

Zambia Newsletter

Zambia Missions

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Graduation 2012

Graduation Day at Mapepe arrived on Nov 17th. There were a total of 44 students who graduated, 31 first-year students and 13 M.T. students. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, so I'll let the pictures tell the story. This year was special as it was our seventh graduation since beginning this college eight years ago.



Pictured above are all 44 students. This graduation was also special because my daughter, Natasha (front row, last on the left), graduated through the program.



Above: first-year students with our MBC faculty.



Pictured below (left): our 13 graduates from the M.T. Program (Missionary-Training Program) along with our MBC Faculty. Unfortunately, I somehow failed to get a picture of just the M.T.

students by themselves and it is a little bit difficult to separate them from the Faculty (as all are wearing black).

And, finally, below is a picture of our MBC Teaching Faculty. Another factor that made this year extra special was the fact that we had the addition of Greg Swindle and Dixon & Flash Settle this year. This added input made a huge difference this past year and will ensure that our program continues doing well for the next couple of years while Lorie and I have to focus the majority of our time in the USA in an effort to raise additional support. We are most thankful for their combined efforts.



Project-Planning.

I want to make mention of another important event that took place this past month. Dixon Settle (who is retired from the business world) has extensive experience in Project Planning. One of our greatest challenges in preparing our students for ministry is the lack of critical thinking skills and the ability to make a plan and implement it. Thus, one of the things that Dixon implemented this year was a year-long, afternoon program called, "Project Planning."

The students were divided into 5 teams (which also taught the students how to work in teams which is another critical skill) and were given the assignment of planning a project for campus development. Dixon taught them extensively about how to assess needs, develop a plan (identifying all the steps to implementing a plan), assessing and organizing resources, and then finally implementing the plan. Dixon's friends and church family back in Wilmington, NC (mostly members of the Pine Valley congregation) helped fund the projects.

The five projects were: (a) Paint the classroom building (which has never been painted), (b) Build a volleyball court for the college, (c) Build a playground for the staff children on campus, (d) Record a CD of acapella songs by the students (which involved renting a recording studio in Lusaka), and (e) building an amphitheater (or outside chapel) on the hillside overlooking the Baptistery (as there we have never had much a place for people to gather when people are baptized).

The projects were all finally completed the week before graduation as we concluded with a series of dedication ceremonies for each project. Pictured below is the dedication of the outdoor chapel (amphitheater).



Lorie's Reflections.

No rain for 8 days. The heat was intense and could be seen in wiggly waves coming from the top of our tin roofed classroom. The sounds of the delighted children inside quickly caused my attention and gaze to enter the door of the building. There in neat rows were all of the children in their best clothes (some with holes, torn zippers, etc) awaiting the end of year celebration for Daybreak Basic Christian School. My first thought was that I needed to have a "Dorcus Day" and mend all these clothes... then I saw their faces – the delight of God's precious children about to quote His Word to their excited parents. The praises in song, Bible verses and dramas were remarkable and I know that the heavenly hosts were rejoicing!

Perhaps the best moment came when the parents were given the opportunity to thank the school for the education of their children. One young mother from the Sonadi Compound (a shanty town across the road from Mapepe Bible College) said that not only had her child learned ABC's and 1-2-3's, but she had also learned God's way of respecting others. The young women went on to say that her household atmosphere had changed to more respect and her marriage was even better because of the child's learning and sharing what she knew at home. As tears filled my eyes and heart, I realized that God's powerful mission has always been one where the smallest and weakest become the kings and teachers. God had used a tiny six-year old to bring His peace to a household.

At the end of the ceremony we gave a school T-shirt to each of the students for a school uniform for the January term and they put them on immediately. You should have seen the smiles of the Moms and Dads and the children – I know they touched God's heart. First picture (below) is one of children with their teachers at the End-of-the-Year Celebration.



The second is a picture of some of the children with their brand new school uniform T-shirts



Expansion of the M.T. Program.

I'll say more about this at a later time when I have more room in the Newsletter, but we are (as planned) taking the next step in expanding our M.T. program. Now that we have our new campus and were given a sizeable donation in October to begin development of this new campus, we are ready to move forward in our plans for the M.T. program (which involves increasing training from one to three years and bringing students with their wives for training). Up until now we have not had the housing (for student families) nor the land (for raising their own food as we cannot afford to start feeding whole families). But, now we have the land and now we have the funds to begin construction & development. Pictured below is our construction crew learning how to make blocks out of dirt with our new Hydraform block machine.

