaching session with the church community leaders who asked us to come and start a ZEBS in the area. Please pray for this new school and area kwaMakhutha. Zebs yearly graduation testimonies always brings joy to our hearts as you hear from students how studying the word of God thoroughly, as they do in ZEBS, brings light into their lives. Some leaders have never seen God's love shine through His scriptures before and testify that it is like reading the word for the first time properly. Pray that this Love light shines brighter than ever.

## Matthew Kuehl



I hope everyone is enjoying a wonderful Christmas season! I'm so excited to celebrate with you on the USA side this year. It's such a joy to spend time with family and see snow, something I definitely miss in Africa. Since arriving in mid-November last year, I've been focused on support raising, traveling all over the country to share what Christ is doing in southern Africa. And I mean all over: Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, South Dakota, Colorado, Arizona, California, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania. And those are just the ones where I had appointments. I've driven through many more! It was such a

blessing to share what Christ is doing in southern Africa across this great country. It looks like I'll be able to return to South Africa early next year, and I can't wait! While I've loved my time in America, my heart is in South Africa. I'm so excited to get back and share the amazing truths of the Bible with my friends, brothers, and sisters there.

## Tim & Luann Kuehl



In 2024 we were involved in the ministries of evangelism, discipleship, church leadership training and empowerment within established 'Zionist' churches. We use the tools of ZEBS, children's ministry training, literature development, mentoring and so on... so that the amaZioni churches of Southern Africa turn from being a group of people who meet on a regular basis to a biblically defined Church. Even though we get more tired at our age in handling these ministries, we wouldn't have missed these last years for anything to see and be part of what God is doing. The ZEBS ministry in our area is going very well. We are regularly hitting new highs in attendance since Covid.

Last year we opened a new school in Verena, northeast of Johannesburg city center and this year a new school in Orange Farm, south of the city was opened. Luann's Children's Ministry/Sunday School Teacher Training is booming. In response to high demand, she is spending a lot of time on curriculum development for the amaZioni. Last year a 13-Lesson curriculum book on the Ten Commandments was published and a comparable new book on Jesus' Parables was published this year, written by ZEMA ladies. She also has been assisting Union Bible Institute in coordinating back translations of their various materials – she just finished her third book on their behalf.

## Kit Tischler



Praise God for His work in the lives of Zionist University students this year, like Siyabonga. Siyabonga and I explored the book of Colossians together, studied the Ten Commandments, the Apostle's Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. He and another student have also launched a new Bible study for their Zionist peers. We were also blessed with the opportunity to travel to Zimbabwe three times, to teach at our Bible School in two different locations. One congregation member shared this testimony about their pastor, who is studying at our school: "Praise God for how He is using your school. Our pastor is now preaching the true gospel!"

## **The Akers Family**



We have been grateful this year to be witnesses of God's faithfulness and power. We continue to be amazed at the power of the Gospel to change lives and amazed by the hunger of those who receive the Gospel to know all they can of God and His will for their lives. We have seen and been challenged by many who have accepted the Gospel and have become very lonely because though there are countless Churches there are few true followers of Christ Jesus, and those who fear God alone find themselves strangely alone in the crowd of Church members. Greg continues to find great joy in the ministry, and

Sarah has been growing in her teaching and counselling ministries. Rayah and Olivia are growing more beautiful each day and are a source of enormous joy in the home."

## **The Boatman Family**



I began a ministry position in July at Forest Springs, Wisconsin at a Christian camp. I have learned a lot as their Accommodations Director - my contract is through next August, and we will wait till late Spring before seriously wrestling with what our future looks like. Our ZEMA directors remain extremely supportive of our placement here for now, and our love for ZEMA's work is far from gone. We just don't know what God's plan is, but it is so wonderful to see and feel so many signs that we're where He wants us for now. After 7 years of working secular jobs and feeling lost, we simply can't describe how thankful we are to be living and working in ministry. Thanks again for your prayers and support!

**"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and  
peace on earth to people he favors!"  
Luke 2:14**

