

P.O. Box 908,
Charlestown Nevis, W.I.

Dear Friends in Christ,

December 14, 2015

Greetings in the lovely name of our wonderful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Oh give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. (Psalm 107:1)

I thank the Lord for taking me safely to and from Zimbabwe and for keeping me in good health for the six and a half months that I spent in that beautiful country. I am indeed delighted to be back home with my family and friends. I thank the Lord for the many opportunities given me to minister the Word of God and I am gratefully glad for those who responded and received the Lord. I thank the Lord for the soul winning team from Nashville Baptist Church in Gweru who spent several days going from house to house and from hut to hut giving out gospel tracts and introducing people to Jesus.

After visiting most of the homes, we invited the people to come to the first meeting at Hope Baptist Mission on July 12. On that first Sunday afternoon, twenty nine (29) people from the area came out and several of them stood up and expressed their gratitude to us for coming to their community to start a gospel mission. After the message was presented and the invitation was given, seven young men and eight young women came forward and received Jesus Christ into their lives.

After that first Sunday service, we continued going from house to house giving out gospel tracts and the attendance continued to increase. On August 9, I was given the privilege to baptize twenty three (23) of those dear people who received the Lord. Shortly after, this body of Believers was officially organized into a local church, called HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH. Let us pray that these dear brethren will grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I am gratefully glad to God for those of you who have given to the construction and the completion of House of Hope Orphanage. The Lord will certainly bless you for investing in the lives of these precious children. However, if you have never given to this project we are kindly asking you to seriously consider making a contribution towards the digging of the well which will cost US \$3000. So far, we have collected US \$700. Can you think of a better gift to give a child this Christmas than the gift of water? Apart from Salvation, the most precious gift is water, because water is life. Your contribution will be deeply appreciated.

If you wish to contact me, you may call [1-869-469-5680](tel:1-869-469-5680) (home) or [1-869-760-7297](tel:1-869-760-7297) (cell). Email address – dacostamissionary@gmail.com or pastor.dacosta@live.com. May you experience and enjoy a Blessed and Beautiful Christmas and a Bright and Bountiful New Year in Christ. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

In His Service,

Allinson & Floretta DaCosta

ZIMBABWE: THE RICHEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

The tale of one country called Zimbabwe is a fascinating one. It is a bittersweet one. There are many aspects about Zimbabwe that compel me to never cease to wonder. I guess that's why our local tourism fathers have coined a national brand that goes: "Zimbabwe, a world of wonders." What a wonder we are, indeed! Did you know that Zimbabwe is the richest country on the planet, in terms of natural resources per person? This was proven by the International Monetary Fund in its Natural Resources Per Capita Index report. Richer than America! Richer than Germany! Richer than China and South Africa. Zimbabwe is highly endowed with minerals of all manners beneath its fertile soils, as well as other natural resources. We have the largest reserves of diamonds in the world, with reports indicating that we control about 30 percent of the world's diamond reserves. We also have the largest known reserves of coal-bed methane in the region, apart from being the holders of the second largest platinum reserves in the world. Our platinum is estimated to be 2.8 billion tonnes, with an estimated extraction life of 1,167 years. Apart from the above, there are about 40 other mineral products that Zimbabwe currently produces, including gold, chromite, nickel, coal, iron ore, copper and others. I wish if the story could end just there. But there is the other side of the coin that we should flip to see. And the spectacle there is not amusing, in different facets. It is a sad narrative. Take, for instance; the poverty, income consumption and expenditure survey, which was done by the Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency in 2013. The survey revealed that 72.3 percent of Zimbabweans are poor, with poverty being most prevalent in rural areas, where 84.3 percent of people are deemed poor. The survey also highlighted that 62.6 percent of households are deemed poor, whilst 16.2 percent of them are in extreme poverty. The simultaneous presence of riches and poverty is what I find difficult to reconcile.

Richest country, yet amongst the poorest. This observation sparks inevitable curiosity to investigate this status quo. What is Zimbabwe's problem? What should we do to solve this problem? Are we willing to do that? Such Questions are being asked everyday. The day that our nation is going to effectively answer those questions is the day we are going to chase poverty right up to the colossal gates of hell. Prospects of turning around the fortunes of the country's economy are however getting more and more vivid and we should tap on them. For instance the continued warming up or the international community on the country is something to smile about. The European Union late last year removed the greater part of sanctions on Zimbabwe, which is a welcome development.

The world now sees Zimbabwe with immense hope and optimism, following the peaceful elections held in the county in 2014. What followed was a scramble by European nations and countries from other continents for investment opportunities in Zimbabwe. For the first time in a decade, the United Kingdom sent an official trade and investment delegation to Zimbabwe late last year, with the Netherlands and Russia also visiting and making huge investment commitments. Zimbabwe, last year, also signed billions of investment deals with China, whose implementation has already commenced. The time to invest in Zimbabwe is now. The beauty of Zimbabwe is not seen through the eyes of indexes such as the Global Competitiveness Report or the from the testimonies of those who have visited the country.