

MZUZU NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2025

MZUZU AIDS ORPHAN CARE PROGRAM – CANADA-MALAWI

SMILES OF JOY AND HOPE!!



Report from Lisa Bailey who visited Mzuzu in November!!!

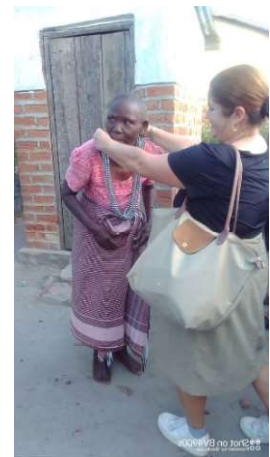
In November I had the great privilege of traveling to Mzuzu with my husband Ty. It was a trip planned for March 2020 but was postponed due to Covid. After flying to Lilongwe, Malawi via Addis Ababa and staying the night at a hotel in Lilongwe, we had a six-hour car ride with Small Steps Adventures, arriving at our Sunbird Mzuzu hotel mid-afternoon. After checking into the hotel, we walked past the golf course and down the road 10 minutes to St Mark's church where Father Phiri and Project Manager Paul Kamlaza gave us warm welcome.

It had been seven years since I had visited St. Mark's church with my mother in 2017. We had a fruitful meeting with Father Phiri in his office. As we sat at his desk discussing the program, the plans and the challenges we face in raising funds, I couldn't help but think back seven years to the meeting Mom and I had with the late Father Chifisi in that same office. Father Phiri was

delighted to receive a letter from Father Matt McMillan, along with a St. Peter's mug and some maple gifts I had brought. We made plans with Paul to visit latrines the next day. I manage a latrine project that is under the umbrella of the Mzuzu Program, and to date we have built nearly 100 latrines for the orphans throughout the city of Mzuzu (a city of 221,000 residents). After my visit in 2017 I asked Paul to be the Project Manager for the latrine program. Later he became the Mzuzu Coordinator for the feeding program and to this day he handles all the oversight (the accounting, planning and delivery) of the feeding program, the education, nurse, dentist, tailoring, and latrine project. We couldn't do this work without Paul's faithful and unwavering support. However, I wasn't aware that it was Paul's goal to have us see all 100 latrines over the next few days!

On the Friday we met Paul and, learning that he no longer had a car, set out in a taxi for the hills on the edge of the city. Malawi is one of the poorest African countries and the people the Mzuzu program serves are some of the poorest on the planet. They live to get their next meal (often only 1-2 meagre meals a day). The taxi ride in the hills is comparable to a roller coaster ride at Canada's Wonderland, with dirt roads that quickly get washed out in the rainy season January-April.

We visited many homes, met the grannies and gave them a scarf and piece of costume jewellery brought from home in a thrift shop suitcase we could leave behind. Family and friends (some from St. Peter's) provided us with so many lovely gifts to give and the grannies were delighted! The orphan children were largely at school that day. Primary school is



provided at no cost by the government and in most schools a charitable organization 'Mary's Meals' provides a breakfast of Likuni Phala. Secondary school is available for a fee. We walked back to our hotel from the hills, visiting latrines along the way. A grueling 6 hours of walking in 28 degree heat in a long

skirt (customary in Malawi) and I had heat stroke that night!

Before 9:00 on the Saturday morning we walked to the church and the ten Mother's Union members, who form the Mzuzu committee there at St. Mark's, warmly welcomed us with an African dance. I was so enchanted I didn't have a chance to film it! Then we were put to work attempting to stir the big pot of rice and serving the tea and large bun. Once done we were free to walk around the hall, where Ruth gave me a big hug and had us see her 65 students learning sewing and knitting. There are five working foot treadle



sewing machines, three instructors and almost an equal division of boys and girls. The young children start with hand sewing on scrap material whereas the older children learn measuring and cutting and then use the treadle machines. They were able to measure, cut, and sew aprons for Ty



and I that morning, which we wore for the latter part of the day. We met the nurse who was visiting, with a line-up of orphans and guardians. One at a time they receive information and medicine which she had on hand and is kept in Paul's office. We also walked the grounds and watched the children play football (soccer) with the balls we had purchased at

Cobourg's Canadian Tire. Girls and boys had their own games going and it was fun to watch how much they enjoyed it, while I cringed at the thought of a ball going through a church window!



By 11:30 we were asked to help serve the main meal. I was tasked with serving the rice and Paul had me show him how much I would put on the plate, increasing the amount three times before I got it right! Ty sat next to me to serve the beef.

Along with vegetables and a banana it was a full meal they sat and ate on the hall porch and grass. After lunch we distributed packages of toothpaste, toothbrushes and soap which had been bagged by the Mother's Union Mzuzu Committee at the instruction of Paul. As the bags were given out, Paul had the children who were receiving further education (secondary or post-secondary) stand together before us for photos, including a group of six children who haven't yet been put 'on our ticket' as Paul says. Following that, there were some scripture readings and education and one of the lead boys Shadreck, just back from studying Mathematical Engineering at a University near Blantyre (supported by St. Peter's), spoke to all the seated orphans in the hall to welcome Ty and I and explain about the work St. Peter's is doing for them. He was an impressive young man, and on behalf of all the orphans he expressed thanks to St. Peter's and the Mzuzu committee. We left at about 2:00 and while our walk was only 10 minutes back to the hotel, I could appreciate that the orphans and their grannies might be walking up to 90 minutes in the 26-30 degree heat. Being there that day was such a moving experience, magical in a way but also heartbreaking that there is so much need. Later that night, Paul and his wife Christina joined us for dinner at our hotel and feasted on chambo fish.

On Sunday morning we arrived at the church just before the 7:00 service. I had been asked to preach and chose the English service (the Chichewa service is translated). Our visit was timely because the Diocese had established the focus of the day was orphan care. Following the service and lunch back at the hotel, we met Paul and drove through other areas of Mzuzu seeing latrines until near dark at 6:00. It was especially fun to visit on the Sunday when many of the children were home. We spent the day Monday visiting the remaining homes and latrines. Ty would sometimes wait in the car chatting with the neighbourhood children who came to see the strange white guy 'azulu'. That night we visited homes until after dark. As we walked around those neighbourhoods with Paul and Peter (one of the contractors) we watched as the cooking fires were lit and I said to Ty how fortunate we were to have this opportunity. Normally mission workers go to hospitals, schools, and churches so to walk around neighbourhoods visiting homes was an exceptional experience.

An election is coming up this year and hopefully that will bring positive change. There is an abundance of road work going on, and gas shortages cause line-ups which sometimes last three days. The orphans need our help and despite their extreme poverty the people in Mzuzu are happy and grateful. We recognized that their small communities bring an abundance of togetherness and opportunities for companionship and problem solving. They essentially live outside with their neighbours, and you can see that they don't have the anxiety, depression, and loneliness that we see here in Ontario. I am so grateful to be a member of the Mzuzu committee and see the difference that St. Peter's and St. Mark's are making in so many lives. As Galatians chapter 5 verses 13-14 says "Love your neighbor as yourself" and I believe our neighbours exist in the far reaches of the globe, just as they exist next door.

Yours in Christ,

Lisa Bailey



More Photos of Lisa & Ty's visit





Hot off the Press News!!!!

Below is a letter from Obed with very encouraging and exciting news!

Dear sir

Happy new year! First, I hope this email finds you well and refreshed after the holidays.

I am thrilled to share some exciting news as 2025 starts off.

As a result of your generosity and the dedication you have invested in promoting my education, I am pleased to share with you that I have reached a significant milestone in my academic journey.

Let me take you back in 2024 first semester has been a success and 20th December it was the finishing line of second semester whose results are not yet out, i would like to let you know that if the second semester results will be of success I will be certified in my studies as an advanced diploma holder in electronics engineering.

I am so grateful because every breakthrough and every success here forth will be reflected upon your effort, I plead with you to share my gratitude to the whole team and church.

If opportunities arise to pursue a degree, I will be sure to keep you informed.

Thank you once again, for your unwavering support, may this new year bring you blessings from the lord

Yours truly

Obed Mbewe

Thank you to all our Donors

After reading the above letter from Obed you can appreciate how all our efforts are really making a huge difference to the children/young people in Mzuzu. They all do appreciate all the help we can provide for them. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts that you are all helping to make this happen, because if it wasn't for you, we wouldn't be able to do all that we are.

With our heart felt thanks
The Mzuzu Committee

At Christmas every girl orphan received a new dress and every boy orphan received shorts and a tee shirt -



WITH THESE GIFTS YOU CAN HELP ST. MARKS AIDS ORPHANS:

\$100

Purchase 5 family sized mosquito nets to prevent malaria.

Pay an instructor to teach tailoring for 2 months.

Annually make children smile at Christmas with gifts of soap, sugar, salt and oil.

Purchase new shoes, blankets and used winter clothing for 5 children.

Feed one child every Saturday for 3 months.

\$200

Provide funding for sick orphans to have hospital visits for 2 months.

Purchase lamp oil for 10 students for one school term... to study at night.

Fund new green agricultural and self-sustaining feeding initiatives.

Purchase shoes and clothes locally for 20 children.

\$300

Provide special Likuni Phala feeding for one month for HIV children to reduce mortality rates and maintain health.

Provide school uniforms for 5 students.

Provide emergency drugs for 250 children for 2 months.

\$400

Send one child to secondary school for one year... for uniforms, tuition fees, books and one daily meal.

Tailoring training for girls and boys for 5 months.

Additional cost of blankets annually.

\$500

Funding a nurse and doctor bi-weekly on Saturdays for priority orphan health checkups... for 2 months.

Purchase of vegetable seeds and plants for small local kitchen gardens.

Gifts are under the umbrella of St. Peter's, Cobourg as a registered charity ... # 10803 8563 RR001. For more information, please visit our website: www.mzuzuchildren.com For further contact: Colin Turnpenney, Co-Ordinator, MAOCP, St. Peter's Church, Cobourg (colinv@bell.net)