

# Zambia Newsletter

## Zambia Missions

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**Mission Campaigns.** Our 34 students just finished their first mission campaign. We divided them into four groups. One group traveled north to work with the Kapiri Mposhi church and the new church our students planted near there last year. As with the other groups below, they went out during the days doing evangelism and hosted an old fashion "Gospel Meeting" during the evenings. The second group traveled south to work with the church at Mazabuka. The third group remained in Lusaka and worked with the church at John Lenge (in Lusaka) that our students planted last year (which has now grown to about 50 members)! The fourth group (our female students) conducted a VBS for about 125 children here at the Mapepe church. By week's end (after 9 days) our students reported having about 12 baptisms. The students themselves expressed great enthusiasm and were most excited about the results. They have never been involved in such efforts as these and were surprised by the results!

We now have three of our past graduates who are working with us full-time as "Mission Coordinators" and it is their job (working with our Director, Simubali) to organize these campaigns and to go out with the students to train them how to do this work. We are, of course, in the process right now of trying to figure out what strategies and approaches work best as there has not really been anyone before us doing this kind of work from whom we can learn from; but so far, we are finding that working through an already existing church is the best long-term approach (necessary for the stabilization and maturity of the churches).

**Purchase of Bus.** We are most happy to report that two or three people have contributed money to buy the bus. We just placed an order for a 1992 Toyota 26-seater bus from Japanese Vehicles. The bus will shortly be loaded on to the next ship heading toward Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania. From there we will drive the bus down to Zambia. We hope to have this done in 8-10 weeks.

**Medical Mission.** Much work is now being done in preparation for our medical mission in June. There are now about 30 people

from Memphis (doctors, optometrists, nurses, etc) who will be coming on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to do this great work. We made a trip two weeks ago up to the Central province (where we are going to conduct the six medical clinics) to choose the sites (villages) and seek the permission of the local chiefs and headmen. We were MOST warmly welcomed and they were all MOST thankful and excited about our plans to visit them in June. The headman in one village kept saying, "Please don't fail to keep your promise to come!"

We have now hired a new staff person, Oliver, to oversee the preparations for this mission (as neither Lorie or I have time to do this) and all future humanitarian works that we hope to do (e.g. orphan care, HIV-AIDS Prevention, etc). Oliver has had a great deal of experience with humanitarian works, bush medical clinics, and all the government paperwork/procedures involved in this process. Elizabeth Halale from Namwianga Mission is assisting us in this effort which is our first. She has had much experience organizing the medical missions that Namwianga has done each year.

Now that we have our bus, we will be taking our students up to this area (2-3 hours north of Mapepe) each weekend to plant churches in every village where we will conduct the medical mission. We will use this medical mission as a way to introduce the church to an area where we have almost no churches. The medical mission will greatly assist us in our church planting efforts. Our goal is to plant no less than 30 churches throughout this area (Central Province) over the next 3-5 years.

**American Visitors.** As I mentioned in my last, my brother John was to visit us in early February (which he did). He is now an elder in our sponsoring congregation and, thus, his visit was also an official visit from the church. Together we traveled north into the bush in preparation for the medical mission (above) so that he was able to see the areas where we plan to focus our church planting efforts for the next 3-4 years. We also

traveled to the Copperbelt, Kapiri Mposhi, and the Southern Province (Namwianga Mission) in order to visit with our new Mapepe Board members (see below). Johnny Bruff (elder from another supporting church in Union City, TN) arrived on Feb 8 to visit the work on behalf of the church there. On Saturday (Feb 10) we conducted our first board meeting with most all of our new board members in attendance. This provided a great opportunity for these two elders to meet with our new Mapepe Board and to deepen our partnership between the American and Zambian leaders involved in this work.

Tom Torpy, minister from another of our supporting congregations (Mocksville, NC), has volunteered to come teach two classes in March-April (six hours per day for three weeks). This will be of such help to me as I have been struggling since Jan 8 trying to teach (six hours per day for many weeks) and do all the

other work that I must do (administration, contractor, fund-raiser, academic dean, long-term development, etc). In addition, Michelle Lewis (from another supporting church in Missouri) will arrive in late March to assist us in the work here for about six weeks.

**Re-Constituted Mapepe Board.** Due to a variety of reasons, our Mapepe Board of Trustees has gone through a period of transition that has left us with only about four members. Hence, we have initiated a process for selecting new board members from churches all across Zambia to serve on this leadership board (a process to select spiritual men of integrity who also have some skill to contribute to the board). This process is now nearing a conclusion and the new board members will be official appointed in the next few weeks. We are MOST excited about these new appointees as they are good men. – David

## Lorie's Reflections

The dirt path, complete with deep ruts made by the constant flow of the recent rains, were overflowing again with children. Their excited chatter seemed to be a symphony of perfect harmony as they made their way down the path for their first day of the new community school which begun at the "church on the hill". The parent-teacher school board announced that the new school would be named "Pierce Community School" to honor one of the first missionaries who came to Mapepe over 40 years ago. I know that his family would smile to know that his legacy lives on here after all of this time.

Our girls rose up early to bathe and dress. Susann proudly announced that she was going to "eschoolo wit Atasha" (school with Natasha). When everyone was ready, we joined the parade of children and parents on the path. I was amused at the excitement of the children who were "running" and trying to urge the parents to do the same. We reached the top of the Mapepe hill and a smile broke out on my face when I saw the ocean of little faces with tremendous smiles, all of them waiting patiently for their parents or guardians to pay the \$2 fee so they could "enter into the classroom".

Many of these children had been unable to attend school because of the expense of public schools here. Many of these children have been hindered because they are orphaned or vulnerable children. Each face appeared to glow with anticipation of the event that was about to occur. The orchestra of excited chatter fell silent as the teachers



appeared in the door of the old church building . The silence was broken only by the muffled ringing of the bell (a rusted tire rim suspended from the tree) which announced that "Pierce Community School" had officially begun. The entire group filed into the small "one-room" school-house (Little house on the Prairie style).

Once again I find myself so thankful to God for all of you and your faithful prayers



on behalf of God's ministries here. I am constantly amazed and humbled at how many doors are being opened by God. Christ told us that we must be as children to enter heaven and that when we bless "one of the least of these" that we are blessing Him (Matt 25). These children are being blessed now by all of the school materials and supplies that so many of you contributed to this work. Chimwemwe (in the picture to the left) is only one of the Lord's precious little lambs who is being blessed by your love. She has been on the path to school early each day this week! May our the eyes of our hearts be opened to see all the ways that God has blessed us so that we may always be a blessing to others. – Lorie

