

HELLO FROM THE HORNES:**End of Year Newsletter-2017****COMING AND GOING**

As scheduled, we did arrive here in America on November 1st. After a five-day visit with two of our children, Lisa Steyn and Steve Horne and their families in Fort Worth, we drove on down to Kerrville where we had a number of doctors' appointments. In the interim, we worked at packing up the house at 710 Bow Lane. Now we know why moving from one town to another is so high on everyone's "Stress List." Donna's parents had lived in that house since 1970 until they passed away in 2001 and 2007. They bequeathed their house to their two children; then Donna and her brother worked out a deal for Donna to acquire the house. She needed a place to stay during the times she spent in the USA taking care of her parents. Now the house is to be sold as soon as we are able to clear it. (Just in case you missed out on our big news, we are in the process of moving to Fort Worth where our daughter, Lisa, found a house adjacent to hers. Last year she contacted us in Africa to exclaim, enthusiastically, that the house next door to hers was for sale. She begged us to buy that house so that, as she expressed it, "*When you get old, Mom and Dad, Des and I can take care of you.*" Donna replied, "*Too late—we have already arrived at 'old!'*" But we did acquire that house. As Donna puts it, "*We came, we saw, we conquered.*" Some who have heard this news assume we have left Africa permanently, but we love our work there too much to leave just yet. We plan to return to South Africa as usual on the last day of February, 2018, to continue spreading the Word.

ISAIAH 43:6

As the Good Book says, "*Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth.*" Sure enough, on Friday, December 8, our daughter, Lynda, and her husband, John Staiger, arrived at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport to visit us. In their 21st year of missionary work in Auckland, New Zealand, their flight was 15 hours long! Of course, seeing Lynda and John again was the best Christmas gift they could ever give us. It had been two years since we saw them and when they were here on their last visit to us in America, it had been six years since we saw them. So their visit now is like the icing on our Christmas cake. For some time they were hoping to be able to make this trip so they could attend the graduation ceremony of their oldest daughter (also named Donna) at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, on Saturday, December 16. And yes, happiness is. . .family togetherness.

BENONI CHURCH CRISIS

Back in the 1980's, emigration from South Africa began and over the years, it has exacerbated. We have steadily seen people "leave our shores for other climes." Now it is peaking. Since the first of September this year, three young couples with their children have already emigrated from our Benoni congregation – one family (Sheldon and Candice Fisher and baby) to New Zealand, another to Australia (Larachelle and Tyrone Tee and their son), and the third—an active deacon at Benoni (Jason Wright and wife, Natalie, and two children) to England. A fourth active and helpful family (Ricci and Nicole Jenkins and two children) flew to New Zealand and Australia, to investigate work possibilities there. On top of that, three other families from the congregation are migrating to the south coast of the country: one family (Nadine and Jared Andalof and twin boys); another active faithful Benoni deacon (Paul Mansfield and his wife, Litza, and young son) is to move in January, and another indispensable deacon (Eddie Anderson and his wife, Kathleen, and their grown children) are moving during the first quarter of 2018. When such substantial members leave the area, it will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the congregation and its work. Add to that the fact that we also lost two long time active members to death in the past few months (Ivan Currie and Poen Greeff) and you will get a picture of devastating loss. "*Why are so many migrating or emigrating?*" you ask. The constant unabated crime rate, the incompetent judicial system, and the severe lack of jobs (affirmative action) are driving people

to seek safer havens in other parts of the world. They are also seeking a better future for their children. Nearly everyone we know has lost either friends or family to emigration. People move to other countries and start over, leaving behind family, friends, and everything they've ever known. Families are fragmented and the whole family unit is diminished. Many find the grass is greener on the other side so their departure from South Africa is permanent. Now an ever-shrinking number of South Africans are those stalwarts who continue to stand their ground, hoping and praying that new converts will fill the ranks. Of course, not everyone CAN leave. It takes money, qualifications, and an enormous amount of emotional strength, leaving behind many whom they know they will never see again. Yes, there is Skype and Whatsapp but they aren't quite the same as seeing and being with your loved ones. Secondly, many South Africans feel, "*WHY SHOULD WE LEAVE?*" and especially those who were born in that country!

CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY

At this point in our newsletter, we borrow the title of the most famous and important novel in South Africa's history by author, Alan Paton. Generally hailed as the greatest South African anti-apartheid novel bringing international acclaim to South Africa, it was published in 1948. Not only was it a world-wide best seller, it brought the racial problems of the land into sharp focus and brought international pressure to bear on the problem.

"UNITE AGAINST FARM ATTACKS"

A national appeal went out at the end of last month from the heart-broken country of South Africa. Everyone was urged to join in and wear black on Monday, October 30, to mourn the great loss of every single farmer murdered in South Africa. From October 20-25 of this year, in just those 5 days (120 hours), there were 11 more senseless farm attacks with 4 fatalities. The appeal read: "*We call on every single person who sees this to spread it as far and wide as possible. We need INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION as our own government turns a blind eye to the unthinkable violence committed against the people who feed this country.*" To this someone commented, "*We look at our own country – our precious and beautiful South Africa – and we bow our heads in sorrow. Our hearts break.*"

CLASS CONTINUING

On March 3, 2016, Al started a weekly Bible class in Kerrville. It was created to be an Open Bible Study and brother Ken Willis of the Riverside congregation was the associate teacher. In our absence, Ken has kept that class going every Thursday night. We have just taken part in the 89th class! Along with committed Christians who love in-depth Bible study, some people from the community have attended as well and several baptisms have resulted.

A SEASON OF GIVING THANKS

Recently, Americans paused to celebrate "Thanksgiving." We have much to be grateful for. God has blessed America with great physical resources. Now turning to you—those who hold up our hands—we deeply appreciate your prayers and your support of our work and the work of Southern Africa Bible College. Please share the spirit of the season and make a donation for the work of the Lord in South Africa. Rising costs and substantial people mentioned above leaving the country make for a grave financial struggle on the field. Your donation could be the difference that makes a difference. Please help us do what we live for—to bring Christ to the World. Your contribution is tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Make out your check to the Memorial Church of Christ (SABC) 900 Echo Lane, Houston, TX, 77024.

Until Christ calls us home,

Al and Donna Horne, Your missionaries to Benoni, South Africa.