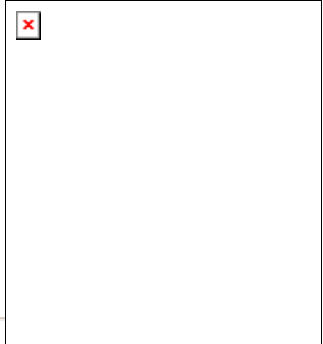


Zambia Newsletter

September 2005

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Dear Friends,

We have just returned from our Mission Campaign to the Luapula province and we are now preparing to return to the USA in just a few weeks to begin raising long-term support for student scholarships. There is much to report this month, so I will get straight to it.

Luapula Mission Trip

On Sept 2 we loaded up all our students, staff and supplies on an American school bus that we borrowed from Namwianga Mission and headed off to the far north of Zambia for our end of the year Mission Campaign (41 of us in total). Our destination was Mansa (500 miles north), the district capitol for the Luapula province (which runs 300 miles north-south along the Congo border).

Our trip had four objectives: (a) plant two new churches in the province, (b) assist the Mansa church in evangelism, (c) give our students practical, hands-on experience in evangelism and church planting, (d) conduct a leadership seminar for church leaders in the province, and (e) conduct a women's conference for women and the wives of the church leaders.

Our students divided into three groups. One group went into the area surrounding the Mansa church to do evangelism. The other two groups went into two compounds (suburbs) of Mansa in order to plant new churches. Mansa has a population of about 100,000 people and there is only one church in the city. By the end of the campaign, our students had baptized 18 people and organized the planting of two new churches. One of our students (who lives in Mansa) will now work with these two new churches to bring them to maturity in Christ over the next year (until he returns to school next year). Since we do not believe it is right to plant a church without a follow-up plan as to how to develop the church (someone to follow-up and bring about maturity), our mission campaigns will always work in cooperation with a local church or an existing leader living in the area who is committed to working with the new church for several months after our departure to bring it to maturity in Christ.

This campaign mark-ed the end of our first school year. Our students have now dispersed and return-ed back to their homes. Twelve remained in the Luapula province, four are on their way home to Angola, and the rest have dispersed among the remaining provinces to begin putting into practice the things we have taught them this past year. We are most anxious for the day when they will return to school with the news of what great things God has done through their lives!

Leadership Seminar

During the day while our students were out evangelizing, Lorie's Dad (Richard Waggoner) and I conducted a leadership seminar for various church leaders in the Luapula province (about 65 men in total). Elizabeth and Esther Halale (two Zambian women leaders from Namwianga) and Lorie conducted a women's seminar for the wives of the church leaders (about 40 in total).

There was one major problem that we had to overcome. We had rented a government training facility for this week (included 66 beds, kitchen/dinning hall, and two classrooms). We paid the deposit on the contract back in May. However, upon our arrival we discovered that all but 20 beds were occupied with government personnel who were awaiting transportation to new assignments (posts). Our students claimed the beds on the first night, but this created a problem when all the church leaders and their wives arrived on the next day. Our students gave up their beds for the women and children and took up residence in six tents we had brought. The remaining men slept on the ground or in the two classrooms. Although this was a major inconvenience, it was actually a great opportunity for our students to put into practice what we have been trying to teach them about being servant leaders. Our goal is not just to teach knowledge but to train leaders in how to be spiritual leaders and examples of Christ in their own lives.

Plans For Next Year

We have started construction on two new buildings at Mapepe: (a) dorm for 60 students with a kitchen/dinning room, and (b) classroom building. We received a donation that will cover about 70% of cost – enough that we will be able to begin operations at the Mapepe property next year. Getting this construction done before next year (May 2006) is essential if we are to double our student enrollment with the addition of the second year to our training program.

We also are making plans to dramatically increase our emphasis on evangelism and church planting. As I have said many times, our program here involves much more than just classroom instruction. Because Africa does not have a long history with Christianity, understanding and applying the true essence of Christian faith is difficult. Although people are very receptive to Christianity, real spiritual transformation requires much more work as they struggle to throw off witchcraft, sexual immorality, drunkenness, and tribalism. Africans are ready to embrace Christianity, but they do so within their animistic worldview (way to receive blessings from God) without understanding that Christian faith involves a life transformation involving their ethical conduct and behavior.

Consequently, African churches often look a lot like the church at Corinth (conflict between leaders, sexual immorality, drunkenness, witchcraft, etc) and few church leaders demonstrate a life worthy of imitation. Thus, the process of planting churches in Africa involves exactly what Jesus taught in Matt 28 (make disciples by "going, baptizing, and teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you"). It is not near enough to just plant a church. We must also continue working with each new church to bring them to maturity in Christ and assist them in developing leaders who are worthy of leading God's people on to maturity in Christ.

It is because of this assessment that we have established three primary objectives for our school: (1) teach basic Bible knowledge, (2) facilitate the spiritual and character development of the student, and (3) train students to be church-planters through practical experience. We are more concerned about "who" our students are when they leave MBC than upon "what" they know. Thus, our Bible classes focus on the essentials of Christian faith and what it truly means to be a Christian. In addition, we have hired Zambian teachers whose primary task is to focus on the spiritual and character development of each student (next year we will have three Zambian teachers and a fourth will join us in Jan 2007). In addition, our teachers are also heavily involved in taking students out to do evangelism and church-planting. This year (with only one Zambian teacher) our students planted one church in Lusaka and two in Luapula. Next year (with 60 students and three teachers) we plan to plant three churches here in Lusaka and five churches elsewhere in Zambia.

One of the things I will be raising money for during my time in the USA this Fall is money for one or two buses which can carry our students out during the afternoons and weekends to do evangelism. Our teachers will each plan three mission trips during the school year with students (nine mission trips outside the Lusaka area). Our objective is very clear: produce Zambian missionaries who are models of Christian faith and who will go out to make disciples (by going, baptizing and bringing converts to Christian maturity). Mapepe (MBC) is NOT a typical school. MBC is a missionary training center designed to promote the planting of Christ-like (mature) churches throughout all of Central Africa (Zambia, Angola, and Congo). We are not an educational center for preachers; we are a practical, missionary training center.

Return to the USA

Lorie and I dearly wish it wasn't necessary for us to return to the USA, but it now appears that this will become a

necessary part of our work here (raising funds for the school). There is no one else to do it. I do NOT want to do what many others have done in hiring full-time fund-raisers as this only creates overhead and bureaucracy. I want every cent contributed to this work to go straight to work here in Africa for which it is given. Whenever you create an organization for fund-raising, a certain amount of every dollar contributed gets absorbed by the organization before it ever gets to where it is going. Thus, in order to avoid this, Lorie and I will do the fund-raising work ourselves during school breaks when school is not in operation here in Zambia (Oct-Dec). Hopefully, this will be sufficient.

Lorie and I will be very focused during our visit to the USA on raising money for student scholarships (\$75 per student per month) and on raising the additional funds that we will need for the following: (a) one or two buses for evangelism/campaigns, (b) tents and camping equipment for campaigns, (c) books for library (d) commercial stove and equipment for kitchen, (e) Bibles, (f) shipment costs, etc. I wish we had time to visit all of you during our time in the USA, but this trip will be totally dedicated to visiting new churches in an effort to raise additional support for the school. We will, of course, schedule another trip in a year or two in order to visit all of you and to make a personal report on the work here. Please keep us in your prayers as we travel extensively over the next few months in search of support.

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