

# Zambia Newsletter

## Zambia Missions

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Dear Friends,

The last four months have been very, very challenging and stressful for Lorie and I. It seems our days have been filled with more problems to be solved than we have time and resources to solve. In fact, I don't think we have been any more overwhelmed than we have the last few months. But, such are the growing pains that come with trying to start anything worthwhile!

### **School Progress.**

So far as the training efforts of the school, everything is going fantastic! We couldn't be more happier with the progress and development of our students. We are also most encouraged by the sincerity and dedication that we are seeing in the students about the work of the Lord in Zambia. Our students from last year planted no less than 12 churches upon their return home at the end of school last year (Sept 2005). And, already our students this year have gone out most every weekend to plant new churches in the surrounding areas of our Mapepe campus! We bought 15 bicycles which the students are using (others we are taking out by vehicle and they walk back).

In our last newsletter, I mentioned that the dorm was not ready for use when our students began arriving in May. Not only was the roof not on, but we didn't even have toilets (nor electricity)! Thankfully, our students were patient as we got the roof put on and installed all the necessary plumbing (by the end of the fourth week). However, the windows are still missing and it is getting cold at nights. Despite the discomfort, the students have been wonderful not to complain. The classroom building is still not completed (we are still laying the block walls). Classes are meeting in the dorm cafeteria and in the mud-brick church building up on top of the hill. We did purchase a 26-seater bus four weeks ago in South Africa (to take students out on mission campaigns), but it has been held up in South Africa. Our shipping container (which has our tables, chairs, Bibles, school stove, etc) has been stuck at the port in Mozambique for six weeks.

### **Upcoming Mission Campaigns.**

In one week we will be taking the students out on our first two-week mission campaign for this year. We are taking half of our students north to Kapiri Mposhi in an effort to plant two new churches there in partnership with the one (and only) church we now have in that town. The other half

of the students will focus on the recent efforts already begun in the last few weeks to plant 3-4 churches in the surrounding areas of our Mapepe campus.

We have identified several large compounds (village communities) that we want to focus upon. Our goal is that within the next five years we will have planted more than twenty-five churches in the surrounding areas of our campus! I hope to buy more bicycles in the near future so as increase the ability of our students to go out on mission efforts as I have money to do so (cost: \$100 each).

### **Mapepe Medical Mission.**

We were most happy for the recent visit by a medical mission survey team from our sponsoring congregation in Memphis, led by Joe Godley (along with Dr. Judy Jones, Willie Holcomb, Richard Myers, Josh Fussell and Olivia Behrens). During their two-week visit to Zambia, we traveled to observe and learn from another medical mission from Namwianga Mission operating in north-Central Zambia this year. We, then, traveled to an area where we (Mapepe Bible College) will be working over the next few years to plant churches. This is an area where we have only one or two churches. Our goal is to use the medical mission as a way of introducing ourselves to the people of that region so that we might increase our efforts to plant many churches.

This survey trip was a great success and we have now determined to conduct a Medical Mission in this area next year (first two weeks of June 2007). Joe Godley, who is very experienced in conducting mission trips, will be heading up this great work next year. We would like, therefore, to invite all of you who are doctors, dentists, nurses, etc (any healthcare workers) to consider joining this campaign next year. If you are interested, please email me ASAP (dfrench@zambiamissions.org).

### **Other Recent Visitors.**

We were also most encouraged by the recent visit by three elders from the Goodman Oaks congregation in Southaven, Miss: Smith Howell (who is 91 years old), Jerry Winstead, and Marty Brownfield. Marty remained for three weeks in order to teach two classes (Hebrews and Minor

Prophets). He did an incredible job. Our students were also blessed by the efforts of Keith Fussell (Family Counselor from Sycamore View in Memphis) who taught a 10-day class on Marriage and the Family. Dr. Anna Griffith (from Texas) also conducted a five-day workshop on HIV/AIDS for our students (including what churches can do to develop ministries to fight this epidemic in Zambia). And, finally, Jerry Hogg (from SABS in South Africa) taught a class on Spiritual Leadership.

My Dad, Parker French (along with my Mom) is scheduled to arrive on June 26 in order to participate in our July campaigns and to teach a three-week class as he did last year. Then, in late July, Lorie's Dad, Richard Waggoner (along with his wife Cheryl) will arrive to teach two classes (four weeks) on Conflict Resolution and Addictions and to participate in our September Mission Campaigns.

**Farming Operations.** Richard Myers (who was also part of the medical mission survey team) came to visit us in relation to his work with Healing Hands International. Richard surveyed our small farm here at Mapepe and gathered some soil samples to test upon his return to the USA. Based on his findings, Richard is going to make some recommendations so as to best utilize our land for

the purposes of growing our own food for the school and teach some basic agricultural skills to our students that will help them better support themselves in the future. Richard is also planning to return next May in order to teach our students how to do "drip irrigation" so that they can raise vegetables year-round in Zambia. We are also in the process of building a "chicken run" that will enable us to raise both broilers and egg-laying hens for the school.

#### **Other News.**

The first four days of July are holidays in Zambia and there are lots of churches that gather for "camp meetings" during this time. I have been invited to speak twice at the lectureships at Namwianga Mission and also at the camp meeting in Serenje (400 miles north of here). We will also host a dedication ceremony on July 29 for our two new buildings on campus. And, our first graduating class will be graduating on Sept 8! Also, our daughter Kerin (along with the rest of us) has been keeping a two-year old orphan from Namwianga in our home for the past three months. My concern? Everyone in the family is becoming too attached to her now which is really going to make it difficult when we have to head back to USA in Sept to continue raising funds for the school. — David

## **Lorie's Reflections**

I exchanged the appropriate greetings with the grandmother of one of our friends (see picture below). She began to tell me that she had loved the Lord longer than I had been alive. Though her eyes had grown dim with age, they actually sparkled as she told her story of God's faithfulness to her.

She and her family had been living in Zimbabwe during a time of government unrest. She had planted her five-acre garden with potatoes and corn to provide food for her family. A terrible drought hit. There was no rain. One day, while working in the field, she prayed that God would bless her yield in spite of the lack of rain. She then vowed to God that she would give Him the first 10 pockets (buckets) of the potato crop.

When the time for harvesting the vegetables came, she had a yield of exactly 10 pockets of food. Without hesitation she took all of the pockets that she had promised to give to the Lord and gave them to the church leaders. At this point in her story she paused, looked directly into my eyes and said, "I promised to give the first 10 to Him. I told Him that He would have to feed and clothe my family because His portion was my total yield". Then she relayed in a very pensive manner that she and her family had managed to get by.

However, the tone in her voice almost danced with delight as she continued her story. "The rains came strong the next year". God blessed my land and each of the five acres yielded 300 pockets of vegetables. A smile spread across her face which let me know that from the depths of

her being she knew that the harvest had come straight from God. You might think that was the end of her story, but she went on to use that bountiful harvest to help others in need! Her example of trust in God has now touched 4 generations of her family.

Perhaps even more, her faithfulness and trust has touched me. We are so very blessed by God in so many ways. Let us look for ways to be faithful by sharing our blessings with others. On a daily basis, your generosity is blessing the lives of people here in Zambia. Thank you for being God's hands to touch and comfort these precious, hurting people with Him. Please continue to pray for God to send us more lives in need of Him.

