

# South Africa



## Today in South Africa...

The South African office opened in 1961. Since that time, it has grown to six full-time employees.

The expanding media outreach has resulted in four children's animated videos—"Red Boots for Christmas," "The Puzzle Club Christmas Mystery," "The Puzzle Club Easter Adventure," and "Magic Boy's Easter"—being broadcast on national television.

Each month the office receives an average of 650 calls and letters, mostly from Bible correspondence course students. The "Real Life" correspondence course remains the most popular. A topical booklet on AIDS was developed for distribution to AIDS sufferers, their families, and the population at large in an effort to prevent further infections.

New relationships have been established with four of the five Lutheran Synods in South Africa to facilitate closer follow-up ministry for the students that are referred to Lutheran congregations.



Special workshops are held for contact persons to enable them to carry on the LHM mission of "Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church" into the broader sphere of their particular region.

The primary means of outreach are regular ads placed in the largest national daily newspaper that invite people to call in for counseling, prayer, or topical booklets. In this way, Lutherans in all of southern Africa are being

reached. The office often receives visits by Lutherans from Botswana and Malawi.

The ministry has a Web site at [www.lutheranconnections.net/southafrica/](http://www.lutheranconnections.net/southafrica/) and also uses e-mail. As the number of subscribers to the Internet increases in South Africa, the response through this media is projected to grow.

**"My aunt, who knows my desire to study the Bible, gave me your address. I have gained a lot from the course. I can say that I am changed."**

A new drama project has been launched in local schools. The pupils are invited to audition for the dramas, which are presented to the whole school. During this time, LHM material and spiritual support is made available.

Members of local Lutheran congregations volunteer to help out with the packaging of books and materials, answering telephones, and forming prayer groups.

The Lutheran churches also provide some financial support by donating funds.

## Religion in South Africa...

South Africa's Bill of Rights ensures equality of all religions. Mainline churches have experienced a drop in membership, while the African

## The Ministry...

### Office Established:

Johannesburg, 1961

### Manager:

Christel Scharlach

### Population:

42,718,530—600,000 Lutherans

### Media Outreach:

- "Real Life" BCC and follow-up
- Newspaper advertisements
- "Red Boots for Christmas," "The Puzzle Club Christmas Mystery," "The Puzzle Club Easter Adventure," and "Magic Boy's Easter" broadcast on television
- Distribution of storybook versions of both Christmas specials
- Web site at [www.lutheranconnections.net/southafrica](http://www.lutheranconnections.net/southafrica)  
E-mail at [southafrica@lutheranmedia.net](mailto:southafrica@lutheranmedia.net)

Independent Churches boast a sharp increase.

The Zionist Church is the largest denomination with about seven million members. This church, which combines Christian beliefs with ancestral worship and witchcraft, has become a societal organization even more powerful than labor unions or any other civil society.

The Lutheran Church in South Africa has declined from 949,140 members in 1970 to 660,718 in 1991.

The largest Lutheran church in the country, ELCSA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa), has an estimated membership of 500,000 members. The smallest Lutheran Church, FELSISA (Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa), has a membership of just over 3,000.

Overall, Christians account for 68 percent of the population; Muslims, 2 percent; Hindus, 1.5 percent (60 percent are Indians); and, traditional and animistic people, 28.5 percent.

The Lutheran churches in South Africa have to face the challenge of implementing a new missionary spirit, and the LHM office will assist them in this venture. Still, South African missionary enterprises to the rest of Africa have doubled over the last four years.

## The Country...

South Africa has a population of nearly 43 million people and occupies the southernmost tip of the African continent. The country ranges from the arid desert Kalahari to the tropical climate of the Natal coast; and from snow-covered mountain ranges to thousands of kilometers of sun-drenched beaches.

Apart from the export of gold and other minerals, tourism has become one of the main sources of income.

## The People...

Khoisan people, of which the migratory bushmen are descendants, were South Africa's earliest inhabitants. The Nguni tribes migrated south and entered present South Africa in the sixteenth century.

Jan van Riebeeck from the United East-India Company (Netherlands) established a base in South Africa for ocean-going ships en route to the East. With each ship the population increased, and in the early eighteenth century, a group of white Boer people trekked north to escape English colonization. Heavy clashes with the first of the Nguni people followed. The Boers subjugated the Nguni people and established republics.

In the late nineteenth century, England went to war with the Boer Republics and created a new English colony which became the Union of South Africa. Later, the Republic of South Africa was established and cut ties with England. The Apartheid era saw a rise in hatred and acrimony, which ended when the De Klerk government slashed discriminatory laws, set Nelson Mandela free from prison, and called for the first national election in 1994.

South Africa has 11 official languages. The people are 76 percent black, 13 percent white, 8.5 percent mixed and 2.5 percent Asian.

## Your Opportunities to Serve...

Pray to the Lord for He is good... We give thanks for the opportunity given to us by our heavenly Father to bring His good news of hope and salvation to the people of South Africa.

Indifference can be a powerful enemy to the work of the Lord. If we choose to do nothing, those that are without hope in their lives will not know His mercy and salvation. Through the blessed work of Lutheran Hour Ministries, we can break down the barriers of indifference.

Through your support, the ministry of South Africa can continue to reach out to

the lost souls around the world. Become a sponsor or increase your level of giving to help us continue our mission of "Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church."

## Contact Information...

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**Our world is full of people who NEED to know they are loved. Please join us in reaching out to them—with God's love.**

### How You Can Help:

**Become a sponsor and assist LHM Ministry Centers around the world. Call 1-800-944-3450 for details, or visit our Web site at [www.lhmint.org](http://www.lhmint.org).**

**For the latest listing of fact sheets for all the countries in which Lutheran Hour Ministries is carrying out its vision of "All nations, all peoples, all in Christ," visit our Web site listed above.**

**For more information, write to the Int'l Lutheran Laymen's League at 660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, St. Louis, MO 63141-8557.**

The Int'l Lutheran Laymen's League, with its outreach through Lutheran Hour Ministries, is an auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and Lutheran Church—Canada.



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