

Zambia Newsletter

June 2004

Dear Friends

We are most encouraged as our progress in raising the monthly support is continuing well. We estimate that we now have just over 70% of our monthly support! As a result, we believe we are just 3-4 months from departing for Zambia! Having reached this point, we are now initiating the first steps necessary in making this move. We will soon begin the process of applying for a resident visa for Zambia, preparing our shipment, buying a vehicle, renting a house, getting our health records in order (vaccinations), purchasing tickets, etc.

This month has been a busy one. Four weeks ago Lorie and I drove to Lubbock, Texas to visit Sunset School of Preaching and to sit down with Doug Reeves (academic dean) to begin working out a curriculum and to begin planning for the beginning of the school in Zambia next year. We are now planning to begin the first semester of leadership training in Lusaka in May 2005.

There are two primary seasons in Zambia that will greatly influence the operations of our work in Zambia: (a) rainy season (Oct thru April) and (b) dry season (May – Sept). Because we want to begin by training already existing leaders, it will be necessary to work around their schedules. And, since life in Zambia is still very much centered around the agricultural cycles, the busiest time for Zambians is during the rainy season (growing season for crops).

This means that during the rainy season, we will likely need to do our leadership training by extension (i.e., we will need to travel out from Lusaka to certain centralized sites throughout the country to conduct 1-3 week classes for already existing leaders). However, during the dry season (when leaders can travel away from their family farms for extended periods), we will hold classes at our central campus in Lusaka during the months of May through September.

The plan now is for us to begin the first of our classes in Lusaka in May of next year (dry season). Our family will arrive in Zambia just as the rainy season is beginning. This will give us just 5-6 months to get everything ready for the beginning of school in May. During this preparation period, Lorie and I will be busy finding a house and getting set up in Lusaka. We will begin to visit churches throughout the country and to recruit leaders interested in attending our school. We also hope to begin conducting some leadership training workshops by extension.

Already Doug Reeves (Sunset) and I are lining up teachers to assist me next summer in Lusaka. Each session will last three weeks, consisting of two classes per session (three-hour morning class and a three-hour afternoon class). I will teach one class per session but (for the next year or two) I will need to recruit one visiting teacher per session to teach the other course. Most of these teachers will come over from USA. All teachers will be screened and approved by Sunset and myself. Already I have lined up one teacher for next year which happens to be my Dad, Parker French (who hopes to teach next July).

During our trip to Texas last month, we also visited with Kelly Hamby who is one of the primary leaders involved with the work at Namwianga. This is the work that has existed 80 years in the Southern province of Zambia where 70% of the members of the churches of Christ are located (I speak about this work in my presentation about Zambia). Although I have visited with the missionaries at Namwianga, I had not yet had opportunity to visit with Kelly Hamby. One thing main reasons for this visit was to explore ways in which we join forces in certain efforts to advance the work of the Lord in Zambia. Most likely I will make visits to Namwianga to conduct leadership training courses for leaders among the southern churches. This will enable us to use the excellent facilities at Namwianga as a base for our leadership training by extension.

All this means that there is not much time left before our family will move to Zambia. There is, however, so MUCH that still must be done before we can actually leave. Besides all the things that I mentioned at the

beginning of this Newsletter, Lorie must still complete and defend her thesis for her Masters degree in Education. Even during the few days since I started this Newsletter, I have already accomplished two major tasks for our departure: (a) I contacted our travel agent and scheduled our flight itinerary, and (b) I bought a vehicle for Zambia with the help of Patrick Kawinga in Lusaka (bought a used Toyota in Japan to be shipped to Lusaka so it will be there when we arrive). Thus, we have now begun the actual process of physically moving to Zambia. Please keep us in your prayers as we now work through all these complex details in moving to Lusaka. May the Lord give us wisdom and success as we proceed. – David

The aroma of freshly prepared peanut butter and jelly sandwiches filled the air of the house, as well as, the chattering sounds of hungry children waiting to be fed. The children eagerly scrambled to get in line first. When each child had received their sandwiches, they found a spot to sit down and eat. As each bite of sandwich disappeared into the mouth of a child, the chattering of hunger was replaced with the silence of a full mouth... satisfaction.

I was so fascinated by the children that I could not take my eyes off of them. As their physical hunger was filled, they became satisfied. I thought about the promises that we, as God's children, have in Matthew 5. If we hunger and thirst f

Lorie's Reflections

After eating and being filled, the children were asked to get their backpacks and to form another line. The government had sent representatives from the health department to test the children for AIDS. The children were not rushing to fill the spaces in this line.

The eager chatter which had been heard earlier was silenced. Their facial expressions were troubled and fearful. The silence was broken only by the crying of a child and soft voices of their caretakers, Sue and Rod Calder, as they consoled the children. Rod wrapped his "father's" arms around the children and Sue comforted them with a "mother's" voice. When their fearful eyes met the comforting eyes of their father or they hid their face in the safety and love of his arms, they were comforted. I thought again of the promises we have in God. Those who mourn will be comforted.

Though a smorgasbord of meats, cheeses, lettuce and tomatoes had been spread for the adults to eat, I had been so intrigued by the children that I had not taken the time to eat. The children were getting ready to return to Bible school. One by one their little, backpack clad frames exited the door of the house. I found myself drawn to walk outside with them.

On the way out the door, I picked up a piece of bread to munch on. One little girl was waiting just outside the door for a few of the other little girls so they could all walk together. I noticed that her eyes were fixed directly on me. At first, I thought she was afraid because she didn't know me but I soon realized that she was staring at the partially eaten bread in my hand. I offered the bread to her and she took it. A slight smirk crept across her cheek as she ate the rest of the bread.

Out of the house came a group of children, and they were all off to school. I ran ahead of them to snap a picture, and I thought what a blessing it is to be privileged to share with one of God's precious children. (Story based on our visit to Namwianga Mission in Zambia last August).



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