Attending:

Rick Ness, Kathy Roy, Charlie Barker, Dory & Paul Dickman, Bonnie Frick-Jesteadt, Ed Jesteadt [Scribe]

3:15 – Meeting opened with prayer by Pastor Rick

Started with ‘suppah’ – cooked by Charlie – scalloped potatoes; home grown carrots; beet tops [ugh!] – plus chicken, fruit, rhubarb pie & brownies.

Rick reviewed news from SA – the Mail & Guardian – he advocates checking it periodically for South Africa news – [www.mg.co.za](http://www.mg.co.za)

Update on Tyhume Valley Gardens, etc. - Ed:

* Reviewed recent emails on progress reports from Tim Wigley, Artwell Chivhinge and Winnie on Home Gardens.
* Expressed gratitude to Rotary International who made good on their commitment of 7 wheelchairs – these have been delivered to Winnie home for distribution.
* A CD of family pictures from Rev. Luthuli that Ed was to deliver to Rev. Brendan Bass were finally delivered to him at the recent Presbytery meeting at Starks – sent note to Rev. Luthuli which he greatly appreciated.

Finance Report - Ed:

* We have $8,614.74 in the bank; $73.50 in petty cash [we will be doing some craft sales this summer of stuff brought back from SA in Sept. 2012].
* We may have to make a funds transfer in June to cover latest visits planned by Tim and Artwell. Ed will confirm final amounts from Winnie – authorized to transfer whatever was needed.

Where does the partnership go from here? A general discussion on this issue raised the following points:

* We need to keep a connection with the Macfarlan Church – at the minimum, we need to worship with them each time we visit [as we did with Rev. Tom Robinson in August 2012 as the guest preacher at the Upper Ncera Outstation church].
* Participation in the Home Garden Program is based on need, not on church affiliation. This tenant of our program was re-affirmed. The Home Garden project has a written constitution that governs how the program is implemented – [this on our website – [www.southafricapartnership.weebly.com](http://www.southafricapartnership.weebly.com)].
* There is a small but dedicated core group still interested in continuing this outreach mission in the Tyhume Valley.
* Travelling to SA is expensive – future trips should be more ‘work’ focused and less ‘tourist’ focused, and with fewer people - doing projects/work with the people - building relationships. The trips should be longer than 2 weeks. A view was put forward that it would be better to send them $3,000 than to visit – but that has to be balanced with ‘their’ joy in having frequent visits by ‘the Americans.’ It isn’t just about the money – interacting with the people is so enriching. However, that does require giving up some of our western culture comforts and accepting their hospitality graciously.

Action Plans:

* Ed to review the work that has been done on the Home Garden Project since September 2012, and develop a proposal for the next 12-month period. This will be reviewed prior to and acted upon at our next meeting.
* The uBunye Committee – a joint Boston Presbytery-PNNE committee that meets ~ 6 times a year [in Bedford, NH] – coordinates the Presbytery-to-Presbytery activities with the Amatola Presbytery of the Eastern Cape Province. Their current program is a Women’s Retreat from July 17 to Aug. 7 in 2014, whereby Boston/PNNE will send ~ 12 women to SA as the 2nd part of a women’s exchange [in 2011, ~6 women from SA came to the USA for ~ 3 weeks as part of this women’s leadership development program]. Several women from the MATE churches have expressed interest; Rick will contact the chair of the committee – Jenny Stoner – and get MATE more directly involved.
* The MATE churches do not have as strong a connection as in the past with this “Outreach Mission” work. We are active in supporting our congregations and our local communities – but not with this global focus. Developing a presentation – dare we say “a sermon” – to be shared with the MATE churches should be considered. Charlie reported he and Barbara made a presentation like this to the Leeds congregation.
* A potential 2014 MATE trip? – While he was not at the meeting, we all agreed George Hardy would be supportive. Charlie Barker is willing if it is done in the Feb – Mar time frame. [Could I add Oct-Nov as an option? Ed might have another trip in him]. Next trip would be 3-week minimum – perhaps longer. Consider the seed planted – let’s see if it grows. It would be open to anyone wanting to get in the gardens and get dirty.

Next meeting: Sunday, August 18 @ Charlie’s – starting at 2 PM. If MATE leadership cannot make that date, we will reschedule the meeting – it is essential that this MATE ministry gets reconnected to the MATE churches and receives the needed pastoral leadership.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM – with pictures taken at Charlie’s garden where the pea plants were taller than Grandma Dory!