

the
AARON FAMILY
Missionaries to South Africa

Hello Churches and praying friends,
We hope you enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and a good start to the new year!

In November we had a few last meetings. We participated in a bus ministry big day at a missions conference in Knoxville, helping with the activities, and teaching a kid's class. Then we wrapped up furlough by spending time with family. For Thanksgiving, we were with my parents and my brothers and their families, and we enjoyed getting to see them all before we left.

On December 2nd, we flew back to South Africa. Our trip took two days, and we spent most of a day on a layover in Turkiye. We loved getting to see a bit of Istanbul while we were there. When we arrived in South Africa, we had no problem entering the country, which was an answer to prayer as we are still waiting on our visas to be approved.

We hit the ground running because of the holidays which were coming up. Compassion Baptist Fellowship thrived in our absence under the leadership of Bro. Malcolm, and we were grateful to see everyone in their places and serving. We also got to meet some new ladies and a few new teenagers who had started coming while we were gone.

It was time to take our quarterly teen activity, which is for the teenagers who earn enough points by participating in church services and completing spiritual challenges in the youth group. We had nine teenagers who won that quarter, and we took them ice skating. It was a first time for almost all of them, so it was a fun and funny night! Afterward we got pizza.

At our Bible study before Christmas we had a Christmas party with hot chocolate and cookies, games, and a gift exchange. This was the first time we've encouraged people to bring something for others, and we were proud of them for participating and for the thoughtful gifts they made or bought. I also shared a lesson on the nativity. Then, the Sunday before Christmas we had a special candlelight service, which is one of our favorite services because we spend some extra time singing together about the birth of Christ. Thanks to several people who sent extra support in the month of December, and some who had given us money specifically for the church children, we were able to buy gifts for everyone who attended. Thank you so much for helping to make that a special time. There were over 40 people there that night, and everyone was so happy and grateful.

We also introduced something else new this year -- Christmas caroling. A group of about 25 people signed up to go, and we practiced five Christmas hymns with them. Two days before Christmas, we took everyone to carol at a nursing home and an orphanage. We introduced ourselves and our church, sang for the residents, and then passed out goodie bags with cookies and candy. We were also invited to walk through the nursing home to visit residents who had not come out of their rooms. It was such a sweet time being able to meet and show love to these people who are alone and forgotten. They really appreciated everything, even just a few minutes of conversation. The joy of serving others was evident in our people's spirits that day, and we plan to do this every year. Hopefully next time we can begin the scheduling earlier and get into even more places.

Our New Year's Eve service was also well-attended, and we had a great time. Three of our young men preached that evening, and we had special music, Bible trivia games, and snacks. We also had fireworks after, and everyone loved that, especially the kids and teens.

We have lots of exciting plans for this year. We're looking forward to our outreach days, visitors coming from the States, more training classes, growing our kid's program, and so much more. One of our main reasons for taking a furlough last year was to raise money to purchase another church bus, and God provided those funds, so we have bought a bus! It's an upgrade from the one we have -- a bit newer and a bit larger, but we will keep both and run them both when necessary. This will be a great asset to our ministry and allow us to do more and reach more people. Thank you so much for giving sacrificially toward this need.

The Lord blessed our furlough and at least 7 new churches have partnered with us allowing us to be able to raise more support which will help our ministries tremendously in several areas.

We now have 4 people on part time and 1 on full time salary to assist and/or run various ministries.

Also we will be renting an additional property nearby to help with additional S.S. classes and to house any visiting groups from America.

Another one of our goals is to raise funds specifically because we have a desire to start a camp and orphanage in the future so we need to purchase a plot of land.

If you or your church would like to help in this area, you can do so by sending it to:

International Baptist World Missions 1729 Gross Rd. Mesquite, Tx 75149 and my name in the memo

We are so very grateful for what God is doing in Durban, South Africa, and we're extremely thankful to you for being part of it through your love, prayers, and support. By the way, If you would like to contact me you can do so by email or by calling my South African number on whatsapp, (+27 078 399 3015). Thank you for reading this update!

Your Partner for the Gospel in South Africa,
-The Aaron Family



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