



SAVE OUR WORLD

A Publication of Church of God World Missions • Fall 2007

Building the Kingdom, One Brick at a Time

Like all good builders, Steve and Renee McKenzie know the importance of having a solid foundation. The name of their construction business, TIH (Trust in Him) Homes, reflects their commitment to trust God not only with their personal lives, but also with their business.

"We started TIH Homes with the idea that our homebuilding company needed to be more than just about building homes and making money," said Steve. "A pastor friend of mine called me one Saturday with a Scripture—Matthew 25:3–46, with an emphasis on 25:40. My knees buckled as I listened and knew that this was confirmation of the direction we were to head."

Using this passage of Scripture as their foundation, the McKenzies offered God the construction gifts and talents He has given them to be used for His glory. Although they see their business and ministry as one, in 2003 they established TIH Ministries, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, to ensure their business remained above reproach or question.

"In 1999–2000, we started with our single moms' ministry and with Bud's Bicycles while helping various other folk in need where we found them," said Steve. "By 2007, we had been a part of building five churches in South Africa, four homes in Mississippi [for Hurricane Katrina survivors], remodels in the local area and for a children's home in Georgia, and various other 'helps' you can read about on our Web site [www.tihhomes.com], including the construction of a house for ABC TV's 'Extreme Makeover: Home Edition.'"

"None of this has been planned beyond surrendering our gifts and talents to God and allowing Him to lead us and use us," he added.

Through their church, Mount Paran North Church of God, Steve and Renee first traveled to South Africa as part of a prayer team. While there Steve felt led to pray with Malan Moolman, a native pastor and missionary supported by Mount Paran. As he prayed, the Spirit of God fell upon them and they began to weep. Several days later, Malan told the group he had been planning to leave the ministry, but had changed his mind. He shared how God had reminded him of a vision he had had several years before.

In this vision, he was going down a staircase, but stopped on the fourth to last step. He could see light coming from several rooms at the bottom of the staircase, but was unable to move. Only when a man with dark hair put his hands on his shoulders and prayed for him was he finally able to move. He went down the last four stairs and through the open doors where people repeatedly asked him, "How can I help?" Long before Steve reluctantly agreed to go to South Africa, he was in Malan's vision.

Later, when God revealed a 10-year plan to Malan that included building 22 schools and 22 churches in South Africa, he understood why God had sent Steve 8,500 miles to pray with him. Partnering with Malan, Mount Paran and North Sewickley Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania, TIH Ministries has helped to build five churches in South Africa in the last four years and continues to work with Malan.

But it hasn't been easy.

"There is a saying: 'Salvation is free. Everything else will cost you,'" said Steve. "Money and [finding] people who will 'go' are our biggest challenges. God provides these resources regularly, but it is always a step of faith. Many times His provision comes in what we think is the last moment." In both their business and personal lives, God has rewarded these steps of faith.

"I left the U.S. with the largest bone in my foot badly broken," said Renee. "But when I stepped on the slab in Swaziland God instantly healed my foot! I worked as if nothing had happened for two weeks! I've had no problems since."

It's miracles like this and countless others that remind Steve and Renee that the God they serve is bigger than any of their problems or challenges.

"God truly cares for every detail of your life," said Steve. "He really does work everything together for your good. And that's what He's showing us in our business, in our ministry, and in our personal lives right now."

Whether it's presenting each client with a new Bible, driving people to church on Sunday or building churches in South Africa, the McKenzies strive to use every opportunity they have to share the love of Christ.

"The disciples were just ordinary men who made mistakes," said Renee. "But God used those 12 men to do extraordinary things."



For more information about the McKenzie's ministry or to volunteer to accompany one of their teams, contact them at www.tihhomes.com or (678) 331-8490.