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This edition of the newsletter has an interesting variety of news and prayer material:

1. Newsletter from Brackenhurst Baptist Church, Alberton South Africa
2. Prayer request received from Steve Whitaker
3. Two new websites.

1. Newsletter from Brackenhurst Baptist Church, Alberton South Africa

Leadership

The new year has brought some changes to the eldership of BBC as Gary van den Heuvel made the decision to cease with his vocational eldership and to join his father in a family business. The church has greatly appreciated his integrity as he came to the conclusion that the pastorate was not his calling. He and his family remain actively involved in the life and ministry of the church and we look forward to the ways that God will use him in his newfound vocation.

Francois Koch has resumed his duties as an elder now that he has returned from the mission field. His position is non-vocational and he is waiting on the Lord for direction concerning future ministry. As much as we selfishly desire to hang on to him, we have a greater desire for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom and thus we anticipate that one day he may be called to strengthen the Body of Christ elsewhere. He appreciates the prayers of God's people with regard to this.

Preaching

The Lord has encouraged us as a church as we have been 're-discovering' the glory of the gospel. Doug has been preaching a series from Matthew 1:21 on, "He shall save His people from their sins." There seems to be a new appreciation for what Jesus has done, is doing and will do for His people. Sunday morning continues to be an exposition of the book of Genesis. As the church journeys through the story of Joseph there appears to be an increased sensitivity to our own 'hidden sins' and a joy at finding forgiveness as they are exposed.

Christo is doing a series on Wednesday nights entitle '10 Crucial Doctrines of the Christian Faith.' It is very meaty content which has been of great benefit to the congregation.

Membership

For the first time, the membership has recently exceeded 200 and we are encouraged by the many new visitors that are attending with a view to joining the church. We are currently looking into the possibility of expanding the size of our auditorium due to space problems and we are grateful for the problem! We continue to work at helping one another to see the responsibilities that attend church membership. One of the significant areas of growth has been regarding young adults. The Lord has blessed us with several young adults who are keen to grow in Christ and to serve in the church. Christo has been encouraged as he is shepherding many of them. He is excited about the prospects of many of these young adults becoming 'young marrieds!'

Missions

The church was shocked by the unjust deportation of the Koch family from their sphere of ministry in North Africa. After many years of praying, planning and the investment of much money, the doors closed. Though we don't understand the providence behind it, we do trust the Lord in it. The Franks and Swanepoel families continue to labour fruitfully (and at times frustratingly!) in India. The Lord has given them many opportunities and He has also allowed many adversaries for their good and for His glory.

Our World Outreach Celebration this year will be held from 5-9 March and at about the same time we will also be hosting the Spurgeon Fraternal. We anticipate a great time of fellowship and mutual encouragement in the Great Commission. Jeff Gage, Ronald Kalifungwa and Joachim Rieck will be our keynote speakers for the evening meetings of the conference.

SGTS and Shepherds School

For many years our church has sought to do 'in house' training of those who desire a more formal biblical education. This year we are thrilled that we are able to do so in conjunction with Sovereign Grace Theological Seminary. We currently have eight students registered. We are finding that the material is excellent and that the mentoring opportunity within our church is of great benefit. We are grateful to God for this opportunity to teach excellent material and to invest our time in training leaders right here at 'at home.'

2. Prayer request received from Steve Whitaker

Steve, an Associate Member of Sola 5 and pastor at Mbombela RBC (a church planted by Antipas Reformed Baptist Church, Pretoria SA) wrote by e-mail: *"We at Mbombela have a prayer request for the E-newsletter. Our church, the Mbombela Reformed Baptist Church here in Nelspruit have by Our Lord's provision been given a donation to buy or build our own church. This is a wonderful gift from the Lord and we thank the person for their obedience to God in supplying these funds. Therefore we would like to ask for prayer for the Lord to make available to us where He wants His church to be here in Nelspruit and for Him to provide the land if He wants us to build our own church. The Lord has really blessed us in the church and we give Him all the glory for His wonderful provision and grace to us. Please help us to realise Our Lord's provision as to where we can move to that He may build His church."*

3. Two new websites

Eastside Baptist Church, Windhoek Namibia

Joachim Rieck earlier this week informed us that Eastside now has a new website. Should you be interested, click on www.eastsidebaptist.co.cc and enjoy!

African Pastors' Conference Website

Responding to a request by Irving Steggles, pastor at Birchleigh Baptist Church in Kempton Park South Africa, the information below is made available to E-newsletter readers:

The purpose of the African Pastors' Conferences (APC) is to supply some training, books and support for mainly black pastors who have not had the privilege of the training received by some of their white counterparts. The website (www.africanpastorsconference.com) has been set up to provide information and resources related to the Conferences. Downloadable addresses (in audio format) from the recent Pretoria Conference (held at Ora et Labora) are available.

General and specific reports have been written, accessible via the links on the website:

- About the APC To-Date (February 2008)
- News From the Bulawayo, Ora et Labora, Mseleni, Port Shepstone and Welkom Conferences.

- Information about the speakers at the recent conferences.

The following resources are also available (just follow the links on the website):

Blog	Access the latest news, sermons and resources.
Sermons	View the MP3 archive of conference messages.
E-mail subscription	Get the latest APC blog updates delivered to your email address (already 10 pastors are subscribed to the email distribution list).
RSS Feed	Used to subscribe to the Blog RSS feed in a feed reader (Google Reader is excellent)

For any interested in further information, or enrolling for a future Conference, please contact:

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