



**Swaziserve**

*Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and in*

*deed to those in need in southern Africa and beyond.*

## **Swaziserve Trip Report for South Africa and eSwatini, September 2021**

*But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. 2 Thess. 3:3*

My mouth is overflowing with praise! I'm trying to be succinct, but...!

### Praise Reports:

- GOD IS FAITHFUL! Several months before our trip to Africa, the Lord prepared me for the battle and encouraged me to continue to prepare for the trip in faith, though the obstacles seemed overwhelming:
  1. In July there was major political unrest in both eSwatini and South Africa.
  2. In eSwatini the borders were completely closed and the US marines were called in and a US embassy vehicle was shot at.
  3. COVID numbers increased and the lockdown level went up in South Africa (which would have prevented us from meeting with any groups).
  4. In late Aug. our flights to Africa were cancelled and I had to scramble to get new flights on a different airlines.
  5. The regulations due to COVID continued to fluctuate and we had to get a total of 3 COVID tests throughout the journey.
  6. Our scheduled driver quit a week before we were to leave.
  7. Our first flight was to Newark, NJ and Hurricane Ida caused flights to be cancelled up to 3 days prior to ours.
  8. Prior to the trip I'd been unable to wear a mask for more than a few minutes at a time. When a friend asked how I'd cope for the long flights and mandatory masking, as well as mandatory masking in both countries we were to visit, I had to reply, "I don't know, but I trust God."
  9. The US government official site listed both countries at Level 4 "Do Not Travel" because of violence and high COVID rates (US government said "no" but the King of Kings said "yes!")
  10. Two team members had to drop out a week before we were to leave.
  11. While we were there, the borders closed for one day.
  12. The day we were to get our final COVID tests to return to the US there were official reports of political protests planned in the city where we had to be tested. (At the last minute the protests were postponed for one week!)

13. Hurricane Sam was brewing right when we were supposed to cross the Atlantic back to the US.

14. I'll shout it again: GOD IS FAITHFUL! He made a way!

- Because one of our team members had to drop out, she was able to focus on rallying a prayer team of about 40 women to cover us daily in prayer!
- I had two "episodes" early on with my mask. The first was on the first flight, lasting only about 5 min. and the Lord enabled me not to fling it off my face (which would have caused a BIG problem!). The second one was very intense, in an airport, and I couldn't even see clearly for a period of time, was in tears, and had trouble breathing. Margaret held my hand, prayed for me, and quoted scripture. Once I began quoting scripture with her, I had a MIRACULOUS breakthrough! Immediately the episode passed, and I had no more problems during the remaining 3 weeks!
- We were able to meet with ALL Swaziserve project partners and see firsthand that all projects are going well; it was a wonderful time of mutual encouragement with each.
- We got to meet with all 40 or so sponsored kids; all are flourishing.
- We had a delightful time with "M" from the unreached people group; he shared his testimony about Christ's transforming power in his life from a militant jihadist to a Wycliffe Bible translator! We were also blessed to get to spend time with his beautiful wife and infant daughter, and others who are ministering in the island nation of "C." We had good-natured arguments over who was more blessed with our fellowship, them or us!
- Margaret and I got to teach on lamenting, "Be Still," our eternal inheritance, Psalm 32, and Psalm 33 in nine different communities.
- We got to see the new orphanage for the first time. Edith is doing a remarkable job. All the kids are healthy and happy. The pig, chicken, and garden projects are flourishing. The kids help with these projects so are learning agricultural skills, and the products not only supply the orphanage with plentiful food, but are also sold for a profit to further benefit the kids and meet their needs.
- There was so much gratitude everywhere John G. taught CPR classes.
- We were able to supply about 250 households with the "luxuries" of oil, salt, and sugar. Margaret did a wonderful job giving a short devotional with verses concerning these three things (including the Gospel message!) to everyone to whom we provided. One feisty prayer warrior told us that the day before she'd asked God for salt for her family, and told Him she trusted Him to provide. Imagine the joy we all felt when the very next day He answered!
- We also had the joy of providing a months worth of food for two single moms in desperate straits.
- The giving wasn't just one way; we were humbled by their sacrificial gifts of meals, garden produce, a mat, handicrafts, etc.
- Three different women approached me about starting new Moms in Prayer groups (through Vimbai)! One of the above-mentioned women was from the original group at the dump. She now has a job and wants to start a new group. Another of the women is a teacher at a primary school where the problems are intense (violence, drugs, sexual abuse, fetal alcohol syndrome, to name a few--at a primary school!) and the teachers embraced MIP! Ten of them are now meeting each week to pray for the school and students.
- Maria Olivia from Maputo, Mozambique traveled to eSwatini for a day to meet with me. She's a dynamo with lots of great ideas/solid vision for growing Moms in Prayer groups in her country.
- One woman summed up the gratitude expressed by so many for the past year and a half of emergency food parcels we were blessed to provide. She simply said, "I'm here today because of you."

- We were so encouraged by the obvious spiritual growth in individuals and in groups!
- God provided us with an amazing young man as our replacement driver. His skills at driving the large shuttle over rutted dirt roads were remarkable; he's a Christian and was delighted to fellowship with us as an integral member of our team; he selflessly went way above and beyond the call of duty to help us in so many ways--protecting, interpreting, helping us shop for and distribute goods, etc. Jomo was a gift!
- Our team worked together well--not easy to be thrown together for three solid weeks, but the Holy Spirit provided the oil of unity. :) We were also able to capitalize on each others' God-given strengths, and the others were incredibly patient with my weaknesses!
- This trip was bountiful in times of spontaneous prayer for many we met along the way, ongoing discipling of ministry partners, impromptu counseling sessions as needed, etc.
- God provided bonus times of running into old friends with the joy of reuniting!
- SO much love given and received!

Prayer requests:

God bless you if you've made it this far through my lengthy praise report! I'll keep the requests short this time. :)

- Please pray for us as we process all that happened; the transition back to the US after seeing so much suffering and hardship is always abrupt and jolting. Please also pray as the other board members and I consider how God would lead us ongoing.
- Please pray for a book-signing sponsored by my church for "Refiner's Gold." God's glory!