

# Zambia Newsletter

## Zambia Missions

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**Medical Mission.** I am just a bit late writing our newsletter for this month because this past month has been a terribly busy period of time for us here at Mapepe. The advanced team for the Medical Mission arrived the last week of May, followed a week later by the arrival of the medical team. Unfortunately, things did not go smoothly this year. We had a lot of logistical problems (mainly involving our vehicles), but nevertheless, we got everyone transported to Mkushi in time for the first day of the Medical Mission. If you are interested in the story of how things began, you can log onto our web site and find the E-Bulletin I sent out to everyone on June 1.

Despite these early challenges, the Medical Mission turned out to be a huge success (and with few problems). I don't have the final numbers yet, but I estimate that we treated about 6000 people in six villages and baptized about 20 people.

This is our third medical mission to this region of Zambia and, as a result, our relationships with the people of this whole region are VERY warm and supportive. Some of you may remember that it was not this way in the beginning as we were not welcomed very well (one village even burned the chief's house down in protest to his allowing us to come to their village). The people were afraid of us and frequently called us "Satanists" (i.e., people who will bring evil into their villages). Things couldn't be more opposite now! The people now welcome us warmly and respect us as a people of God. Our reputation is well known in this area and the chiefs have all invited us to come plant churches in their chiefdoms! Several churches have now been planted and we have had several new converts come to Mapepe for Bible and ministry training over the past two years. Several of these students have now returned home and planted new churches.

We now plan to build upon this "good will" and launch some new efforts to advance the kingdom of God in this region (which is centrally located in Zambia). We plan now to initiate some agricultural initiatives (e.g agriculture workshops, introduce drip-irrigation, etc) and increase our church-planting efforts in the next few years. In fact, the Serenje city council has just approved our application for land (which they will give us free of charge) and one of the chiefs just outside Serenje has just offered to give us 1000 acres within

his chiefdom. We will soon pick one of these sites as an extension center for our work. We will likely build a small building in which to conduct agriculture and leadership training

workshops for the churches and people of this region. This building will also serve as a place in which our students can sleep when they go out on mission trips to this area. We will use the land to set up a small agriculture demonstration farm using drip-irrigation. Obviously, none of these things would have happened if it had not been for the medical mission trips that we have conducted over the past three years. These trips have opened up doors for us and have established us as a people of God in this region.

I would like to express my thanks to Joe Godley (Director), Charlotte Bradsher, Ty and Judy Jones, Mark Taylor and all the other people who have participated in and contributed to this effort over the past three years. I would also like to thank the elders of the Sycamore View congregation who have supported this effort and allowed various staff members to work on this project.

**Future Medical Mission Efforts.** Our plan now is to expand these efforts and to focus primarily on the Kafue District (region just to the south of our college). There are very few churches in this region (our back-door) stretching for more than 100 miles to our south. We have already conducted several agriculture workshops in this region and are now going out twice a week to set up Bible studies and plant churches in these areas. It is our firm belief that we will easily be able to establish 30 new churches in this region within the next 4-5 years! This area will also provide our students plenty of opportunities to put into practice what they are learning and to gain valuable church-planting experience.

Several people who have been instrumental in our past medical mission efforts are now launching a new effort to raise money and start a mobile medical clinic (and eventually a medical clinic and distribution center). In fact, we are presently in the midst of conducting a needs assessment/analysis so as to determine the best direction in which to proceed. Not only do these efforts help people in need and glorify God, but they also greatly enhance our church-planting efforts!

**Prison Ministry.** Our prison ministry continues to flourish. Ruth Orr and David Harper (whose home churches in Lewisburg, TN and Nashville support this ministry) just completed a visit to follow-up their WBS students in Zambia and in prison and to

asses the work that is being done. Before leaving, Ruth wrote a report (which you can find on our web page). Just during their short visit, they were able to baptized more than 65 people (most of whom are prisoners). She also wrote that Zambia has become one of the most successful (if not the most successful) areas in which they have been working with WBS and with prisoners. In fact, this has also proven to be one of our most productive ministries here at Mapepe. While I don't tend to count baptisms, I do know that there have been more than 100 prisoners baptized each year. And, some of our best students have been converts of this ministry! Melvin (one of our staff members) serves as the Prison Minister for this ministry (which is funded by the Lewisburg church). What is unfortunate is the fact that Melvin can only make a few trips each month to just a few of our many prisons here in Zambia due to lack of money (transportation costs are just so expensive). It is our hope that we can increase funding to this ministry in the future.

**Upcoming Visit to USA.** It won't be long now before Lorie and I have to head back to the USA to continue our fund-raising efforts and make reports to all the churches that are supporting this work which we were not able to visit last year. This

includes most of you who are reading this newsletter as we have about 60 churches to visit in three months this year!

I am somewhat frustrated, however, as I have begun trying to put together this report for this year. Our work here has grown and matured to such an extent that it is no longer possible for me to share with you all that is going on here or tell you about all the great things that are happening here! This became clear to me the other day when I tried to explain all that is going on here to a first-time visitor who had just arrived here at Mapepe. It took more than three hours for me to show him around and educate him about all we were doing, why we were doing it, what our objectives and expected outcomes are, etc. And, then I thought, "How in the world will I be able to share all this with all of you back home?!" In any case, Lorie and I look forward to seeing many of you in a few months!

**Reminder:** Be sure to sign up for our e-bulletins. Go to [www.zambiamissions.org](http://www.zambiamissions.org) and click on the link "subscribe to e-bulletins" at the bottom of the web page.

## Lorie's Reflections

"Jehovah is my portion." (Psalms 119:57)

I can't help but rejoice at the wonders that God did through the medical mission team this year. They were the hands and feet for the Lord to hundreds of people each year. We saw a student who was thought to be totally blind fitted with glasses and see some for the first time since he was a child. Each village had its own stories to tell. Each station had their own testimonies after being touched by God's people. One story which touched our hearts deeply was that of one particular woman.

When we met her she would not make much eye contact. She had been suffering for a long time with a growth on her throat with extended so far out that it was even with her forehead in her profile picture. Under the care of our incredible medical team and their compassion for this woman the decision was made to send her to Lusaka for surgery to try to remedy her problem. This is her story.

The bus ride to Mapepe was long, and full of apprehension. She was leaving the village of her birth and traveling with strangers undergo a procedure that she was afraid could render her unable to speak or could rob her of her ability to breathe. The sun was slow to rise that morning since we are in the middle of winter here. She came to our house before daylight accompanied by her daughter. Both of them sat quietly on the swing. I was up in the kitchen and heard the gentle rocking sound of the swing. When I saw them, my heart was moved by the fear that their faces displayed. I fixed them some hot tea and waited with them until Bro. Oliver arrived to escort them to the hospital. By this time, the staff and construction crew had arrived for the days work. A most wonderful and unexpected blessing occurred when over 20

staff surrounded the woman and her daughter and filled the air with a reassuring chorus in Tonga ( a tribal language from southern province) saying "The Lord is my portion. That is all that I need". The strains grew louder with each repetition of these words. We all bowed our heads and a prayer was given. When we opened our eyes a great amount of the fear was gone from the faces of both the woman and her daughter. The surgery went well and then we waited. There was great rejoicing when on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day post-surgery, she spoke to her daughter. Her improvement has continued steadily.

I thank God for the devotion and compassion of the medical mission team. They blessed many lives during their time here but perhaps none more than...



I think that this is the best way to thank you all for "giving to the Lord". Here is a life that was changed. The Lord is our portion and that is all that we need.