

Second Table Ministries



“Table Talk”

Second Table Ministries Report to Partners April 2010

Hello, Friends and Partners!

The **STM** Board of Directors traveled again to South Africa February 16 to March 10 of this year. It was summer which is nicely warm but also brings some rains to otherwise parched areas. The result is a stunning physical beauty everywhere you look.

But we return there because, in contrast to this beauty, are the conditions under which most African blacks live in the townships; 80 to 90% unemployment, deep hunger, premature deaths from HIV/AIDS, crime, little sanitation or clean water, and the remnants of apartheid in their souls. We enter into these conditions to offer our help. This is when we find an emotional beauty here virtually impossible to describe. It comes from the members of the Uniting Reformed Church in South Africa (URCSA) congregations in these townships where **STM** has been at work for nearly five years. This beauty is the radiant joy and warm welcome from those we serve who are so hungry and impoverished, yet alive in the spirit of His love which they share openly and without reservation. It is remarkable!

Our travel mates included Reverends Rik and Denise Stevenson (City Hope Ministries CRC, Grand Rapids, MI), Rev. John Postuma, a retired CRC Pastor from Caledonia, Ontario, Canada (who is now on our Board of Directors!), and Eunice Hop, a retired school teacher from Baldwin, WI. One purpose for our trip was to “connect pastors and congregations in relationship and ministry with poor black and reformed churches in South Africa”. We have found that the sister church relationship between Evaton Noord (URCSA) and Seattle First CRC makes a world of difference to both communities. While the South African church so much appreciates the relationship and financial help, the Western church has much to learn about strong faith amidst adversity, the potential joyful exuberance or worship and the importance of loving personal relationships.

Another purpose of this trip was to meet each of our **STM** program pastors and their churches to determine the progress made and current needs. Driving over 3,000 miles, we worshiped in four URCSA churches (Rik preached at all four and was incredible!), had important meetings at Cape Town, Evaton Noord, Pretoria, Kgautswane and Sebokeng, and still enjoyed some “tourist” time in a game park. Following are some of the incredibly blessed results being accomplished through **STM**!

