

Zambia Newsletter

Zambia Missions

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Report on Church-Planting Efforts.

[I have asked Sandi Mustapha (who heads up our church-planting efforts) to write a report our missions efforts].

From February to May 2009, a hundred and three people were trained to take up the responsibility of Church Planting. The number includes two from Tanzania and two from Malawi. The ninety-nine are all from different parts of Zambia.

About forty teachers, mostly from the Northern, Luapula and Central provinces of Zambia were among the number we trained. Good reports are heard about some of these teachers reaching out to people and establishing new congregations. They are now also influencing the lives of the students and the congregations they are working with.

Of the two trained in Tanzania, Brother Samuel Adambike has fully involved his church and the Bible School in the implementation of the church-planting strategies that we have thought here at Mapepe. According to his recent mails, forty-seven people were baptized in one village. Because of the positive effects of our new training, the churches in the area have asked that I go to Tanzania in June this year. The Church of Christ at Lyunga has also sent four letters of appeal for me to come and do the same training there for them as well.

In the Central province of Zambia, testimonies of God's transforming power by brothers Melvin Mushwalumuku and Bangwe Harrison has been tremendous. They are establishing new congregations and have set up Discovery Bible Studies (which is what we call our evangelistic Bible studies) in various communities within their reach. Brother Melvin said *"This approach has been an eye opener; our churches are blossoming and our churches in Serenje now have direction and are becoming more focused. In the past we hardly had anyone going out for evangelism; but now, everyone in my church is getting excited and getting involved in studying the Bible."*

Chongwe district (each of Lusaka) is also experiencing similar growth. Brother Boas Mushingwe (one of our graduates) has established three churches in this area. He starts Bible study groups wherever he goes to do construction work. He has at the moment established three DBS (Discovery Bible Studies) which he believes will soon become churches. Brother Boas rides a bicycle over fifty kilometers to go to some of the areas where he has been working over the past year.

From the Mapepe compound, we have (from our staff) Brothers Melvin Kalimashila, Samuel Nkando, James Mulenga, Fanwell Liswaniso, and Sister Eness Siangandu who have been going out into the Kafue West region where they have now established groups at Mungu, Chikupi, Chanyanya and the Tent/Harbor communities. Sister Siangandu teaches women in the communities how to make dresses and other crafts. In doing this, she is also doing DBS with them before they do any the work. She works with about forty women at a time for three months (after which she moves on to work with another group).

A testimony of what God is doing in the lives of these people is tremendous. The man that Brother Samuel was working with for the past few months has now gone out to start his own DBS group. Brother Mulenga and Sister Eness usually bring their groups together to do their DBS groups. As a result, we are hearing great testimonies about what God is doing in these communities. At the Tent/Harbor area (which runs along the Kafue River), there is always the problem of flooding when the rains get heavy. One old woman who raises chickens to care for family and pay her children's fees said, *"Although the rains (floods) have carried off all of my chickens and my structure has collapsed, I am not moved because my God shall replenish me... Thank God for these people who have opened our eyes to the Word of God and have shown that our God is God of love who cares for people... I would have been frustrated, as in the past, but I believe my God is more than my problems."* Of course, with such success also comes opposition. As a result of these efforts, several of the church leaders in the area are now labeling our church planters as "Satanists". We need prayers for the work in Zambia.

Our students here at Mapepe continue to go out every Saturday to evangelize and do some church planting activities. However, they are sometimes taken along by our church planting team (staff) to different communities in which they are working. Our students are also visiting some of the Churches of Christ in the Lusaka area every Sunday to help build up the spiritual level of these churches and to encourage greater evangelism. They recently went together with the Central Church of Christ (Lusaka) to Kasingula to help in evangelism and the church planting effort that is going on there (southern Zambia). God is, indeed, at work in the lives of our students and our Mapepe staff.

Comment (David): While I try not to use this newsletter as a way to ask for financial help, I do believe it is necessary at times to let you all know of some legitimate needs. With the economy as it is, it appears that there are fewer individuals and

churches who are sending in extra contributions this year. As a result we are struggling to meet all the demands this year. In particular, we have not had enough money to full fund our outreach efforts (to pay for fuel and vehicle repairs). There have been quite a few days and even weeks when we didn't have any of our 4x4 vehicles working and had to cancel our evangelistic operations. Presently, we have 4 vehicles that need major repairs and haven't been available for 3 months. We have two others (both 4x4's) that keep breaking down almost every week and have forced Sandi and/or our mission teams to cancel scheduled Bible studies. Since this is very important work, I thought I would share with you this need should any of you be in a position to assist.

Major News: Additions To American Work-Force.

We have some great news to report that has been in development for the past three months. As some of you know, this ministry here in Zambia has grown far beyond the ability of Lorie and I to manage by ourselves. In fact, I pretty much reached the point of "burn-out" last year and was given some pretty stern warnings by several people (including counselors) that I had better find a way to slow-down and reduce the level of responsibility in my life or I would not last much longer. I simply cannot continue to function at the same level as I have for the past six years.

Hence, Lorie and I devoted a great deal of effort this past Fall to trying to recruit some other people to come work with us in this ministry and the Lord has provided. Just before I left the USA in January, I met with a long-time friend of mine who has been involved in missions for many years and asked him if he would be willing to partner with us in handling the fund-raising efforts needed for this ministry. I am not able to mention his name at this time (as he is transitioning from his present ministry), but I will be able to do so in just a few more days as he will officially begin working with us on May 1. In fact, I will probably make an official announcement just after May 1 on my Facebook Page and via our e-bulletins (for those of you who are on our internet mailing list). I will, of course, devote most of the next Newsletter to this matter.

I can't begin to tell you how excited and relieved I am to have this brother join us in this work and to help share the fund-raising responsibilities of this ministry. I believe this will also allow Lorie and I to reduce the amount of time that we must spend in the USA each year in order to handle the fund-raising responsibilities and it will allow us to keep ourselves more focused on the work here in Zambia.

Other Additions. In addition, we have been working hard to recruit some other people to come work with us here in Zambia. We now have three other couples who are coming to visit us in the next three months who are seriously considering the possibility to joining us here in this work. The first couple that is coming in June is a young couple from Bermuda (about 30 years old) who will be graduating this year from Sunset. The second couple is from South Carolina and is about the same age. He and his wife have experience in business and would fill a great need in this work. And, finally, the third couple is from middle-Tennessee (about 34 years old) and has had more than 11 years of ministry experience. We have great hopes that one or all of these couples will decide to come work with us here in Zambia.

There is another major reason (besides our overload) as to why we are trying to recruit other people to join us in this ministry: long-term sustainability. One of the questions the elders of our sponsoring church (and others) have been asking for the past few years is: What happens to the work if something happens to you and/or Lorie? It is not good for any ministry or business to be so heavily dependent on one person. One solution to the problem is to develop Zambian leadership and we have done a great deal to do this; but, since this ministry depends a great deal of our American churches, there is a need to strengthen the American leadership and involvement as well. And, finally, I have come to realize that I am not sufficient by myself to develop the Zambian staff and indigenous leadership. This ministry has grown far too much and is involving far too many people here in Zambia for me to do the leadership development by myself. I need more foreign assistance to develop leaders.

AIM Students.

Because one of our goals involves recruiting younger, long-term workers for this work (and other mission works), Lorie and I felt it wise to include an internship program that will allow young people from the USA who are interested in missions to get some actual practical experience in missions. We believe that we are and have learned things about mission work that we need to share with the next generation of missionaries. Hence, we have contacted most of our Christian colleges about this interest and will be inviting some interns to come work with us periodically in the future. We also believe this is one of the best ways to recruit new and younger missionaries for this work in the future.

Consequently, last Fall Lorie and I visited the AIM program at Sunset and invited six students to come work with us for the next 12-18 months. Although we had hoped for a couple of young men, we did recruit six very good young women who volunteered and will be arriving on May 17 to work with us this next year. We certainly have plenty for them to do as they will be working with our female students and with all our new and developing humanitarian ministries (mobile medical clinic, orphan-care programs, agriculture, community school programs, etc). Below is a group picture taken the day the AIM team was announced at Sunset. We share more with about the team once they arrive next month. Their names are Cally Ward (Montana), Susan Pitney (Arkansas), Beth Horn (West Texas), Samantha Wiegmann (Florida), Glenna Schultz (Colorado), and Whitney Schwenn (Oklahoma).



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