



## Southern Africa Literature Trust

### **THANK YOU!**

It is now 4 months since SOUTHERN AFRICA LITERATURE TRUST (SALT) was incorporated, and we have been busy making plans for the future of the work which SALT will undertake, Lord willing.

We have also recently taken occupation of a small office and store which will serve as our receiving depot for Northern Ireland. The premises had lain vacant for a long time after having been vandalised, and needed a lot of work done to make it suitable for our use. Gail and Stephen (Harper) have been busy with that since early New Year, and thankfully the work is nearly done. The office will not be permanently manned, but you would be welcome to drop in for a coffee if you're passing by and find us in. The address is at the foot of this letter.

Stephen & Gail visited Malawi in December 2018, mainly to finally vacate their rented home in Thondwe, having received notice from their landlord a few months earlier. However, this also gave opportunity to make progress in some areas which we expect will prove very important in the development of the work:

#### 1. Land / Building Project

We firmly believe we can see the Lord's hand in having to quit the rented property in Thondwe. This has not only been the Harper's home for almost 13 years, but has been the base for much of the literature operations in Malawi.

This ministry had already begun to outgrow the facilities at Thondwe, and we believe it may now be the Lord's time to make plans to put the work on a more stable footing for the future, if the Lord has not come.

We need more suitable accommodation for visiting Gospel Outreach teams and facilities for Bible teaching conferences, and more suitable storage and administration premises to allow the various aspects of the work to grow as we would like. With the price of land in Malawi starting to rise as development space becomes more scarce, it seems like an opportunity not to miss.

Gail and Stephen spent some time searching for potentially suitable sites and we would value your prayers that we will be guided in this important step.

#### 2. Annual Gospel Calendar Distribution

Historically, Stephen & Gail have taken full responsibility for the various aspects of the literature publishing ministry, but as this grows we feel it is appropriate to bring it under the auspices of SALT. We trust that this will ensure the long-term viability and progress of the publishing work.

For 2019 we further increased the circulation of our Gospel Calendars to 350,000, an increase of almost 50% on 2018, and during their visit, Stephen and Gail were able to get the

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distribution underway. We would like to continue to increase the circulation of Gospel calendars, along with Gospel tracts, Seed Sower texts and similar literature.

### 3. Prison Work

We are continuing to build an excellent relationship with the Malawi Prisons Service management and chaplaincy teams.

A very useful meeting with the Chaplain General and Education Co-ordinators revealed a very acute shortage of resources within the 17 Prison Reform Schools. Lack of funding means that these are run by volunteer inmates, rather than employed teachers, and are desperately short of basic teaching and learning materials, such as text-books, exercise books and writing materials etc.

We see an opportunity to help with these important materials, not only to help rehabilitate the prison population through education, but also as a great complement to the Bible Study Courses which we aim to provide throughout the prison network. Since returning to the UK we have been able to purchase some text books for the Reform School in Zomba prison, and have secured a donation of others (old curriculum) from the publisher.

We are also hoping to print several thousand Exercise Books (with a short Gospel message), some John 3:16 pens (Chichewa language) and a number of scientific calculators.

During a recent visit to HMP Durham with fellow-trustee, Jim McMaster (who has volunteered as a Chaplain there for over 20 years), Stephen was introduced to some of the senior prison management, who have been very supportive of Bro. Jim's involvement with the Malawi prisons. A very useful meeting revealed a lot of good will on their part, and this extra link will doubtless prove valuable in building the relationship in Malawi.

God willing, Stephen and Jim return to Malawi on 12 February. They hope to have further discussions with the relevant parties about how to maximise the opportunities to spread the Gospel within the prison network, as well as trying to make progress regarding obtaining development land.

We are so pleased that the program to assemble hygiene packs for the prisoners is starting to gather momentum. A number of assemblies have already begun packing, or will do shortly, and we are starting to develop a much clearer picture of how this will operate. If you would like further information, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We plan to update our website shortly to give the latest information.

Finally, very many thanks for your prayerful and practical support of the work. We have every confidence that the Lord takes note of every sacrifice of time, energy and financial resources and will recompense in due time. For our part, it would be impossible to continue in this work without your support, and to that end we say a hearty "thank you".

Yours,

SOUTHERN AFRICA LITERATURE TRUST

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Please visit our website for latest news, or to sign up for regular updates on the work of SALT:

[www.southernafricaliteraturetrust.com](http://www.southernafricaliteraturetrust.com)