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Christmas Day Service in Southern Africa—Photo courtesy of Stephen & Jessica Langley



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December 2020  
Christmas Newsletter

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**Family Christmas letters are a tradition with many families and our ZEMA missionaries have adopted that tradition. You are an important part of our family and we wanted to share just a few highlights from 2020 that were meaningful to us. There have been so many blessings it would be impossible to list them all. Each missionary family has shared one or two highlights. We praise God for these opportunities to see Him at work in these challenging times and we praise God for your outpouring of love to us! May God bless you abundantly this Christmas!**

On our first to a Jericho church the Fortuner got helplessly stuck and we needed a tractor to pull us out. On our most recent trip we all recalled the incident and laughed. I presented the gospel message again, and after service they sang a song they made up. The chorus was, "Miller loves us all. Miller pointed us to Jesus." After our lunch of chicken and rice, while we chewed on sugarcane from the surrounding field, the pastor again offered his thanks. He appreciates so much, that we are with him – that we are brothers. Thank you, God, for those who send us to this work, and for the welcome and willing ears to hear your Word! May You be glorified. **-The Millers**

The lockdown has allowed us so many blessings. Sunbury has had a major renovation to our main camp kitchen thanks to a volunteer couple from the USA (the lockdown allowed uninterrupted time for this to be accomplished). It looks beautiful, and we are excited to begin having groups use it soon! Through a grant from an organization in the USA, we were able to roof parts of two residences and one of our main buildings which is a wonderful blessing to us and to the contractor we were able to hire. We have been able to connect on a more personal level with our employees and in turn those in the local area during this pandemic. **- The Hoffmans**

God is doing an amazing work here among the amaZioni. One example was spoken by a current student name Mr. Mtshsi, "I was an unbeliever far away from God, living as how I liked. Jesus came and changed my life. I have accepted God's word. I thank God that I am in this school ZEBs. I have got teachings that I never knew. Now I can talk to people by the word of God. Even people who know me, now they want to see this school because now I cannot change from where I am now to go back to where I was. I thank a lot in Jesus name. Amen." Another example of how God is at work was shared by a ZEBs graduate and current Mukhanyo student named Pastor Zingani, speaking about church history: "It helped me in a way that when you are preaching you must know that there will be challenges. There will be people that will be against what you are preaching. So, you mustn't give up because there were people that were martyred, that were killed for this belief, were killed for this faith in Christ. So, it helped me in a way that I

must not give up even if the times are tough. I must go forward, pray to the Lord that He give me strength to go forward, and never go back." May God receive all the glory for what He is doing! **The Emanuelsons**

Our "highlight" of 2020 was being stranded in New Zealand for five weeks due to COVID-19 lockdown regulations. We praise God for providing for us while we were there and for providing a repatriation flight back to South Africa. We learned many lessons through the generosity of friends and being in situations over which we had absolutely no control. **- The Sullivans**

Our family relationships have grown a lot and we had some good time to spend with one another this year during COVID-19 lockdown. Ministry is back now with our normal ZEBs classes and couple's ministry that we have with Zion couples. My wife Nozipho has done a lot of counseling work and translation for the coursework at South Coast bible school into English. I have been busy with Online recordings to our ZEBs students in the time we could not meet and continue this for those that are in our WhatsApp group on Wednesdays. Ayanda, our oldest daughter is still looking for work as times have been tough because of COVID-19. Kayleen, our youngest is 2 and a half years old and full of life and very busy. She will go back to pre-school next year. We thank you all for your prayers and support and may God's grace shine upon you all. **—The Swarts**

The theme of this year was getting creative with technology! While nothing replaces face-to-face fellowship and discipleship, God did help us to discover many ways we can use technology to love and serve the amaZioni. There were Zoom meetings with young Zionists, where we studied 2 Timothy and Haggai together. Paul Seelhammer edited his radio programs on the book of Romans, so I was able to send out 40 lessons on this great book to students. We were also able to put our Biblical Correspondence Course, "This We Believe" in a digital format to be a tool for the future!

**- Kit Tischler**

This year has been filled with praises to God. My sister fighting and beating cancer, getting in some nice family time since we were all living in the same state, and growing in God's will

and grace daily. The main highlight though has been His unmistakable confirmation of my calling into missions among the amaZioni in South Africa. In support appointment after appointment, I was humbled to hear others in my life joyously confirming their belief in my calling. God also poured out His blessing by bringing in most of my support in a relatively short amount of time ... I have been told it is way above the statistical norm for a person in my position. God is good! Another highlight of my year was my month-long missions training in Colorado. The seminar classes were amazing. We have all been to trainings before where you can pick out things here and there that are valuable to you. This was not the case for this training! I felt like I was learning brand new things every time which is surprising since I am an missionary's kid with a degree in Missions! I was also so blessed by the other people who were attending with me. Each person there was going into full-time foreign missions with imminent departures. This meant that the circumstances were ripe for true spiritual bonding and friendships. I am so excited to see what God has for me in my ministry in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2021! I cannot wait to learn the culture and the language of the people I am going to be working with. Teaching is my passion. ZEBs is going to be great! **- Matthew Kuehl**

Lockdown blessed us by giving us the opportunity to ask the Lord how He would have us minister to the amaZioni with all the restrictions. We became aware of the desperate need for food that some of our ZEBs students had. It was so encouraging as we made up the parcels, seeing folks come along side to help with food donations for the parcels. We delivered our first parcels to 15 of our ZEBs students during level 4 of the lockdown. The recipients were most grateful. One lady commented, "God sent you today as I had nothing to eat, I did not even have salt in the cupboard". Another recipient sent us a message saying, "I have never seen a Bible School like this, that you would even bring food in our time of need."

**- The Adkins**

The virus caught us all unprepared, and for us the biggest adjustment we needed to make was suddenly to have no face to face ministry and suddenly to have a year old granddaughter in our care for 6 months. These things have

cemented our belief that God is in control and sovereign, and that every complaint about the circumstances we face is really a complaint against the sovereignty of God, and so we end the year rejoicing in all He has given us and trust in His Grace for 2021. **—The Akers**

One of the big 2020 highlights for the Langley's was seeing how powerfully God answered our biggest 2019 prayer request! In 2019, we knew we would be leaving at the end of the year, and that we would not be able to lead the Pietermaritzburg Bible school (ZEBs) long-term. We knew that what the school needed most for growth and vitality was a team of godly Zionist leaders to take it and make it their own, so that it need not depend indefinitely on Western missionaries. We knew also that if God chose not to replace us with the leaders we were praying for, the school would close at the end of 2019. We worked and waited and prayed and trusted, and with just a few months to go, the Lord raised up Siphos and Lungi Mfusi, Buhle Dlamini and Thandokuhle Mahlase to take over the school! Our final weeks before returning to the USA were marked by joyful and invigorated partnership with these dear brothers and sister! We left the school with complete confidence that God would bless and grow it under their leadership. Through all the trials and chaos of 2020, we rejoiced that the Mfusis & Co. were there with our students and believe whole-heartedly that the school would not have lasted through 2020 if not for this amazing team of Zionists. To God be the glory! Great things he hath done and will continue to do! **- The Langleys**

We have moved to a house for the first time in our marriage, and the space to raise our family and exercise hospitality has been an unmitigated blessing.

We are now expecting our third child, due late February 2021, and the pregnancy is going beautifully. **- The Boatmans**

The Lord's timing can often become a test for our faith and patience. But finding out just how good His providence works itself out in our lives is one of our favorite things! This is what happened with the birth of our daughter Luisa on March 16 and the events surrounding it. Ann-Kristin's parents who live in Germany had planned to visit us in March before we had even told them we were expecting a baby.

They arrived here only a few days before the birth of their granddaughter and were a great help to us in the days that followed. It was a peaceful home birth with no complications. Anni's parents were just in time to catch one of the last flights out of South Africa before the borders closed for a full 6 months! It was the Lord's miraculous timing and our personal highlight for 2020. **—The Stieners**

Stepping out of our comfort zone this year has brought rewarding and exciting times. Many new and different activities filled our plates as the world started changing because of the COVID-19. The local churches closed on March 22, which was new favorite thing for us as we worshipped at "home church" with our next-door neighbors for 23 straight weeks. Carrie was blessed to play worship music with Josh & Abbie and our neighbors Steve & Tanya, which was a fun and joy-filled experience.

Paul's highlight has been sending hundreds of Bibles to churches in the Vhembe District, while continuing to wait for the exciting opportunity to meet with Bishop Lekganyane the head of the Zion Christian Church. Paul also obtained the equipment for the Jesus Film ministry and purchased a big tent for rural Vhembe District ministry. **—The Seelhammers**

We love when God affirms ZEMA's ministries by connecting us with people who love Him, love Zionists (because they grew up 'in Zion'), desire that these churches come to know Jesus, and before our meeting knew nothing of ZEMA. These heart connections affirm God's good work and keep me motivated to share about ZEMA and the open door we must share Christ with amaZioni! Two such men are Siphos Mfusi and T. Vinger. This year, Pastor Mfusi became an administrator of two ZEBs in KZN. I am in communication with Pastor Vinger and praying for ZEBs to possibly begin in the Bloemfontein area. **- The Seghers**

Last year an African pastor's conference took place for two days in an area of the Eastern Cape that was previously very hostile to the gospel, due to witchcraft. Despite Satan's best efforts, the teachings from this conference shook the whole area. A direct result has been - not one - but two "This We Believe" doctrinal classes. After that, the four-year Bible school

class (ZEBs) began and is still currently taking place. The kingdom of God has come to that area as individuals have been saved! In addition to this, both groups that were previously not prepared to work together are now studying God's Word side by side with great joy in the SAME building. Praise God for the weapon of prayer and for the power of the everlasting gospel! What philosophy and politicians cannot do, God CAN do!

**- The Goosens**

Even through lockdown, we have seen the Lord open a new ZEBs, 2 hours north of Cape Town, near Saldanha Bay. Pastor Mpande led in this development, but all 4 of the ZEBs teachers (of which Mark is one), share in the teaching of this school = which started in Sept 2020. The teachers also kept contact with the Khayelitsha ZEBs students all through lockdown via WhatsApp. - though they are also back meeting face to face:).

The small church, where we serve, took on the responsibility of assisting the 3 ZEBs teachers during lockdown, with a small financial gift each month. We were encouraged to see the church (Christ Church Sybrand Park) give/ assisting families in need, very generously during lockdown. Church services resumed in Sept, with social distancing and masks, numbers are growing steadily.

It has been a joy this year to see JJ flourish at his first year in digital art college in Cape Town. He hopes to do another 2 years. Kara too has grown immensely this year... and is now contemplating her next step into studies. We are so thankful for our family. Lockdown, though challenging for many, was a blessing to our family... spending extended time in one place, together:) **- The Hugos**

Most of 2020 saw us in the USA for what we call our un-furlough. During the first part of the year we were fully engaged with helping Marie and her family as she underwent cancer treatments. After that, COVID-19 hits. What was particularly special during those unique times in our lives was experiencing God's engagement with us, encouraging us in special ways, meeting our needs and drawing us to himself. One work God did was to uplift us through the great outpouring of love, help and prayers that we received from God's people. We also now praise and thank God that Marie is currently cancer free! **-The Kuehls**