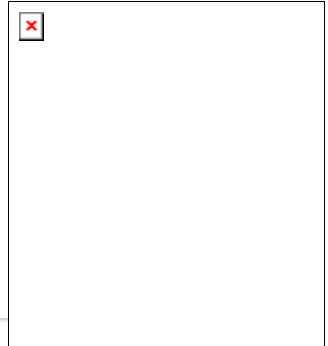


Zambia Newsletter

February 2005

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Dear Friends,

After eight weeks of much effort, we finally were able to acquire official registration for the school and, subsequently, were able to secure our work permit. This now allows us to work (teach) in Zambia and to stay in the country for the next two years (must be renewed every two years). This also allowed us to clear our shipment through customs duty-free which we were able to do last week.

We are also happy to report that work on our house at Mapepe is now also moving along quite nicely. We ran into a major delay when we went to order concrete for the foundation footing. We paid the company in advance (required) and then waited for 10 days. When we inquired as to the delay, we were told that they could not find fuel for the concrete truck (there was no diesel in Lusaka for more than a week). After that we were told that the truck was broke. Next, they ran out of concrete and could not get any (which was true). Finally, they delivered a load, but they failed to send enough. The job was left undone. Then, the truck broke again. By pressuring them they finally promised to deliver the next day (Sat). When I called at noon to see if they had made the delivery, I was informed that the power had gone off and had been off all day; thus, they couldn't mix the concrete nor load it into the truck for delivery. On the following Monday, they finally made the delivery after our having to wait for more than five weeks.

Since then work has progressed quite well. We now have the foundation ready, they are finishing the septic tank, and they are digging the trench for the footing for the security wall around the plot. However, we must now again petition the cement company to bring us concrete to pour the concrete slab (floor) and the footing for the wall. So, here we go again! Such is life in Zambia.

We are also waiting for our electricity to be hooked up. Patrick (our friend and builder) paid for this to be done more than four months ago. It now turns out that they surveyed the wrong plot. Because we have no electricity, we have no water (need electricity to run the pump). Because we have had no water, we are unable to mix mortar to lay the concrete blocks (which is what the house will be made of). However, Patrick was able to work out a deal with a neighbor to get water from his plot for one month.

I share all this with you just so you can get somewhat a "feel" for what it is like to live and do business in Zambia. Nothing happens without much time and effort... and GREAT PATIENCE!

Much progress has also been made in formalizing our plans for the start of the school in May. Working with the Zambian leadership, we have now finalized a class schedule and have printed out a brochure to announce the beginning of the new school. These brochures are now being mailed out to every church for which we have an address. That is, of course, the big problem. We know that there are over 800 churches in Zambia but we only have about 200 current addresses. The big challenge now is to find a way to spread the word to those other 600 churches.

On Sundays we have been visiting the various churches throughout Lusaka. I am, of course, always asked to preach. Thus far we have visited the following churches: Central, Mapepe, George Central, Chilenje, Mtendere, Chelston, and Chilanga. Although the Central and Chilenje churches number about 200, the others only number about 80 in attendance. The average weekly contribution averages only about \$7.00 to \$12.00. Only four of them have a permanent structure, the others either meet in schools or temporary thatched buildings.

Last week Lorie and I (along with our girls) made a trip down south to visit Roy and Kathi Merritt at Namwianga Mission. Roy's father (Dow Merritt) was the first missionary to come to Zambia (1927) and he stayed in Zambia most of all his whole life. Namwianga was the third and final mission that he established (around 1936). Roy has, thus, lived in Zambia all his life and now continues his father's work. Although Roy has served in many different ways, he and Kathi are now involved in two main ministries: (a) overseeing an orphanage that cares for infants whose mothers have died (often because of AIDS), and (b) operating an orphanage for street kids (which is their main focus). Roy and Kathi now have 24 street kids living in their house with them. These are kids they have found on the streets who have no family to care for them. In actuality, they are trying to "salvage" these kids since they have developed many social and emotional problems (as they have had to struggle to survive on the streets). This is one of the most challenging ministries of all.

Roy is also involved in efforts to plant churches in the northwest province (a remote area next to the Congo). This is an area where there are few churches of any kind and an area that I am especially interested in since it is a "launching off" place from which to reach into the Congo one day. These churches are extremely weak and this why Roy has asked me to accompany him on his next trip to the north in late February so that I might begin considering how we might assist in strengthening these churches and developing leadership for them.

Two or three times a month, I send out a email message (E-Bulletin) that reports many other details of our work that I don't have room to include in this monthly Newsletter. Periodically, I also send out an email which I called a "Cultural Journal" which describes certain features of Zambian life and culture that I think might be of interest to you all in the USA. For those with broadband or those willing to download large files via dial-up connection (which takes time), I am also emailing pictures of our work here in Zambia. If you would like to receive any of these (or all three), just email me with your email address and tell me which of the above emails you would like to receive (E-Bulletin, Cultural Journal, Pictures).

Lorie's Reflections

I greet you in the name of the Lord! It's hard to believe that it is already February (the month that most people in America associate with love). Let me begin this reflection by sharing with you what your love and support for God's mission here has already made possible.

Each time that David preaches for a church, he tells them how happy we are to be here in Zambia with them. There is always a chorus of voices (from the oldest to the youngest) shouting, "AMEN"! The Zambian Christians know that you all are showing your love for them because you sent us here to serve.

We visited one, newly planted congregation (in a shanty area of Lusaka) which had been constructed with logs for beams, cardboard, empty cement bags, and paper for interior walls, and thatch for a roof (leaks). Communion was spread out on a hand-hewn table and our feet rested on a mud floor (rainy season). When the speaker got up to give the communion talk, he proclaimed that "Different kinds of love had brought us here to Zambia: God's love for us and the love of those who have sent Bro. David and his family here to help the churches in Zambia to grow." By sending to them "a helper," you continue to show God's love to the Zambians.

We were waiting in the car last Sunday for our lunch food to be ready. A young boy walked up to the car window and put his hand to his mouth to show he was hungry. All we had in the way of food at that moment was a zip-loc bag with a few crackers in it. We opened the car door and handed him the bag. He closely inspected it to see what it was (you know that Americans sometimes eat strange things), then slowly raised his face up to reveal the biggest smile you have ever seen. We all watched in amazement as the little boy "danced" away eating the crackers. He looked back periodically, still wearing the smile and held up the bag of crackers. Your love for God and the lost is what has brought us here so that we could tell



you of that smile.

I know that many of you sacrificed to make it possible for us to serve here in Zambia. I thank God for you daily and I am so happy that we can be the extension of God's love (through you) for His precious children here. In this month associated with love, thank you for continuing to show love to "the least of these;" for as Jesus himself expressed it, "... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Mt 25:40).

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