

MALAWI – October 2011

We can not believe that it is three months since our last newsletter.

It has been a busy period getting the nursery in Samuti back on track after the holidays. Most of the repairs to the buildings have been completed and the painting done. There are now 60 children attending and they are enjoying the new toys to play with, many are learning to draw and colour for the first time. They like the Likuni Phala that they have for lunch. It is made from groundnuts (peanuts) and is like a porridge, it does taste rather good!

The gardeners are doing a grand job with growing vegetables, at present we have sweet potatoes, green beans, onions, carrots and English potatoes on the go. These will be sold in the village or at market to help with the nursery. The gardeners also have the role of washing the children's uniform on Wednesdays, it is general across the country that school uniforms be washed mid-week.

The children are also bathed once a week, twelve each day. This has proved beneficial in helping to identify any sores or wounds that need attention, as well as improving personal hygiene. The guardians are very happy for us to be doing this. It is amazing how they don't seem to bother with wounds until they get so bad and then need hospital treatment. One boy had a cut that was stuck together with superglue to make it heal!



Dealing with the primary and secondary schools is always more of a challenge. It is hard for primary schools as there are so many children in the classrooms. Standard 1 has 300 children and two teachers in the class, even the teacher told us that the children learn very little. This year they only took in children aged 7 years and above because of the lack of space. The toilet blocks have been completed that have been kindly funded by Swaffham Junior School.

The students who we have helped at secondary school did not do very well with their exams. This seems to be partly due to the teachers being on strike for a long period and also some of the students missing school. We have now found a private teacher who is helping with extra tuition at a very reasonable cost, hopefully things will improve. In Malawi if they fail English in their final year at secondary school they fail everything and end up with no qualifications. Even jobs such as a waiter require the basic qualifications here.

A youth ministry has been started in Samuti village. A Malawian friend, Humphries, who has just graduated from bible college leads this weekly event. Different sports are played and then discussions are held on topical issues from a biblical perspective. There are a good number attending regularly, age range 13 – 30 something.

The children here at Dzanja have settled back into school life. We have had various health issues with them, one of which was measles, happily this we managed to contain to one child only being affected. They all seem to be doing ok at present though.

We do realise now that part of the reason God has brought us here is to do a work in us. He is revealing more to us about His love and softening our hard hearts. He is also teaching us about patience and perseverance in dealing with the children.

We are looking forward to our visit back to the UK in November for 4 weeks, we arrive on the 8th November and leave on the 6th December. As well as being a time of rest, we would love to meet up with family and friends who are available. If you would like to see us please email us at anytime or phone on 07909 750398 when we are in the UK.

It is getting very hot here now most days. It is also a beautiful time of year with many trees in bloom and spectacular colour foliage. There are also a large variety of birds coming into the garden. We are amazed at how quickly plants grow and flower here, unfortunately the weeds do also!



Prayer points:

Give thanks for All that the Lord has done in these first 6 months here, both through us and in us.

For everything we have to do before we leave for the UK, especially at the nursery in Samuti. For safe travel to and from the UK.

There are still difficulties obtaining fuel in Malawi, please pray for this situation to ease.

We are still waiting for our Malawian driving licenses to come through, please pray we will get these at the end of the month, as this will make life easier.

With many blessings and love,

Les & Kathie