

## **Report on some of the visits to Probationers and Students of the UPCSA 2012**

Part of the Ministry Secretary's responsibility of oversight over Probationers is expressed in him going to meet with Probationers and Students and the communities where they reside.

### **Probationer Steven Seoe**

Steven was placed in Frankfort by the Free State Presbytery in January 2012. He is greatly appreciated by the Elders and Congregants for his love for them and the wider community. He is also well appreciated for his well-prepared sermons and for his ability to keep communication channels open with all concerned. As a result of the good example he has set, the Presbytery is asking for the appointment of more Probationers to their Presbytery for the years ahead. The Elders state that since Steven's arrival the reputation of the UPCSA in the community has greatly improved. Steven's wife Dieketseng, used to have a supervisory role at a textile factory in Qwaqwa, but since their placement at Frankfort she has been out of formal work. She is however, planning to put her sewing skills to good use, once their post probation future, looks more secure.

The Elders are proud of the 100 year old history of their small church and will endeavor to do all they can for Steven and his family to stay on and continue the good work that they see starting to take shape.



Steven has his hands full with three outstations also under his care. His present challenge is to obtain enough copies of the Manual of Faith and Order for all Elders and Board members and to conduct Manual workshops so that church matters can be conducted in a transparent way by all.

Steven (holding his child) & his wife Dieketseng at his right, together with Elders and Deacons of Frankfort

### **Probationer Nigel Chikanya**

Nigel was placed by the Tshwane Presbytery at the Rustenburg Congregation with added responsibilities at St Columbas in Pretoria and Khayakulu (near Sun City). The result is that Nigel is benefitting from a unique blend of first to third world experience. This wide experience should equip him well for ministry anywhere in the UPCSA. Congregants have testified that his preaching reflects his passion for God's Word. Nigel is also enthusiastic and has had a big impact on the church through his work in the Sunday School and Youth Group. His illustrations and children's addresses have made a big impact on the adults in the church. His emphasis for the children to learn memory verses has contributed to the elevation of God's Word to everyday discussions in the family homes. Nigel's young wife, Rufaro is likewise being groomed into the responsibilities and roles of a minister's wife.



Rev Gary Sinclair who shares Nigel's supervision has also been a source of great support and wisdom.

Nigel caught sitting in the chair of the Constitutional Court Chief Justice during Probation.

### **United Theological College (Harare)**

There are presently 8 Ministry Students at the United Theological College. On the 26<sup>th</sup> Sept 2012 the Ministry Secretary was able to spend a short but valuable 1.5hrs with them. Various aspects of UPCSA Polity and some areas of priority in the ministry were discussed. The Ministry Secretary was given the mid-year results of the UPCSA students. These results proved to be most satisfying. Those with the responsibility and oversight over the College have on a number of occasions shared with the Ministry Secretary that UPCSA students set a high standard and have a very good reputation at the College.

A valuable meeting with the Principal of the College, Dr Mpofu was also held. Dr Mpofu explained the latest developments concerning the transfer of the College Property into the name of the College. Some



important documents which had been outstanding had finally been found and discussions with attorneys and Land Officials seemed to indicate that the process of registering the land in the name of the College would be able to move forward. A tentative date for the end of 2012 was mentioned. The registering of the property in the name of the College would be very beneficial for 2 reasons: Firstly, it would mean that any investment by the Sedibeng Trust for the upgrading of Cottages or development of the premises would be made on a property partly owned by the UPCSA (as a Partner Church). Secondly, it would enable the College to have its BTh programme formally recognized. This recognition is presently hampered because the Dept. of Education of Zimbabwe does not wish to grant such high recognition to a College that does not even own the land on which it operates.

Andrew Makunda & his wife Tendai, senior student at UTC

## Probationer Kurauone Mutimwii

After spending time with the Students, Rev Mushayavanhu then drove the Ministry Secretary to Masvingo in order to have an onsite experience of Kurauone Mutimwii's performance and maturity as a Probationer. The Ministry Secretary was kindly hosted in the home of the Probationer and his family. A valuable time was spent in private with the Probationer discussing the issues raised in his Probationer's Report. Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> Sept. was spent meeting with members of the Session and Board of Management, without the presence of the Probationer. The meeting proved to be most valuable with franc discussions on the future and viability of the congregation. It is most gratifying to note that Rev Jennifer Shamu-



Handitye, who is both the Supervisor and Interim Moderator had taken the time and trouble to drive from Gweru to Masvingo. Likewise the presence of the Ministry Convener of the Presbytery (Rev Mushayavanhu) also proved to be very helpful. All participants in these discussions voiced their appreciation for the hard work and dedicated commitment of the Probationer. All indications point to the Probationer being "Called" to the Masvingo Congregation once the Ministry Certificate has been issued.

Rev David & Pauline Mushayavanhu (front), Kuruaone & Nancy (back)

On Thursday evening, the Ministry Secretary was privileged to accompany the Kuruaone and his family to the inaugural evening of what was to become a revival weekend at one of the rural outstation, Zimuto. The Evangelist Austin, was on hand to coordinate the outreach while Kuruaone and his wife Nancy led the singing from the keyboard and with microphones, deep into the bush-veld night. A generator, which provided light and powered the sound equipment, purred quietly in the background.



Kuruaone making final arrangements with Austin at Zimuto



Animated singing deep into the night.

## Probationer Anna Banda

Early morning Friday 28<sup>th</sup> Sept. saw the beginning of a long trip back from Masvingo to Harare and from Harare to Mhangura (North West Zimbabwe). While in Harare the Ministry Secretary was able to spend some brief quality time with Rev Max Chigwida whose final retirement from City Church and thanksgiving Service would be held 2 days later, 30<sup>th</sup> Sept. Max explained about the Ecumenical Peace-building and Reconciliation Trust (EPART) he would be involved with for the foreseeable future.

Thereafter, under the care and driving skills of Rev Garikai Mufanebadza, the MS was taken to the north western ex-mining town of Mhangura, where Anna Banda is doing her probation. We arrived in the late afternoon and the MS was kindly received into the home of Anna and her husband Moven. The town of Mhangura was once a flourishing little country town where a small but stable community of mining people resided. However, in 2001 the requirements placed on the mine by the government resulted in the mine being seen as no longer profitable and consequently all mining operations were closed down. This resulted in the virtual collapse of the regional economy which is in turn reflected in the extremely low income generated by the congregation.



The M. S. with Probationer Anna Banda in Mhangura (N. W. Zimbabwe)

The meeting with Elders and Board members on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. confirmed the hard work and great appreciation for the Probationer. As the Probationer is held in high esteem by many of the residents and other denominations of Mhangura, she has already been elected as Chairperson of the Ministers' Fraternal. The one issue that clouds the desire of the community for Anna to stay on is the congregation's inability to offer any form of competitive/reasonable stipend. As Anna would be keen to stay on at Mhangura, the Interim Moderator and Presbytery of Zimbabwe are urged to try to find some way of supplementing the income of the minister, and of empowering the congregants to not succumb to a feeling of helplessness. The young people of the congregation are positive and have been examining ways in which they too can embark on fund raising programmes. The "Call" of God's people is certainly present but this is a case where God's Call appears to be determined by finances.



The M.S. meeting with Elders & Board members of Mhangura

The Ministry Secretary was able to stay on until Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> Sept and attended the morning service in the beautiful chapel built under the supervision of Rev Randall Bush. The service was sensitively led by and enthusiastic "young" Elder. Anna Banda preached a well prepared sermon and Rev Garikai Mufanebadza (from Chinoyi) conducted the Communion part of the Service. The Ministry Secretary was also given time to address the congregation on the responsibilities of the Ministry Committee and on the priorities of the Ministry. The Ministry Secretary was safely returned to Harare where he was able to have a brief but valuable meeting with Anna's Supervisor, Rev Tinashe Chemvumi. While in Harare and prior to being taken to the airport, the Ministry Secretary was privileged to attend the thanks giving and farewell reception hosted by City Church for the retirement of Rev Max Chigwida and his wife Judy.

Eddie Germiquet (Ministry Secretary)