

Zambia Newsletter

January 2005

Text Box: Zambia Newsletter

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Dear Friends,

So much has happened since our arrival in Zambia that it is impossible to share with you all that has taken place. I must begin by acknowledging that it has been a difficult few weeks for us. Not knowing all the government requirements and procedures, we have had to spend great amounts of time driving to/from various government offices to complete all the requirements required of us.

We began immediately upon our arrival to secure our work permit (which will allow us to stay in Zambia). However, there were certain documents that we needed that we did not know to bring with us (e.g. an actual diploma of my academic degrees – not a transcript but the diploma itself). Each time we fulfilled one requirement, we were then told of something else we needed. After four weeks we were finally told that our work permit had been approved, contingent on the submission of the school's registration.

Since we have not yet actually started the school, we don't have this registration. Thus, this began a whole new process of collecting all the necessary documents to submit to the Ministry of Records in Zambia (e.g. school constitution, certified copies of all the Zambian I.D's of those serving on the Mapepi School Board, police report, etc). We were told, for example, that the police report could take 3 months to get since the police have to complete an investigation. Fortunately, there is a man on the board who is a former government worker and has connections with the right people. As a result we were able to get all our paperwork done within three weeks. We have just now submitted these documents and we should be granted a government registration on Friday (Jan 7).

This, then, should enable me to return to Immigration the week of Jan 9 to obtain my work permit. This, in turn, will then allow me to clear our shipment through customs (which has been stuck in

in turn, will then allow me to clear our shipment through customs (which has been stuck in Johannesburg, South Africa for the past four weeks awaiting our work permit).

I share all this with you in order to demonstrate how things work in Zambia. There is no easy, quick, simple procedures in doing anything you need to do. I wish I had space here to share with you just how difficult it was for us just to set up an account at the bank – you wouldn't believe all the forms and hurdles we had to jump just to do what in America can be done in about 20 minutes (it took us two weeks).

Another challenge we have had to address has been that of renting and moving into a temporary house here in Lusaka. As you know, we are building a house at Mapepi (due to the high costs of rent); but, since this will take some time, it was necessary that we find a temporary house. Because we cannot afford to rent a typical three-bed room house, we rented a small, 500 square foot house in a government housing project. It was unbelievably nasty with a sickening smell. If I were to describe what the house looked like, my description would likely "turn" your stomach (so I'll spare you that). It took us two weeks to paint and clean the house so that we could move into it. You wouldn't believe how bug infested the house was (e.g. kitchen).

Nevertheless, we are finally settled into a house and have (we think) pretty much done all that we need to do to secure all our necessary paperwork that will allow us to remain in the country and start the school this year. This is now has become our primary focus: getting things ready so we can start the school this coming May (just four months from now).

It is now time for us to finalize our plans and begin recruiting students for our first year of school. I have already been communicating with the Zambian leaders here and we now have a final meeting scheduled for this coming Sat (Jan 8) in order to finalize our plans so that we can begin sending out letters and brochures about the school to all the churches throughout Zambia. This we should begin doing next week (week of Jan 9 th). This now is the exciting part – the part that we have been looking forward to for more than a year!

Lorie and I (and the girls) have already been busy visiting the various congregations in Lusaka. Thus far, we have visited (and preached at) the churches at Chelston, Central, Mapepi, Chilanje, and George Central (all in Lusaka). There are several more churches in Lusaka that I plan to visit and then we will begin traveling to visit churches elsewhere in Zambia, all in an effort to promote the school.

Construction has also begun on our house at Mapepi (where the school will eventually be located). This project will take about 3 months to complete.

Our girls seem to be adjusting quite well to our new life in Zambia. Although they miss all their friends back home, they have found the people of Zambia to be warm and friendly. Our youngest daughter, Natasha, actually thanked us for bringing her to Zambia a few days ago. One of our Zambian friends gave each of the girls a puppy to keep. They love animals and this has given them much joy.

If you would like to periodically receive our E-Bulletin (via email), then just drop me an quick email to let me know" – Email me

Reflections From Lorie

Greetings from Zambia and from all of the churches that we have been blessed to worship with here in Zambia. This month I want to share with you the story of one woman's faith.

She lost her husband seven years ago. She was left to raise two children (a 7-month old son and a 4-year old daughter). As is the custom in Zambia, the family of the husband takes possession of all of the property from the household items to the house and the land around it. This left her without any means to provide for her children. She has had to work very hard trying to keep her children fed. Her friends, her own family, and her husband's family have ridiculed her for not seeking to remarry (which is the social security for widows here).

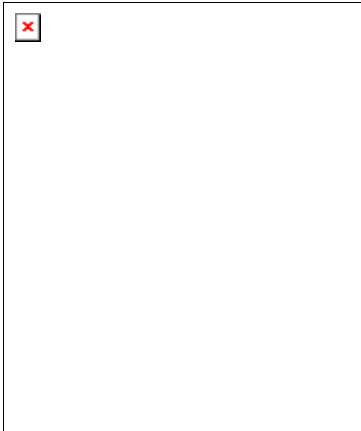
However, she says that she really loved her husband and she feels that so many people have “the disease” (HIV) that she might get it and die. This would leave her children as orphans. As she was sharing this part of her story with me she had a very troubled look on her face. I could see that the past several years had been painful in many ways for her.

Then suddenly her eyes lit up, she lifted her arms high into the air, then brought them down with a loud clap. The sound of her clap was so loud that I jumped and she laughed. She leaned her face forward very close to my own face and asked point blank, “Do you know where my help came from”?

Then without giving me time to answer she announced “From the Lord”! I stood there dazed for a moment, but I could hardly wait to hear the ways God has brought her through these trials.

Though she never stopped the job that she was doing, she shared with me for the next half-hour many of the ways that God has helped carry her and her children “through the fire.” On one occasion she spent a 48-hour period in prayer petitioning God for a need. She kept saying (after telling me of each event in which she had put her trust in God) that “God is faithful.....He has always been there for me.”

A smile broke forth on my own face. Wasn't I supposed to be telling her this; after all, I am the missionary. And, then, I realized that her story illustrates for my own life that God is faithful in everything. He will be faithful even through difficult times – just as we have had these past few weeks in our efforts to obtain a work permit that will allow us to work for His Kingdom here in Zambia. As we walk the road of life (helping to others to carry their burdens “in the name of Jesus”) let us not forget to listen to God's wisdom from those He brings our way. - Lorie



What burden is God helping you to bear?

[Return to Home Page](#)