

From our street to yours ...
Glyn, Susan, Maeyken, Adriaena
October 2008
#5.4

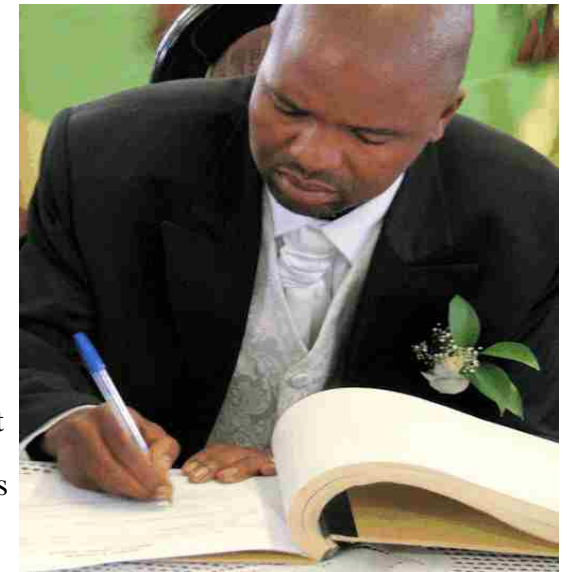
Marriage

On September 13, we attended the “white wedding” of the daughter of one of the Bishops of the Spiritual Healing Church. The Bride and Groom choose a church wedding rather than a legal ceremony at the local magistrate. The wedding ceremony was a wonderful celebration with elements very similar to a Church wedding in North America. The Bride looked radiant in her white dress. The groom was equally dashing in his dark suit with a silver vest and matching tie. The bridesmaids and groomsmen were obviously delighted in having a special part in this day.

What struck me at this wedding was the way in which prayer and blessing were present. Before the exchange of the rings, they were placed on a Bible and the Prophet blessed and prayed over them. After the vows were exchanged the couple knelt before the pastor. He proceeded to take his stole and wrap it around their clasped hands. Once again, the Prophet prayed for the couple placing his hands of blessing over their wrapped hands. And then came the blessing and celebration of the people. As the legal documents were signed the women jumped out of their seats and started to sing and dance in exuberant celebration. This continued as the people came to greet the couple with warm hand shakes, hugs and kisses.



We returned to the home of the Bride to continue the celebration. A similar celebration happened at the home of the Groom the following weekend. Then the happy Bride and Groom returned to their places of work having used up all of their holiday time with the preparations of the wedding - the Groom to Gaborone where he works for an independent company and the Bride to Selebi Phikwe where she is a teacher at a government school. (Five hour drive from Gaborone.) Both are disappointed that she has not been able to secure a position in Gaborone. She has asked for a transfer but to no avail. Even a one for one swap arranged with a teacher friend was denied by the Ministry of Education. Government policy encourages keeping families together however implementation is another matter. When Glyn and I were married in the mid '80s jobs





were difficult to come by. We accepted the fact that one of us would have difficulty finding the ideal job. We decided to live with limited finances as it was more important to be together than to have financial security. People here just accept that they will live at a distance. And costs are such that people need to have two jobs.

Botswana has come a long way in its attempt to help people understand the cultural issues that contribute to the spreading of the HIV/Aids virus. A new President sworn in April of this year is addressing the issues of alcohol abuse. However, the issue of couples living hundreds of kilometres away from each other also needs to be addressed. The institution of marriage is under attack in this country. Many people choose not to get married and many relationships are destroyed because of infidelity.

We continue to feel that helping to strengthen marriages is an important step in helping family life to be more secure, reduce divorce rates and encourage fidelity thus reducing the transmission of the HIV virus. We had a very good

first run with the Alpha Marriage Course. After completing the course one person said that he was angry that so many men do not take their marriages seriously. Another couple, with highschool aged children, said that though they thought they had a good marriage there are now some issues they have worked through that were just "sitting there" and there are things that they can handle much better than before because the course gave them new tools to talk and work through issues.

Susan

Excitement of Emerging Bible Studies

One of our main tasks here is to support and encourage Bibles Studies in African Independent Churches (AICs). Recently we've had a lot of requests to begin Bible Studies in new areas. Susan visited a church here in Gaborone to invite them to attend a Bible Study in a near by community. A week later they called back and said they had about 15 people interested in a study and want to have one at their church! They are now running into scheduling difficulties but hopefully soon they will find a time to start. Glyn is working with the churches in the village of Pitseng to begin a class there. This is the village that the Bluffton University Student group connect with and has a historical contact with the Mennonites. And the church leaders in the town of Selebi Phikwe have also asked about the possibility of starting classes there again. Former AIMM Mission workers lived in this town and led classes there. And there are other possibilities that we continue to work with. We know that these Bible Studies make a difference in the lives of individuals and the quality of the teaching during worship times in the churches.



Family:

We had an amazing vacation in Namibia in August. This is the longest no work just the four of us vacation since we came to Botswana! We put a lot of km's on our car but the ocean, the sand and the very different feel of the national parks there was well worth it. We'll let the pictures speak for themselves. (See our web site for more pics)



The last week of the school holidays Glyn and I quickly got immersed in work again while the girls caught up with friends. Maeyken participated in the leadership training programme for King's Camps, a Christian sports based ministry. Adriaena attended a science camp and got invited to be part of a Hip Hop Dance at a local music festival. The return to "real life" and a more predictable schedule happened on Tuesday, September 2nd when the girls returned to school for the last term of this school year.

Adriaena is currently on a school trip at an outdoor education camp in South Africa. It is an exciting week of new adventures and challenges for all of the children.

Meanwhile, David and Edith Bachmann from Zurich, Switzerland are here for about a week visiting us. Edith is the daughter of our good friends David and Ruth Wiens from Morden, Manitoba. They are on their way to a short term mission adventure in Mozambique and Tanzania.

Upcoming Events

Oct 17-20 Susan and Glyn to Matsiloje (near Francistown) to meet with leaders of the Spiritual Healing Church and have a team meeting with Melanie

October 24-27 Glyn to Selebi Phikwe to meet with AIC leaders to explore possibilities for ministry

October 28-30 Dan and Yvonne Nighswander (Witness workers in South Africa) to visit



David and Edith Bachmann with Patience at her tuck shop

Contact us

Mail us at:
Box 33, Gaborone,
Botswana

Phone us at:
Botswana: 267-390-5554
(Just remember that we are 6 hours
earlier than Ontario!)

Skype at: susanglyn

Our web site: which includes
pictures and previous newsletters:
www.susanglyn.org

There have been some issues with
our blog since the web site was
relocated. We are working on it and
you should be able to check it out
soon at: www.susanglyn.org/botswana/



Witness

*We welcome your
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these to:*

*Mennonite Church Canada WITNESS
600 Shaftesbury Blvd
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Please Thank God for...

... **safety** for us as we travel for work and for pleasure. Distances are great here and accidents are common.

... **the couples that participated in the Marriage Course** who all responded enthusiastically on the last night to the question "Has this made a difference in your marriage?"!

... **the last term of school** this year for the girls. We are thankful that both girls enjoy their schools and for the various opportunities the schools provide for them.

We ask you to pray for...

... **wise discernment for Melanie** as she works at her role of encourager and mentor to the leaders and youth at the Centre in Francistown. Pray also that they youth will be able to keep up an enthusiastic energy level as they take the message of abstinence and HIV information to the local schools.

... **the new classes that are emerging.** Pray for us that we may be able to respond to all of the locations interested in starting classes in a timely fashion. Specifically: Pitseng, Selebi Phikwe, Gabane, Odi, and Old Naledi (Gaborone).

... **the unrest in the countries around Botswana.** Continue to pray for the needs of the various countries that make up Southern Africa. The recent forced resignation of South Africa's president as well as the unravelling of the deal made by the political parties in Zimbabwe leave much room for concern.