

# Zambia Newsletter

## Zambia Missions

1910 Sycamore View Rd  
Memphis, TN 38134  
(901) 372-1874

## David & Lorie French

P.O. Box 36893  
Lusaka, Zambia (Africa)  
dfrench@zambiamissions.org



Web: [www.zambiamissions.org](http://www.zambiamissions.org)

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**E-Bulletins.** Be sure to sign-up for our e-bulletins (via email). Email me at [dfrench24@gmail.com](mailto:dfrench24@gmail.com). If you do not have email ability, then get someone in your church who does have email capability to do so.

**President of Zambia.** A couple of weeks ago I sent out an e-bulletin to many of you reporting the death of President Mwanawasa (President of Zambia). Fortunately, this was a pre-mature report put out by BBC and other British News Services. The Zambian government denied his death, but that was to be expected. The truth? The President is hospitalized and is in an apparent coma (possibly has a brain hemorrhage). The news doesn't sound very promising and there are serious questions as to whether or not he will be able to govern the country in the future. This means we may likely have to go through another election - something that is never welcomed in Africa (even in a country as stable as Zambia). We would like, therefore, to ask you all to be praying for the President and his recovery in the near future.

**Merger With Zambia Christian Institute.** Just a few months after we started our school here at Mapepe in 2005, another school for leadership training was started in Kabwe (75 miles north of Mapepe) by a Zambian brother (Kennedy Mukuka) who had trained in the USA. We didn't know about each other's plans until the last minute. Over the past four years we have partnered together in several joint projects and we began to realize that we both share the same basic goal and vision for training leaders in Zambia. Because it seemed unnecessary for us each to be duplicating what each other was trying to do (especially in a country where the church is as small as it is here in Zambia), we began talking about merging our two schools into one. Those discussions led to some serious considerations this year and a decision was made just this past month to unite our two schools together as one. Because our school owes property (that includes numerous buildings) and has secured numerous government certifications, we felt it best to consolidate everything here at Mapepe. Officially, the merger will take place on Sept 1. Kennedy will join our staff as a Senior Staff member and will become part of our leadership team (with Thomas Simubali and myself). Kennedy will be a most welcomed addition to our teaching and administrative staff as Simubali and myself have been overworked and over-whelmed with

all that is now going on here at Mapepe. We are quite excited about this merger and believe it will greatly strengthen our mutual goals and efforts to evangelize Zambia.

**Student Activities.** Our students continue to be active in missions and in their Bible studies (classroom work). We now have about 72 students and we are expecting about 55 to graduate in September. Among our students are about 12 female students, two ex-prisoners (converted through out prison ministry), and several students from the Central province (where we have been focusing on planting churches). Our students have made several trips back up to the Central province to work with the four new churches that were planted as a result of the Medical Mission in June. And, over the past month, our students and staff members have participated in a Prison-Ministry workshop, several regional congregational camp meetings, and a Youth Conference. When our next group of students graduates in about six weeks (our third class), we will have had a total of about 115 graduates in our first 3.5 years of operations. We have now had about 250 students who have attended classes and seminars here at Mapepe and another 150 who have participated in our Agriculture Workshops.

**Recent Visitors.** We have had several people to visit us since the Medical Mission. Danny Reeves taught a two-week class on Christian Ethics. Danny is the son of John Reese (head of World Bible School) and is part of a new team that is planning to go to Angola in about two years. Ruth Orr from Lewisburg, TN visited us for about 4 weeks. The church in Lewisburg supports our prison ministry and Ruth has been working with two of our staff members in the prisons and with WBS. While here, she taught several people who ended up being baptized into Christ. Keith and Kim Fussell each taught a class in June (Marriage & Family and a women's class). Anna Griffith followed them in June and taught a class on HIV-AIDS (a class that seeks to train our students in how to minister to people with this deadly disease). Also, prior to the medical mission, Marty and Susan Brownfield (elder at Goodman Oaks in Southaven, MS) taught two classes (Book of Hebrews and Minor Prophets) over a four-week period. This was Marty's third year to teach for us. Richard Waggoner (Lorie's Dad) has been with us almost two months now. This is his fourth year to assist in the work here. He has taught 2-3 classes and has been working on an effort to start an Orphan-Care Ministry. And, having arrived three days ago, Parker & Joyce French (my parents). My Dad will teach three classes over the next six weeks and my Mom will teach a class to our female students. We are VERY thankful for all the assistance that all these

people have given us over the past 2-3 months. Without them we would not be able to provide all the classes that we are providing our students (quality classes).

**Self-Evaluation Period.** We are constantly evaluating what we are doing and how well we are doing it. At the end of each year (before I head back to the USA), I sit down with the leadership team and we assess our performance and determine what improvements we need to make for the next year. We have now been in operation 3.5 years and we believe we have enough history to draw some conclusions about our performance. Our Mission Statement is clear: To advance the kingdom of God by training (developing) self-supporting, spiritual leaders who will go forth to plant and mature churches in Central Africa. But, how we do this (method) and how well we do it is another dimension that needs constant review and evaluation.

Let me emphasize two components of our mission: (a) We are dedicated to advancing the kingdom of God in Central Africa (goal); and (b) We are seeking to do that through leadership training (method). So, we must ask two questions: (a) How well are we accomplishing our goal to advance the kingdom of God? (b) How well are we training leaders who will advance the kingdom (and are they doing so effectively)? There are other/deeper questions that we are addressing, but space will not allow me here to devote such a comprehensive discussion.

Let me address the second question first: How well are we training leaders? We have determined that to train effective leaders we must accomplish three things: (a) teach (knowledge of Bible and Ministry), (b) practical skills training (students must learn by doing ministry and learn vocational skills that will enable them to support themselves in ministry), and (c) spiritual and character development. Our evaluation has made the following conclusions: (a) We believe we are doing an excellent job teaching knowledge (we give ourselves an A). (b) Practical Training? Our results are mixed. We are doing a fair job training them in agricultural development so that they might support themselves. Grade: C (because we are just getting started and we are still learning how to do this). Practical ministry training? Grade: C- (needs improvement). We are taking our students out on mission trips and they are learning how to plant churches (we are planting churches and many are doing so when they return home). However, we do not believe we have taught them a good methodology nor have we trained them how to mature a church. Hence, we have a lot of very immature churches that are very dependent upon our students (church planter). And, how are we doing in spiritual-character development? This also we are giving ourselves a C grade. Our students are experiencing spiritual growth, but we do not believe we are yet accomplishing our goal of producing the quality of leaders that we want to produce. We are not failing, we just haven't developed our training sufficiently to achieve the goals we deem necessary to accomplish our mission.

**Solutions.** Over the past few weeks we have been meeting (along with our new team member, Kennedy Mukuka) and we have determined that we must do the following three things: (a) Train our ministry staff, (b) Revise our training program to emphasize and better facilitate the spiritual and character development of our students, and (c) Incorporate new methods that we have recently developed that

are designed specifically to teach our students how to plant and mature churches effectively. We have decided not to conduct our Jan-Apr semester next year so that we might focus on training our Teachers and Mission Coordinators so that they, in turn, will be effectively equipped to implement our new strategies and better train leaders in the future. Our focus between the time school closes in Sept and next May will be devoted to internal development and training our staff so we can more effectively train leaders.

Now, the first question: Are we advancing the kingdom of God in Central Africa? Again, the results are mixed. Yes, churches are being planted in areas where there have been few; but our approach has not yet produced churches that mature and go on to plant other churches. Hence (solution), next month we are launching a new church-planting ministry that will focus exclusively on planting churches throughout Central Africa. We have decided it is not the work of an institution (school) to plant churches but to train leaders who will plant churches. People (not schools) plant churches. Hence, this new ministry will operate separate from the school and will seek to work with past students and churches to plant and mature churches (advance the kingdom of God in Central Africa).

**Finances and Return To The USA.** As you know this has been a difficult year financially for us. The declining dollar (30% in Zambia), inflation (35%) due primarily to the rising cost of fuel (petrol is now about \$9.75 per gallon), and the increased cost of running our school (due to increased number of students and staff) has all led to a tough year financially. We were most thankful for the recent fifth-Sunday contribution that was given to the work here by the Goodman Oaks congregation in Memphis (Southaven, MS). This was truly a life-saver for us this year! Many others of you (too many to mention here) have also responded to the need this year and we are **MOST** thankful to all of you for the extra assistance that you have given and sacrificed for this work.

Nevertheless, I realized a few months ago that to solve this financial short-fall for the long-term would require a major effort on our part to raise additional support. Consequently, I took several measures to finish up my teaching responsibilities here earlier than usual so that I could head off to the USA to invest in a concerted effort to raise additional support this Fall. Last year Lorie and I visited almost every supporting congregations in this work (all but about eight which we will visit this year). Of course, this didn't leave us much time to raise additional support last year and, thus, this left us facing a shortage this year.

Hence, I will be heading back to the USA in August (a little bit earlier than usual) so that we might apply ourselves to an intensive effort to raise new and additional support. In fact, I am not even going to be able to stay for graduation this year. Lorie, however, will be staying here another six weeks in order to wrap up the school year before joining me in Sept. This means, unfortunately, that I will not be able to visit many of you this year as Lorie and I need to focus intently on fund-raising. This is not easy work, as I am sure you can guess, and it requires a lot of travel and a lot of phone calling. And, of course, the US economy is not going to make things easy for us either; but we know God will provide. I would like to ask, therefore, that you keep us in your prayers as we begin this effort.