

# The Troesters in Mozambique

## February 2010

Dear Friends,

We have declared 2010 - the YEAR OF GROWTH. May we be found faithful to take steps of growth in our personal lives, so that we can be more effective in bringing God's hope to others.

**Goals and Opportunities:** One such area to help us grow in thankfulness and contentment and.... perhaps patience is the daily need for water and the shortage of it. Our city has a wonderful way of rationing water; just turn it off. In the last 2 months, the water has been turned off in many areas of the city. Some of our church folks stand in long lines at water sources, hoping to get water to carry home during the two hours in the morning that the water is turned on. At times they go home without it. We have the resources to buy water at a greatly inflated price from companies that deliver it to our door, putting it into our reserve tanks. As a result of trying to make it stretch as long as possible and share some with our neighbors, showers are now called bucket baths and all daily water for dishes, etc. is saved to use for the toilet. As the transformer that we use for our washing machine and microwave has burned out, we are having the missionary opportunities of yester-year, washing clothes by hand and heating everything on our electric stove – when there's electricity. (Plan B is the charcoal grill.) At this moment I am typing this letter by lantern light as the power is off. The temperatures range from 80s at night to high 90s during the day, so it is wonderful to have electricity to run fans. And if you need a February thaw, come on down... we can guarantee it!

Our Christmas program was a blessing as the Mozambicans worked hard in preparation and the presentation went better than it ever had in the practices. Our average attendance is around 85 and that day we had around 150. Our church was packed with many children seated on mats on the floor. They are used to it, because that is what they do in their homes.



**Visitors:** On December 26<sup>th</sup>, our son, Nathan, arrived for a 20 day visit. It was great to get caught up and to have him see life and ministry in Mozambique. Then on December 27<sup>th</sup> three Brazilian young men (Weslei, Reginaldo and Fábio) from Hope Baptist in São Paulo arrived ready to experience the mission field. They came prepared to preach, teach, evangelize, do sports ministry, and a full-blown Vacation Bible School in both of the churches.



They brought teaching supplies, Bibles, clown outfits and tons of candy and prizes. What a blessing! Weslei and Reginaldo were friends of Nathan's during their high school years in São Paulo... how special for them to be together again. Both of the churches profited tremendously from the visit of all of them. Some are seriously considering missions and possibly Mozambique.



**They Can Do It:** After a three month furlough to Brazil, Pastor Divino and his family are back. On Sunday the Mozambican believers put together a special “Welcome Back” service and meal. All of the songs were sung in Shangana and Apólito, a faithful young man, gave the message in Shangana and Fernando translated it into Portuguese. The Mozambicans were challenged to evangelize their own people and to be faithful in the work. They loved it. Then most walked 45 minutes to the house where we ate. The 4 hours that it took to cook the meal allowed plenty of time for games and fellowship. By 5:00 p.m. the corn mush, rice, fried fish and coconut milk with ground peanut sauce was ready and you’d think it was a real Thanksgiving spread... the Mozambicans thought it was absolutely wonderful and that’s what counts! This was the first special event that they planned and paid for within their budgets at \$1.45 per person. They can do it!

It has been great to be more involved in the Bagamoyo church during Divino’s furlough. On Saturdays, two groups of us have been making evangelistic or follow-up visits. One of our visits has been with a lady that primarily speaks in Shangana, placing the responsibility on the Mozambicans to do the communicating. This has been a real stretch for them, as they speak Shangana, but struggle to read it well, making it a challenge to read the Shangana Bible. Shangana is spoken in many homes but they do everything in Portuguese in school.

**Defeat:** With the spiritual growth, we have also seen defeat. Just this past weekend we learned that the husband of one of our young couples has been unfaithful to his wife. This is going to have an immeasurable impact on our church as this has all taken place “in the front yard” of the church. Some of our folks were aware of problems but said nothing. Please pray that, in the midst of pain and shame, this man would be genuinely repentant, that we would all grow in ways that we never imagined and that in the end, God would be glorified.



**Bible Studies:** Our Wednesday night studies with our neighbors continue. Our goal is to establish firm foundations for salvation. Tuesday night studies with Pedro seem to always provide an opportunity to present the gospel to someone new, whether a family member, friend or neighbor. They say that they have learned more in the Bible studies than they have their entire lives in their church. Pray that they would see the need to get involved in a church that teaches the truths of the Bible.

Joanie continues to work with the ladies of both churches and is teaching English on Saturdays at Bagamoyo, and at our home during the week. It is going to be interesting to see how we can use this to build bridges and evangelize more of our neighborhood. The doors are wide open.

Thank you one and all for holding us up in the work here in Mozambique.

By His grace,

*Joel and Joanie Troester*