

Prayer Points

May 2007

By Charles Woodrow

Last month we especially sought prayer that we could get the contracts and work schedules for our seven employees squared away with the local labor department and social security administration. After almost six months of meetings that seemed to be going nowhere, all our details were finally approved the first few days of May and for two weeks now we have enjoyed the "elite" status of being a totally legal Mozambican employer, bureaucratically "faultless." The experience has caused me to reflect on how grateful I should be that the way to heaven is so easy by comparison. What if God had given salvation into the hands of our local labor department for administration!

In the church work, we are encouraged with progress in the evangelistic soccer ministry. Juvencio, the young man who is teaching the Bible stories each week, is gaining confidence and is enthused by the interest the participants are showing. Pray that this soccer ministry would bring good results both for Juvencio and the players from our neighborhood.

Please pray for Lucas, one of our long-time church members and usually faithful servant of Christ, who has been struggling for months now with besetting sin that has hurt his testimony to his unsaved children and his Muslim wife, who in desperation was looking for an opportunity to leave him. We discovered the situation two weeks ago by a fluke "coincidence." The next week the three church leaders came to his home to sternly admonish him and begin a program of weekly "spot" visitations to check up on his compliance with our counsel. As we would have expected from the old Lucas, his response was one of relief and thankfulness for the help he knew he needed rather than irritation at our meddling. The greater surprise came the following Sunday when his Muslim wife, Isabel, walked into our church service fifteen minutes after her husband and children had already arrived. Apart from the day her husband sought to consecrate their common law marriage by making Christian vows to her before God and in the presence of our congregation, this was the only time in eight years that she has come to one of our services. While talking to Lucas the leaders had told her that she needed to stop resisting the Lord if she hoped to have His blessing upon her marriage and home, which was clearly needed. Pray that, as happened with the young woman Maria who was mentioned in our report last month, this time of stumbling may actually be used of God to draw not only Lucas closer to Himself, but even save his wife Isabel in the process.

Speaking of Maria, her deep gratitude to God for His faithful dealing with her remains evident. She has been enthusiastically witnessing to her neighbors and for the past two Sundays has brought a Muslim friend, Sara, to our services. Pray that Maria would continue to shine for the Lord and that through her Sara might also come to know Christ.

The bookshop has been reopened for over a month now and all seems to be going smoothly under Salome Van Niekerk's direction. As has been often mentioned, ours is the only Christian bookstore we know of in northern Mozambique. The next nearest shop is 1300 miles away in the capital. Though we would like to see other bookstores operating, we are grateful to be the gatekeepers for virtually all the Christian literature coming into Mozambique. Eighteen months ago the owner of our coveted location on the main street of downtown Nampula said he needed to sell the property and if we did not buy it he would terminate our lease. He agreed to give us a year to raise funds, then extended that deadline six months ago. Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto has been trying to supply the \$35,000 he has stipulated by June. Though they are still well short, there is the possibility that a second donor church may cover most of the difference. Please pray that God would use these financial realities to direct as we seek His guidance for the book shop.

Please continue to pray for the funding we need for the hospital. We hope to start building the maintenance shop next October.

The family continues well and busy with home school and many youth activities for the kids, both with our church plant and through the missionary youth fellowship. Please continue to pray for the Land Rover we are seeking to purchase. We have found a modified version in England that we would like to buy, but there are still details to be worked out that may render that purchase impossible.

Until next month:

Charles