

Report on the Griers' Ministry in Lusaka, Zambia

August 20 through September 8, 2008

We arrived in Zambia on August 21 late in the evening after a 10,000 mile trip from Grand Rapids to Dulles to Lusaka via Johannesburg. Our flight plans were abruptly changed at Dulles Airport which brought us to Lusaka a day earlier than anticipated. Because of the change we found a motel that evening for we were not expected until the next day.

Our host picked us up at noon the next day and took us to his home along with our large contingent of luggage. Nchima and Faith Nchito hosted our stay in their lovely home. These fine folk put up with us until our departure on September 3.



Nchima, Faith and Nkama Nchito

Their kindness to us can never be repaid for they provided for all of our needs as well as provided for many wonderful discussions of our mutual faith in Christ.

Lord's Day was spent preaching in two churches. In the morning at Evangel Baptist Church we experienced our first taste of worship in a community of Zambian believers. Shirley and I were almost speechless as we participated in the singing and worship. The reception of the preached Word was like nothing I had ever experienced in life before. Lunch was shared in a deacon's home with the pastor and deacons and their families. After an afternoon rest we were at Lusaka Baptist Church to speak in the evening. The same experience awaited us there as the singing and worship was marked with the same fervor and passion. Preaching was received again with great attention and response to the preached Word. I think the word that described our first Lord's Day best is stunned! Never had we experienced a community of worship like this in our lives before.

Tuesday morning the conferences began. Jim spoke at the Family Conference each morning. Following a



Morning Family Conference

short break, Jim would then speak at the School of Theology for the pastors. The subject matter was the

same for the two conferences: **Giving a Reason for the Hope Within**. There were about 70 pastors from 63 churches and 12 countries at the School of Theology.



School of Theology

Each evening the two groups would meet together for a grand time of worship and instruction. The evening meetings were attended by about 600 conferees. The singing and worship left us speechless and awed by the manifest presence of the Lord. The sessions were held in tents as Lusaka Baptist is the midst of major building expansion program. The main tent was aptly called: **The Tent of Meeting**.



Combined Evening Session in the Tent of Meeting

Having spoken ten times in four days the fatigue level was high so that Saturday was a day of rest. Lord's Day we spoke in the morning at Lusaka Baptist again only this time the crowd was very large and the worship and response to preaching was overwhelming. That afternoon we traveled to Mt. Mckulu Baptist Church on the outskirts of the city. There in the midst of what seemed to be a field with no houses close by the people of God gathered for worship. We thought surely not every service will have the impact on us as the others did but we were wrong. We left again amazed at the fervor and passion of the singing and response to preaching.



Pastor, Elder and wife at Mt. McKulu

Our host and hostess graciously provided a trip to Livingstone to see Victoria Falls and tour one of the game parks. We flew to Livingstone that Monday morning and visited the falls that afternoon. The next morning we

did the early game park tour with a guide and both experiences were outstanding. Although it was the dry season there was still a third of the water flowing at the falls. The game park tour gave us close up contact with many of the major African animal groups. To have missed either of those experiences would have been a shame since we were that close to the area.



View of the Early Part of Victoria Falls

The early morning foray into the game park provided amazing close up looks at the animals in their natural habitat. These couple of pictures will have to suffice as examples of what we saw.



African Buffalo



Young Giraffe



Elephant that Swam Across the River

We flew out Lusaka to Cape Town on September 3 and stayed at Camps Bay for a three day holiday before heading back to the States. We had a wonderful time there doing what tourists typically do and enjoying the beauty of the Atlantic Ocean. We slept in each morning and then spent the rest of the days visiting attractions in the area.

When all is said and done it is not the sights, sounds and tastes of Africa that remain in memory even though they were very impressive. The lasting impressions include being a part of a worshipping community that in its music and response to preaching may be the closest we have ever been to what Christ intended His church to be. There is a sense in which we hope that we did nothing that would harm what the Spirit is doing in Zambia.

The second lasting impression is that this is the closest we have ever been to revival in any aspect of life and ministry. We have read about revivals that the Spirit induced in the past. Our experience in Lusaka in the churches seems as close to that as anything we have ever been a part of in life and ministry.

The final deep impression that is ours is all the new friends we have made in the Kingdom. The pastors of the churches are now lifelong friends. Pastor Ronald Kalifungwa and his wife Sarah treated us so graciously providing meals in their home as well as time for theological reflection and friendship. Our host family, Nchima and Faith, are now loved and trusted friends in the work of the ministry. Their Christian hospitality to us exceeded any experiences of the past. They and their children, Nchima II, Chilufia and Nkama, are now a permanent part of our lives which the Lord used to enrich us in countless ways.