

# Mwandi OVC Project Newsletter



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Mwandi United Church of Zambia Orphans & Vulnerable Children Project

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Newsletter No: 49 – July to September 2011

Dear Friends,

I hope that you are well.

**Ruairidh, Lucy and I are currently in Australia as of the 28<sup>th</sup> September.** I had my Thyroid removed at the Flinders Medical Centre in Adelaide. I was only in hospital for a few days but I have taken a few weeks to get back to normal. I have to take tablets every day for the rest of my life, and I am able to get them in Zambia with no problems. At least now I can start feeling 'normal' again and do all things without feeling so tired and worn out. We are in Australia until the end of October. It is so good to see family, Church family and friends.

**Lucy is loving being back in Australia with her Grandparents, Aunt, Uncle, cousins and friends.** Attending kindergym is Lucy's weekly highlight and being with children her own age is so important for her. She is getting cheekier each day and makes us laugh a lot. She is quite the character. Her hair is so blonde now with curls all over. When we get back to Zambia we will be taking Lucy to pre-school once a week in Livingstone. A long way for a 2 hour lesson, but we feel it's so important.

My Sunday school class has really suffered this year due to my ill health, I run out of energy by Friday afternoons and by Sunday I am exhausted. I pray now that I can have the Sunday school class up and running and attend youth group each Friday night. The youth group is going strong but not many girls attending as there is no woman leader. Pastor Simasiku, the Baptist minister runs the youth group and our visitors also go and share with the youth. They are good kids and Friday night is a part of their lives now. I just need to get the girls back to the group so that it makes them feel wanted and part of a group.

Before we left Mwandi the weather was certainly heating up and so were the results from our recent elections. We now have a new President and already we are hearing he is clamping down on the corruption and other economic and social issues.

**We have had quite a number of visitors to the Mission and OVC Project over the past few months;** achieving a lot of jobs, training of staff and students, fun times, tears and relationships built. If anyone is interested in coming to Mwandi Mission please contact me anytime as it won't be long and it will be 2012 before we know it. I thank the Lord for who he calls to come and visit us in Mwandi as we are so blessed with very special visitors that come to share with us all.

Our recent visitors have attended a few Church programs with memories and sermons that will remain with them forever. Our new Reverend Wezi Manda had his induction in September, a wonderful turn up with joyous singing and excitement. We pray that he continues to teach The UCZ congregation members with challenging sermons and encourage members to grow in their faith. Wezi and his family are from the copper belt province of Zambia. Mary, his wife only recently had a baby girl and they have a young boy.

**Feeding Program – How much do you spend on coffees, cakes & biscuits in a week? Never thought about it? Well it only costs \$6 per week to feed one of the children on our feeding program. About the same for 1 cup of coffee and a biscuit.**

With the world economic problems we are facing a shortfall in the support we usually receive and the finance is just not coming in this year for our feeding program, ***we are struggling***. The last thing I want to do is remove

children from the program or change the menu. ***So I am asking you to spread the word and to help fundraise for our children. It's a BASIC essential FOOD.***

Something we don't hesitate about buying when we feel hungry or reaching for the fridge or pantry door is FOOD and it's something we do take for granted. But if we don't feed our children this one meal a day they will die, especially those children that are HIV positive.

***God has really placed on my heart an old Sunday school song we used to sing 'Give me oil in my lamp keep on burning, give me oil in my lamp I pray, give me oil in my lamp keep on burning , keep on burning til the break of day'. Our children's oil is food and we are asking for our children's lamp to keep burning until the end we pray. We desperately need your help so we can give the children on our feeding program continued support with one meal per day.***

What about your children's class at school or Sunday school class could have a fundraiser to help children their age continue to have food in their stomachs or even help us pay for the toothpaste we use each month and the shower gel the children use each week when they shower.

- We use 12 large toothpaste tubes per month at \$3.00 per tube = \$36.00 for 270 children
- 6x 2 litre container of Shower gel per month \$4.00 per 2 ltr tub = \$24.00 for 270 children

**The annual budget for our feeding program is \$55,000 USD**

- The feeding Program uses :2 Cows per month
- 25x Chickens. (per meal; to feed 270 children plus 12 adult volunteers).
- 300 X eggs per month
- 50kg Rice per feeding and ½ pig (40kg) per feeding

**Farmers** – You could put a few acres of crop in and the profits of that crop could go towards the Feeding program? What about giving the profit from a fat lamb towards our feeding program?



**Bible study groups or work place groups** – Can you put away a tithe amount and send to us monthly? We have been putting money tins in businesses all over the Eyre Peninsula – South Australia and if you can help do it all over the world we would easily have enough money to feed our 270 children. People are amazing givers with their change at shops.

Casual clothes day at work, schnitzel nights, movie nights, afternoon teas, sausage sizzles. I am sure you have heard of many ideas for fundraising. ***Please help by helping others in need.***

**Health checks** – **We are constantly having the children on the feeding program go for health checks at the hospital.** Recently we sent about 100 children to the hospital and they come to see us for their results as their records are kept at OVC. It was so lovely to see the guardians of the children dress the children so clean and nicely, I was so proud to see the children looking so healthy and smart. One Auntie had two girls in matching pink dresses that she had made for them, they were both HIV positive but look so healthy and the Auntie was very knowledgeable about how to care for the girls etc. I can see changes in how guardians are looking after their orphaned relatives and especially who are HIV positive.

**Our trained child counsellors** are now spending two days of the week in the village visiting all the families of the children who are HIV positive on the feeding program. We do not want to see any more deaths of our children who are HIV positive. So our counsellors are guiding and encouraging the family members to make sure the children are taking ARV's on time and visiting the clinic at the hospital on the correct dates.

**The Carpentry centre classes** are going really well. We have 8 students and Pascal our teacher is doing a great job. The students arrive at 8am, attend morning staff devotions and finish up at 12.30pm. I have managed to source off-cuts of mukwa (type of local wood) from a sawmill in Sesheke for the students to work with, so we have had to build a woodshed for storage. We still need to source some more hand tools, but this is never as easy as walking into the hardware store and choosing what we want. I have had to purchase some tools from South Africa as we just do not have the availability of tools in Livingstone and quality that will last. We need support to help this

Vocation training to keep running, once the students get enough skills they will be able to make furniture to sustain itself and have some small income for the project. We are hoping that at about 4 months into the course that this will be able to happen.



**Agric training for 10 OVC** is still going well. On Saturday mornings they do theory at OVC Project and Sunday afternoons working the Agric Project garden. The students are gaining confidence with gardening skills and we pray that they utilise these skills so they will be able to grow their own vegetables and fruit for their families.

I mentioned in the last newsletter that all our trees and vegetables in the OVC garden had all been badly hit with frost and everything looked dead. The trees have now green shoots and the vegetable garden is flourishing. We are selling vegetables to the community to generate income and this is only after all the food is picked for the feeding program daily. It's just amazing to see all the plants and trees come back to life.

**Christmas isn't that far away** – In Australia there is already decorations for sale and Christmas carols playing in the shops. **A great idea for a Christmas present to someone who has 'everything' is to send a child to school in 2012.** **A dream of a child in Mwandi** is to complete school and you can help bring that dream to life. IF you are interested please contact Sandra Pugsey – [sandrapugsley@gmail.com](mailto:sandrapugsley@gmail.com) See contact details below.

**Pastor Mudenda and the child counsellors went to visit the village of Sikuzu (A small village 10km east from Mwandi) last month.** We support quite a number of children in all our programs from Sikuzu village. The visit was to meet with the guardians to hear questions and discuss what is happening at the OVC Project. The child counsellors spent time empowering the guardians about the rights of a child and signs on abuse. The ladies from Sikuzu come and clean the toilets at OVC regularly and come and help clean the surrounds

Paul, the young boy I spoke about in my last newsletter is doing ok; he is now living with his great aunt in a village not too far away from Mwandi. He is doing well and enjoying a stable life. He is not attending the feeding program, but I am going to visit him when I get back to Mwandi to see if he is really doing ok. Please continue to pray for him as he needs to feel love.



**OVC Stores person** – This year we have a new storeman as Webby our previous storeman is now in college. Mubiana was a night watchman at OVC (and helped Kevin Freeth build our house) and we felt that he could handle the job as storeman. He is doing a great job and one of our visitors this year has taught him some basic computer skills. He is a strong Christian and attends one of the local Pentecostal Churches where he is an Elder. Mubiana is often leading the morning staff devotion at OVC. He is eager to learn and a wonderful family man.

**We finally have the internet back on at the OVC Project.** This is a wonderful tool for communication and for our students that were recently home from University in Lusaka; it was great for them to use it to be able to continue their studies. We most certainly do not take our communication for granted over in Mwandi at all. It is an amazing gift and we do appreciate it so much. The cost for the monthly fee is \$150; if you can help us with this cost we would really appreciate it.

**I have attached a report from Social worker – Rebecca** who has this year, been empowering the guardians of children on feeding program. In November, she will continue educating and encouraging these guardians. Please have a read.

I hope and pray you all can help us keep our feeding program running and our internet fees I thank you for your continued support. Please spread the word of our needs, **basic but life changing needs**. I ask you to keep us on your prayer list.

May God continued to bless you all.

Lots of Love  
Fred (Fiona)

**Prayer Points**

- Financial support to be coming in for Feeding Program and smooth running at the OVC Project
- Fiona’s Health to improve to be 100%
- For Volunteers and staff at the project to work hard making correct decisions
- Visitors to Mwandu to be safe and feel at peace being away from their families
- For all children who are suffering from HIV
- For leaders of Zambia

**URGENT NEEDS**

- ❖ FEEDING PROGRAM FINANCIAL SUPPORT - EVERY DOLLAR HELPS!!!!
- ❖ New Toilet block for Carpentry and Sewing Students \$1,500
- ❖ Staff shaded eating area \$2,000
- ❖ Hand Tools for the carpentry centre Ranging from \$10 and Up
- ❖ Whirly Birds for the top of feeding hall at OVC Qty - (4) \$150 each
- ❖ Internet monthly subscription \$150 per month

Check out the youtube link below to find out more about the OVC project

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wPBxvbYTSQ&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wPBxvbYTSQ&feature=youtube_gdata_player)



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