



**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
PORT LINCOLN**



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Dear Friends,

They say that good things come to those who wait.... Well it has been a wonderful month with many good things finally coming to fruition.

As I write this, I look back over the past weeks and really am filled with a sense of joy and peace that yes we know, and yet we sometimes forget, that God will always deliver the goods, we just need to pray and be patient.

Many situations come and go and we forget to see how God has been the instrument in letting things happen, but I can say that each and everyday I can see were God has been the reason for the situation – whether Good or Bad in our eyes it all happens for a reason.

I sit here in my house, at my desk (which is meant to be my dining table) and can hear the bells ringing from the cows grazing across the river, there are men fishing on the river to feed their families during this drought. People in the village are suffering because of HIV/AIDS and TB, children are being mistreated because they are Orphans and are treated like slaves and all of these things are happening for a reason... It's a hard one, but with faith I can see that it's happening partly for the rich countries to see the need to help others and give. All good things also come to those who give...

What a rewarding thing I received the other day when I went to Sesheke High school where 22 of our OVC are on our School Support Program. The kids were so happy to see me, they hugged me and laughed, it was great. See, because we care their lives are a bit more fulfilled. I think the huge word in all of the things we are trying to achieve for all these children is LOVE. Love is the most important act we can give to others who may never receive it otherwise.

The amazing things that have happened over the past few weeks are:

- **The Drilling of the Bore hole at the OVC project**
- **Phone coverage in Mwandi**
- **Starting our feeding program at the OVC**
- **Starting our fencing project at the OVC**
- **Employing a cook and another watchman at the OVC**
- **Building a verandah on the front of my house**

Dan and Paula are organizing teams (about 9 in each group) to come out each month to paint, and do general maintenance at the Drop-In Centre and Mwandi Mission. Dan & Paula supply the paint and other needs for these workers (volunteers). It is ongoing, and we are truly blessed with these projects they co-ordinate.

So you can see that we have been very busy.

The **PHONE COVERAGE** is just awesome. We have never had any phone communication and now I can ring whoever whenever. Of course the cost is through the roof, but it's a lot cheaper than having to drive to town/ Livingstone to ring someone in Lusaka. It really is just amazing.

FEEDING PROGRAM – We finally started on 16th September and we have 43 kids on the list. We shall increase this amount over the next few weeks. We wanted to make sure that the children become settled and happy before we increased the amount to come. We are feeding the OVC a balanced meal per day for lunch and boy, these kids are really enjoying what they are receiving. They eat every last crumb. We are giving them a multi vitamin each day and they are cleaning their teeth after they eat.

The routine is: The children arrive and they have designated groups. We have 8 groups and so the kids know which mat is for their group. The kids go outside and wash their hands and then come back in. We say grace and then they collect their lunch. We have 5 volunteers that come from the village, one of the 5 is the team leader and the other 4 volunteers change each week. There are 4 team leaders, one for each week of the month and they never change. We want stability for the children. We make sure that we have a man who is a volunteer, so the children can see that male figure. Remember that most of these children do not have fathers.

After eating, they wash their plates and hands and come back inside to have a story read to them. Then they play games. This is when you can't hear yourself for the noise of laughter from these kids. At first they were too scared to play and laugh; now you can't stop them.

These kids would have never played with toys or dolls and these girls just love playing with any toy or doll. It's so cute seeing 14 yr old girls playing with a doll and loving it. And marbles, and puzzles its wonderful to be able to see the kids smile and have some love and attention for a few hours before they go home to do all the chores.

Oh, I nearly forgot that when they first arrived, we weighed all the children. Each month we shall do this to see if they are putting on weight or stabilizing.

Next week we are going to be feeding a set of 7 month old twins. The mother came to see me and she was skin and bone let alone feeding a set of twins. Usually twins don't survive here as it's hard to go and do piece work with two kids strapped to you, so one of the twins usually is a lot thinner and smaller than the sibling. And this is the case with this set.

I looked at their under 5 cards and one of the twins had lost 4 kg in a month. Not good, so we shall try to support them with some porridge and other soft food.

I just cannot afford to help with milk at this stage, over and above the lunch meal, but we shall wait and see how things go. We shall spend time teaching/ explaining to the mother that she must try to get some work to keep herself fit and strong to be able to make enough milk to breast feed.

We have employed a lovely lady from the village called Martha; she is our cook and doing a real good job. I'm very impressed with her and I hope that she remains with us for many years.

I am starting to see many effects of HIV/AIDS and malnutrition. Children's bodies are stunted and children's brains just do not work. Some of our OVC are like this because of the lack of a good diet. Also I am seeing more adults with the same effects. Retarded and slow, body parts not formed right and not able to even use the toilet. You know we must help this generation with basic education on general health to help these kids before it gets too bad.

The **BORE HOLE DRILLERS ARRIVED** last Saturday afternoon and to my amazement they had finished the next morning. Their equipment was quite antiquated. The trucks looked like they came out of World War 2 or at least from Russia. But despite this, going 100ft down, they found good, clean, nice tasting water. They tested the bore for me twice and the results were 2.5 litres per second. I am currently sourcing solar pumps and parts. Within this week we shall have running water. It's good for the bore to sit for at least 2 weeks before you equip it.

The **FENCING PROJECT** has finally got started and it's cruising along. I am sure by the end of this week we should have all the poles in and the start of next week, the fence to go up. The contractor had some sickness in the family, causing his delay in starting the project. Well we had started the welding and drilling of the poles, just nothing in the ground. A big delay has been in the lack of power on the weekends. I have used steel poles instead of wood, because of the termites and long lasting. We have wire mesh to keep the animals out and barbed wire on the top to keep the burglars out. I am pleased with the effort they are putting in so far, so let's hope no more family members fall sick in my contractor's family.

Once the fence will be finished we can start to grow our **vegetable garden** at the project- this will be wonderful and we shall be able to use our own vegetables for our feeding program and income generation for the project. It won't be much, but enough to cover costs with fertilizers and seed. I am hoping that the children get really involved with this project as it's a good way for them to learn new skills.

Also we **wish to plant some fruit trees**; I really want to get them in the ground before the rainy season. I know it will take at least 4 years before most of them fruit, but these children really need some vitamins in their diet. We will also teach the kids the importance of fruit in their diet.

We are currently facing a drought here in Zambia and the heat is intense already. October and November are our hottest months and this is when we will find that the fit survive and the vulnerable do not.

We have also employed another watchman. Now we have 2. They work one week on and one week off in a month. Crispin is the new guy and he, too, is doing well. Erick our original watchman is happy to have some rest in the month.

I am expecting 2 friends from Port Lincoln to arrive any day to Mwandia. Esther, my best friend, and Darren, a mate. Esther will be helping out at the Pre-school and Drop in centre and Darren will be at the hospital looking at peoples' eye problems. I am sure they will die in the heat, but enjoy their time in Mwandia. They are staying a few months and no doubt will see and experience new and wonderful African experiences each day.

It's that time of year again when we start looking for sponsors for our EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM. We support the OVC at Mwandia Basic school grades 1-9 , (School uniforms, stationary, shoes and school fees) Mwandia evening classes grade 8 &9,(school fees) Sesheke High school grade 10,11 & 12.(school and boarding fees)

If any one is interested let me know and I can give you more details on this very important Support Program.

Jane Carey (Schooling Sponsorship Coordinator in Australia) can be contacted either by Phone on 08 - 8684 2173 or by E-mail address: ajcarey@aapt.net.au

We haven't had power all day and they say that there will be no power for the next three days. Not great!! Also we have no diesel in the country again. Can you believe that for three weeks out of the past 2 months there has been no fuel? It makes it hard to organise trips to town, but we manage.

URGENT NEEDS FOR THE OVC PROJECT

Many of the Orphans who come to the feeding program don't have shoes, and when we wash their hands and dishes it's outside under the direct sunlight and their poor little feet just get so hot. My wish is to purchase some **shade cloth** to erect to cover the area where we do the washing this will **cost about \$200** We would greatly appreciate it if someone could help us with that request URGENTLY, as it's just getting hotter each and every day.

URGENT NEEDS FOR THE OVC PROJECT continued

Furniture for Drop in Centre – We still need some tables to be made for the Centre. We need book shelves for the Library and shelving for the kitchen and Pre-school store room. **\$300 would cover these items.**

Running costs – Like any project we need money to run. Any support would be greatly appreciated for this.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the Rain to come so the families can survive
- For those children who have no family
- For those children with HIV/AIDS and TB
- For those children who are being treated badly by their guardians
- Pray for me to keep strong, in the mind and body
- Pray that the project will keep moving ahead and people will support it in many ways.
- Pray for the visitors that are coming to Mwandí –for good health and safety

I say thank you to you all for your support and love, and I really do mean that.
I don't take anything of what we receive for granted, either for our project or personally.
I really appreciate all the hard work you do to help this OVC project to support these kids in Mwandí.

Please keep in touch and take care.

Lots of love

Fred (Fiona)

PS Jack is no longer the size of a miniature Shetland - he is the size of a Shetland. Hee hee (not really).
I'm just saying that my little puppy is huge, and is still scared of everything that moves. It's very funny.
All the locals here think he is a lion – "cause of his bark and size.

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