



TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY

The official publication of Mponela Reformed Church

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END OF THE YEAR MESSAGE

Written by JJ Matandika

Today is December 26, 2020. This week has been one of the busiest this year. Before I share my ministry plans for the year 2021, I would like to thank the Lord for sustaining me, my family and ministry commitments in the midst of a pandemic and limited financial resources. The Lord has been so good. Psalm 124 has been so dear to my heart as I reflected on what transpired this year. If the Lord was not on our side, we could have been utterly doomed. Indeed "our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

I would also like to thank family and friends for standing with me. When waves threatened my family was there for me. I am also very thankful for friends near and far who prayed for us and supported us at our point of greatest need. The list of names would be endless but thank you. May the Lord bless you all!

"...the virgin birth is posted on guard at the door of the mystery of Christmas; and none of us must think of hurrying past it. It stands on the threshold of the New Testament, blatantly supernatural, defying our rationalism, informing us that all that follows belongs to the same order as itself and that if we find it offensive there is no point in proceeding further."

--Donald Macleod

2020 ADVENT PREACHING SERIES

Written by JJ
Matandika

From Sunday, December 20 I embarked on an advent series focusing on the main events surrounding the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I started by looking at the genealogy of Christ from the gospel according to Matthew 1:1-17. Matthew spells out from the beginning the identity of the Lord Jesus Christ and what He came to do, to save sinners.

Then we looked at the birth of John the Baptizer, the forerunner sent to prepare the way of the Lord.

Then we looked at the virgin birth. The announcement of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ to Mary shocked her to the extent that she wondered how this would come about. The incarnation is one of the mysteries of the Christian faith. Without the virgin birth we don't have a Savior and the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ are equally pointless. Questioning the virgin birth and supernatural elements of Christian is one of the greatest challenges of Christianity in our day calling us to be more prepared to give an answer for the reason of our faith. The virgin birth is a miracle.

Then we looked at the birth of Christ, the adoration of the Magi, and finished with the incarnation. Jesus is fully God and fully man, the perfect mediator, High Priest, Substitute and Revealer of God's character. When we look to Christ, we behold the glory of God.

CHRISTOLOGY

ADVENT PREACHING SERIES 2020

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20 (10-11AM)

The Genealogy of Christ:
Matthew 1:1-17

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21 (4-5PM)

The Birth of the
Forerunner: Luke 1:5-25

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22, (4-5PM)

The Virgin Birth: Luke 1:26-38

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, (4-5PM)

The Birth: Luke 2:1-21

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, (4-5PM)

The Adoration of the Magi
Matthew 2:1-23

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, (9-11AM)

The Incarnation: John 1:1-18

"According to the Westminster Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, the invisible Church is to be distinguished from the visible Church. The invisible Church consists of the whole number of those who are saved; the visible Church consists of those who profess the true religion, together with their children."

--J. Gresham Machen

MINISTRY PLANS FOR 2021

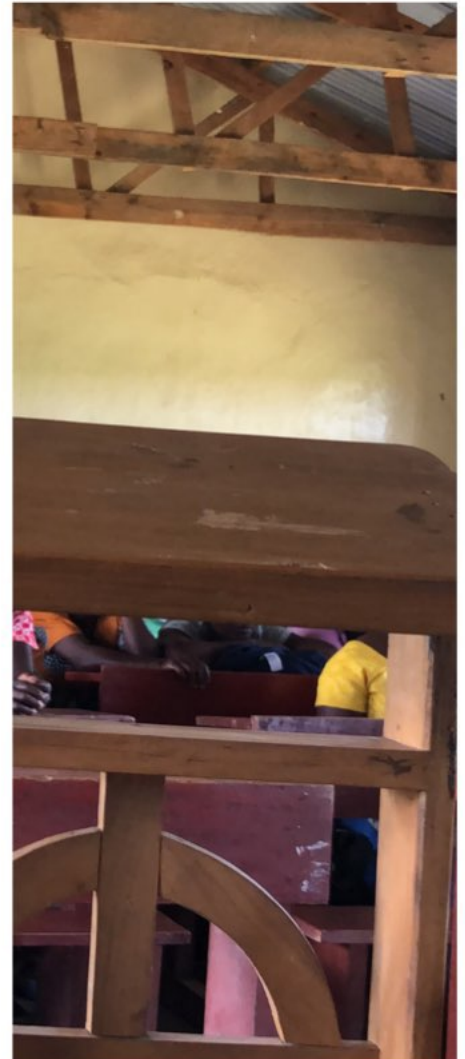
Written by JJ
Matandika

January 1, 2021 will be my starting point as I think about plans for 2021. As a way of serving the larger body of Christ, Mponela Reformed Church Resource Center will be opened to encourage Christian missions and apologetics. My office will also move from my house to this location. My library will be used to benefit people who want to come and read at this location. This will also serve as a discipleship training center where Bible stories will be read to children and Bible study lessons will be provided to the youth and adults. This will also serve as a center for our Reformed outreach ministry.

As one way of developing our ministry, I will be setting up Reformed fellowship groups in Ntchisi, Dowa and Lilongwe. The goal is to develop these Reformed fellowship groups into Reformed church plants.

I would like also to intensify training men to take leading roles in these ministry programs. I hope to add 3 more men to be trained in theology and Christian ministry. The goal is that these men can lead 3 more Reformed fellowship groups in 2022, Lord willing.

I will also be developing my media ministry, to make available our sermons and teachings on the internet. I will be exploring the possibility of radio ministry as well. All these things will depend on the amount of financial support I am able to receive from well-wishers. Please consider partnering with me.



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Ntchisi Outreach Update

BY JJ MATANDIKA

In my previous update I shared about some brothers from Kamsonga in Ntchisi who wanted to organize their fellowship group into a Reformed church plant. Discussion had been going on with the aim of understanding each other for better working relationship.

After two Sundays of gathering they decided to have a congregation meeting to decide if they were willing to accept some of the principles of a Reformed church plant. After their meeting we expected to hear back from them but we received no word.

As a result, we decided to embark on another approach in order to bring the Reformed faith to the residents of Ntchisi area. Ntchisi will be one of the areas targeted to reach out in 2021.

Several people have shared with me the need to establish a Reformed fellowship group in Ntchisi which will emphasize Bible study.

We are still expectant to hear back from the brothers in Kamsonga. I hope to travel there one of the Sundays in January as a follow-up on the developments which have transpired so far with the group.

At the end of the day, I hope and pray that we can bring discipleship training programs to the group there.

HOW SHOULD WE PLANT MORE REFORMED CHURCHES?

"Church planting can only be accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit and the means he has chosen to bless, namely his Word. The New Testament is clear that Christ uses his gospel to create his church. "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom. 10.17)." URCNA Church Planting Manual.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

“Our faith cannot be supported in a better way than by the exercise of prayer.” John Calvin

PRAISE AND PRAYER ITEMS

Written by JJ Matandika

Praise Items

Praise the Lord for taking us this far from this difficult year.

Praise the Lord for being our provider sustaining me and my family.

Praise the Lord for keeping us safe and healthy.

Prayer Items

Pray that as we enter this new year 2021, the Lord will guard my vision to see churches committed to the authority of God's Word.

Pray that the opening of the resource center at Mponela will be a blessing to the body of Christ.

Pray that strong Reformed fellowship groups will be established.

Pray that the Lord will meet my needs as I serve Him.