

P.O.Box 9219, Eros, Windhoek. S. W. A.

Number Eight

18th April, 1970Community of St Simon the Zealot

This started in the second half of 1969. The basic idea was that a group of young Christians should try to form a self-supporting community in Windhoek to work where formal church structures do not penetrate. After a period of initial confusion, we seem to be getting sorted out. We live in a house and sometimes have a large influx of temporary members, usually in University vacations. At the moment there are five of us -

Dave de Beer - age 22, Diocesan Secretary of the Diocese of Damaraland, (Anglican), and also a sub-deacon.

Steve Hayes - age 29, Anglican Deacon, for money he is a proof-reader and book-reviewer on the Windhoek Advertiser.

Chris Nicholson - age 25, an Advocate who has come to practise in South West Africa.

Dick Blair - age 32, construction worker on a pipeline, came from Cumberland, England, in a second-hand ambulance last year.

John Ngava - age 19, studying by correspondence for GCE O-levels.

Dave, Steve and Chris are permanent members of the community, Dick Blair is semi-permanent, while John has applied for a job which will probably take him out of Windhoek, after an unsuccessful attempt to stay on a mission station in the North East Cape.

Pink Press

This is an informal newsletter sent out by members of the community. It is sent to friends and people who ask for it. Every alternate issue is sent to a wider circle of people we think might be interested. This one is going to the wider mailing list. The next one will go to the smaller list of friends and people who reply etc.

It doesn't represent the opinions of anyone other than its writers, and is in no sense an official publication.

We send out the Pink Press because, living and working together as we do, we have a lot of similar things to write home about. So this is a way of keeping in touch with our friends. We are also in contact with groups of people in various places who are trying to do similar things, and so the Pink Press is also a medium for the exchange of news and ideas among such groups. People have written giving good ideas, and there are some elsewhere here - a discussion on attempts at community living. The Pink Press is sent out free (you don't charge your friends for letters you write to them) but donations for this, or other aspects of our work are welcome.

Visitors

April has been about our busiest month for visitors - at the beginning of the month we had 6 people, three of them on holiday from Ovamboland. Later we had Wolfgang Achtig, who comes from Austria, and is working in Cape Town. He plays the guitar very well, and we went to a joint meeting of the Congregational and Methodist youth groups in Khomasdal, and sang some modern hymns, and Peter Lamoela spoke on the use of music and dance in worship. Another visitor, who stayed a night, was Jan Matzek, a refugee

PROVINCIAL STANDING COMMITTEE

This committee meets twice a year and consists of the Bishop, one priest, and one layman from each Diocese of the Province. With Bishop Winter in the United States Dave and Fr. George Pierce from Ovamboland were the Damaraland delegates to the East London meeting.

Dave writes: This meeting was shorter by a day than the one in Johannesburg last November, and although the atmosphere was slightly freer and less internal business was dealt with (financial matters being handled in November) I still found it hard to reconcile the underlying attitudes of most of those present with what one thinks those of a similar body should be.

Perhaps it is unfair to say that their main concern seems to be with the propagation of the Church's structures; perhaps they feel just as I do, (and I am fairly strongly anarchist in this sense of the word) and have just reconciled themselves to this sort of meeting. But many do seem to take inordinate pleasure in it. Next session: Cape Town immediately before Provincial Synod in November. Let us hope that with Provincial Synod immediately after Standing Committee can lead the way to a more personalised approach to the problems and challenges facing the Christian community in this part of the world.

INTERNATIONAL TOUR NUMBER THREE

Windhoek - Johannesburg - Durban - East London - Durban - Pietermaritzburg - Johannesburg - Windhoek.

This was my itinerary for an eight day journey centred around the visit to East London for Provincial Standing Committee. Fr. George Pierce and I flew to Johannesburg where we stayed overnight with my mother and sister but managed to fit in an evening's visit to the Wits University Anglican Society. Crack of dawn next morning we flew to East London via Durban. Our luggage, however, decided to stay in Durban for another couple of hours and only reached East London late that afternoon after we had already had the first session in Committee. I stayed with the manager of one of the East London Banks and the Bishop of Lebombo (Mozambique) was also a guest. Pressure of time left little chance for sight-seeing, and what spare time there was was usefully spent establishing and re-establishing contacts with other committee members. It always seems a pity that when one has travelled so far for a meeting attended by people from all over Southern Africa not more time can be given to informal meetings where one learns so much about other people's problems. One of the most significant (for me) meetings was a long talk with a priest from Lesotho about the country's governmental problem. Not once in several hours did he refer to Chief Jcnathan by name, but always as "that man". Very indicative.

Thirty-six hours after arriving in East London I was at the airport waiting for the delayed plane to Durban. On the same flight was the Bishop of Swaziland who fell foul of the food-poisoning party earlier that evening. Having had to fight for half my luggage at Durban airport, (they wanted to send it on to Johannesburg - to make amends for the earlier slip?) I stayed the night with the Trumbull's and also saw the Ushers. Trumbulls and Ushers planning a combined invasion of Windhoek in July.... Then on to Pietermaritzburg for Ikon consultations.



INTERNATIONAL TOUR (continued)

A day and a half in Pietermaritzburg provided an opportunity of calling in on friends there, and proved, as in Johannesburg a day or so later, very valuable in keeping our links with those outside our immediate sphere open. Isolation could be a deadly factor in working in South West, which is very cut off from mainstream activity. International tours are very useful in breaking down this isolation.

Pietermaritzburg was also important because it was there that Chris Nicholson joined me on the rest of the trip back to Windhoek. Delays have kept Chris out of South West since January, but at last he has come into the Zealot ranks. He is taking appropriate action to begin practice as an advocate in Windhoek, and has immeasurably strengthened the community.

The two of us moved on to Johannesburg and spent a day rushing around to innumerable appointments, and bumping into other people on the way. All in all most rewarding, particularly as we managed to call in on three other communities in Johannesburg and just see how they moved. To those we just could not see - our apologies; will try harder next time, or better still - come and see us.

We had hoped to bring Chris dogs (a bull mastiff and an alsatian) with us, but the morning we left Johannesburg the alsatian produced nine or ten puppies, and we decided fourteen in a Volkswagen was too much.

If you begin to feel isolated in Windhoek after two or three months without moving out, you feel just as much desire to return after a week away, particularly to a community which seems to be settling down to a more thorough life.

Communal Living

We have received a number of comments on our observations of our experience of trying to live as a community. One of these came from Dr Anthony Barker, Medical Superintendent of the Charles Johnson Memorial Hospital (Anglican) at Nqutu, Zululand.

Dear Stephen,

I read your pinkpress assessment of your community, with its plea for comments by others who have thought along these lines. I am interested indeed in your life together, and am sadly aware that there will be sad disappointments in the technical "failure" of your idea. There is no necessity for a community to be lasting to be effective. Some may be shot-lived and still be meaningful. Others, like the Benedictines may survive 1200 years. There are 3 sorts of communities as I see it; PC & O ones of the monastic type, with a rule, with authority entrenched, with discipline for the family's sake. These are today deeply threatened and for the first time are in danger of losing out since rebellion against, and decay of authority is found everywhere save in the most elementary communities.

Then there are communities of work - like ours here. These are for limited duration, but can be very valuable indeed. Materialism is their main enemy - c.f. Kibbutzim; can they survive to the 3rd generation? I think not. They are great fun to live in, and create openness (as in your correspondent's letter of observation)

Third are self-conscious semi-religious communities run on humanistic lines. These are the most difficult, and the troubles you encounter are predictable. They are best when there is a leader or founder. c.f. the Bruderhof, or the Rappites in the U.S.A. When the old man dies, so does the group usually, and is often only represented by its

lunatic fringe when the best minds have left. My sister lived in such for 15 years in Sussex. Leaving was a serious business which cost lots.

So - in my poor opinion - you have chosen the hardest path of all. And I'd guess you are chary of the leader principle which alone would make life easy. I'd soberly suggest you change gear and alter your basis to a type 2 community. Thus you would eat a certain number of meals together (with grace; with formal behaviour of ending or starting the meal) You would pray together daily whenever you were together, and would have some sort of chapter once a month or so. The introduction of formalism would do away with embarrassments which probably exist.

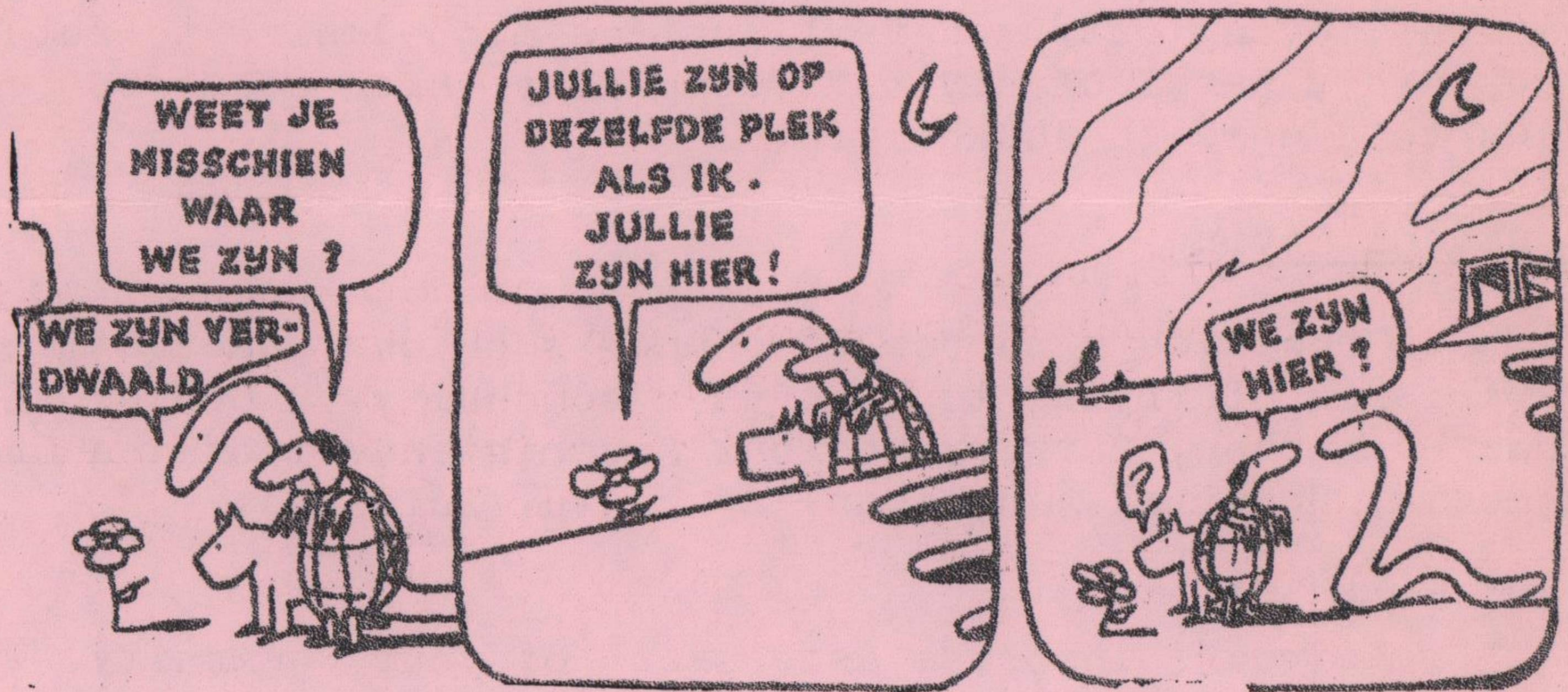
I hope this is not nonsense I write
With love in Christ

Anthony.

Steve comments . . . yes, the last paragraph does indicate the way our life together is developing. Things are very much better now than they were a month or two ago. Some problems were solved by a very simple physical alteration, such as where we put the kitchen table. Any comments from others who are living in a different type of community, or who are starting a full-scale commune. Next Pink Press we will put in some of the other comments we have had, in the hope that this exchange of views and information will be helpful.

Cosmic

As promised, we are giving news of some more Cosmic Circuit publications which we have received. Illustrations from Witzend.



Witzend : The Real Free Press Illustrated, Runstraat 31, Amsterdam, Nederland. Comics, mostly, at least Witzend, which we received, excerpts from which are scattered throughout this Pink Press.

Hapt : Flat L 42 Moore Ave., West
Howe, Bournemouth, Hants.
(Free digger magazine. Forthright
open comment on scene & society)

Other Scenes (John Wilcock ed)
Box 8, Village P.O.,
New York City 10014, U.S.A.
(Politics, poetry and pot in the
American underground tradition.
Also travel, the world scene.)

Revista-Scientifico Literaria
(Miguel de Aguilar Merlo, ed.)
Meson de Paredes 73, Madrid 12,
Spain. (Scientific & literary
review in Spanish)

Signal International (Raimo
Kaarna, ed)
Box 8150, Lahti 8, Finland.
(Personal and commercial ads,
books, films, stamps, bizarre
interests, pen friends world
wide etc. Cost - \$ 1.00 (US)
Your ad - 5¢ (US) per word.

Speaking of Herbs ! (Kenneth W. Eames, ed.) West House Cottage, Barrack
Lane, Aldwick, Bognor Regis, Sussex. (Herbal healing,
nature cures, fasting, radionics etc)



Ikon

Ikon 4 we hope will be ready at the end of the month. This issue contains
articles on . . . LSD & the search for God, Prayer, Elegy for Biafra, and
an article on church hospitals by Dr Anthony Barker (who also wrote the
letter on page 3 of this PP) also poems, short stories, letters.

Thanks to all those who subscribed after receiving the last issue of the
Pink Press. We are attaching a subscription form to this one as well, but
only for those to whom the last Pink Press (# 7) was not sent. If you have
already subscribed to Ikon, then give a gift subscription to a friend.
Take a few to sell around - we give discounts for quantities!

Theological Education We have a couple
of people who
are very interested in training for
the ministry in the African independent
churches here. We have tried to get
them enrolled in the Christian
Institute correspondence course, but
our appeals have fallen on deaf ears.
Does anyone know of any alternative,
or know anything about the CI course,
and whether it is actually running?
If you have any ideas, please let us
know about it as soon as you can, as
the people involved are very anxious to
to begin studying as soon as possible.



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Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.

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The Community of St Simon

live at - 41 Klein Windhoek Road,
Windhoek.
South West Africa.

are telephonically accessible - phone Windhoek 3607.

collect post from P.O. Box 9219,
Eros,
Windhoek.

(And in response to agitation from
some Pink Press readers, will
lobby the city council to change
Eros to Agape . . .)

DON'T send letters addressed 41 Klein Windhoek Road there is no
delivery by postman here.