

# *Jeff & Judy Blanton*

## *South Africa*

1 July 2017

Dear Pastors and Prayer Partners,

We sorted things in Upington. Then we gave away, threw away, sold a few things and packed up the rest to move back to Mitchells Plain. The church members and regular visitors are now under the care of John Gqoboka. We left right after Mother's Day so our last photos are of a good group of mothers smiling after church.



Back in Mitchells Plain our people have all welcomed us back. It's very easy to rejoin church family. Several people assumed that missionary, Jeff Blanton, was back to step into the position of Pastor again. We take that as a misguided compliment. Our people really do love Pastor Strafford Frantz and his wife and children.

We arrived back in time to start working on food for the Ladies Retreat. Five missionary wives, a single lady missionary and five Pastor's wives worked together on this 2 1/2 day retreat. Holly is a creative genius! The tables were beautiful. The different churches brought so many cupcakes and cookies for tea times that it's a wonder we didn't all gain weight. Sue, who was head of the kitchen last year, declared that she couldn't do as much this year and then proceeded to keep two serving tables supplied with coffee, 2 kinds of tea and jugs of hot milk for each meal and tea time! Cathy planned menus and did a **lot** of shopping. Jeff and I helped make spaghetti sauce and butternut soup ahead of time to put in the freezer. We then spent much time in the kitchen. I am so proud of Jeff. He managed to serve everyone hot spaghetti without any of it turning into mush! (In case you don't know, that is no mean feat.) Two teenage girls will surely be rewarded in Heaven for cheerfully working from morning to night in the kitchen. Their favorite words seemed to be, "can't I do that for you?" Katie Switzer came down from Upington to join our ladies at the retreat. She told me it was the best cross-cultural experience yet. The lessons may have all been in English but our ladies revert to Afrikaans for conversation! Katie got lots of practice listening and translating in her mind to keep up. She did well. When it was all over and we arrived home late Saturday afternoon, Jonathan Switzer was waiting for us with a clean house, 3 quiet children and a big pot of lamb curry and another of rice. Ruby brought home extra sets of notes for our ladies who couldn't attend so they could share in the blessing. Everyone had worked hard and the Lord blessed. There were 120 ladies from 8 different Independent Baptist churches.





Father's Day reminds us to pray for the children who don't have loving fathers. Many of our S.S. children are growing up in broken homes. Carol told us at Tuesday morning prayer time that her 7 year old granddaughter was asking so many questions about the changes that will come after you pray for forgiveness that Carol believed little Leila was ready to be saved. When it came time to pray, Leila wanted to pray for Jesus to forgive her Mama! This little girl wants her Mama to get saved. Pray that parents will get saved in South Africa.

Thank you for all your support and prayers.

Your Missionaries,

*Jeff & Judy Blanton*

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