

We are in a lull. It is so rare that I can't remember when last we experienced this, if ever. The lull does not mean that we are lacking things to do. Are you kidding?! It's that my brain finally registered the pause and went into shock. I'll try to coax a few cerebral cells into one spot and give you some updates.

WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE WE: We are NOT in Cape Town this year. The Lord has provided for EBC a maintenance man and a crew of students who are able to address their current needs. YES! We miss and love them, but feel delightful praise that God has supplied! Please pray for the **sale of our car down there**. We need the funds up here for our next bush-mobile! We'll probably wait now until after furlough, as storage becomes an issue when we are out of country.

GREAT BEGINNINGS: We brought in the new year with some sweet fellowship. Salvation Baptist hosted two sister churches for a day of singing and spiritual festivities. The village church (40+) arrived in an "African-pack" truck an hour and a half past our starting time (Don't call this late in Africa; call it "delayed on-time" 😊). The other church arrived in four stages 😊 via their pastor's van. Excitement was genuine at Salvation Baptist, as hosting this was a huge step for our little congregation. Jim had challenged them to prepare by faith and to give by faith so that we could feed everyone. Between the three choirs and the congregations, we had around 180 present. The Lord was worshipped corporately and with unity. The pastors expressed sincere enjoyment and appreciation. It encouraged our church to be preparing for our next event—a **family conference the end of March**. We'll be asking your prayers as we prepare NOW for that.

HOLY WARS: We've been having several Bible studies with the teens, a new couple, and the women of the church. The Word has a way of bringing to light things which have been hidden. While teaching John 5, a rather loud dispute surfaced on what it means for Jesus to be equal with God. It has been a most interesting and challenging investigation for the teens, and most revealing. These things are spiritually discerned, and so the Spirit must Himself be the real teacher from within the heart. We battle with the Sword for the truth to be securely grounded. Happily, MOST have now discovered Christ's deity. One teen did profess Christ as Savior. Pray for "M". Jim and Arthur have been spending time with a new couple on Saturdays, but they have been long-influenced by a cult group that denies the deity and equality of Christ the Son. Please pray for Gibson and Astrida. They are in a battle for truth, the outcome of which has yet to be determined. Please also pray for spiritual vigilance at the church as well. Some people have relaxed their guard duty, flirting with sin and sleeping through spiritual take-overs. They lose. We lose.

TIME CRUNCH: We are also in a battle with time. This lull is welcome, but certainly short lived. Our seven-month furlough is just four months away, and there is too much to address before coming home.

Pastor is helping us determine where to put our energies before our departure. We have a builder coming out to help us with our first construction project, whether that is in the bush or on the EBMZ headquarters at Salvation Baptist.

These rainy months are critical for helping Salvation Baptist when we cannot get into the bush work. Please pray that God will prepare us and the people in both Kamunza and Nambaaza for our separation. Jim and Arthur are working on an outreach plan for the community (including two new neighborhoods springing up around us) and further discipleship in the church family. Arthur is leading a young-men's study on "Christian Manhood" and leadership. Please pray for committed laborers and leaders, and for a revived spirit among some ho-hummers who attend.

ON OUR TOES: We are on our tip-toes, looking eagerly toward furlough, family, friends, and our partnering churches. Jim is sending pastors a request for open dates to present the ministry. Furlough WILL keep us on our toes. We have more than we can handle –with me starting the next book, church reporting, and family events (at least one wedding, two graduations, and time to hang out with our kids and extended families.) I was wondering if I should mention that we might not want to go CAMPING on furlough. Naw! I won't mention that. We might get homesick for the bush. Just don't take us to one with pit latrines.

I feel like this is such a lah-lah letter. That happens in a lull. 😊 We are happy. We are somewhat healthy. Jim's shoulder is ok, but just not "normal" in its function yet. He thinks its healing, but it may need further treatment/examination when we return to the States. We are walking close to the Lord and loving our days here. We're so grateful for effective prayers and for the many investments you have made in the Lord's work here! It's exciting! Thanks for partnering with us, and thanks for praying "lull-less-ly"

We love you in Christ,

Jim and Rachel

ps. After getting home from town, THINKING I had sent this, we discovered that it went to "drafts" instead of the outbox. I really AM in a lull! Sorry for the delay.

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