



**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
PORT LINCOLN**



Newsletter No. 28

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Fiona Dixon-Thompson
Mwandi UCZ OVC Project,
PO Box 70
Mwandi Post Office
via LIVINGSTONE.
ZAMBIA. Africa

Dear Friends,

I hope that you are well and enjoying life.

It's warm here today in Mwandi a real difference compared to the past few weeks. I am well, feeling very tired this week, but I really think it's a lot to do with the weather.

A few weeks ago a wonderful gift arrived for the OVC Project, Mission School and Mission Hospital and I am still overwhelmed by its contents. Many wonderful people around South Australia worked very hard to send us a 40ft container full of hundreds of books - new and secondhand, arts and crafts, sporting goods, stationery, tools, hospital beds, and toys, plenty of clothes and blankets for the vulnerable of the village, and many other items. **It has been a wonderful gift of love.** I can see us sorting through boxes for the next few months trying to organize all the items that are in them and sorting through the books. There are books for the school and our OVC library. Bevan built another library shelf before he left so now we are able to fill it.

It was quite a saga getting the container off the semi trailer that brought it here to Mwandi from Durban. Firstly, the driver got the truck stuck in the sand so we had to unload the contents of the container into other empty containers and storage sheds around the mission. Then we needed to get the front-end loader from the construction company that is working a few km away. Because the container arrived on a long weekend everyone was pretty much under the weather and trying to get the driver for the front-end loader took quite a few trips to their site begging with the Indian manager to let us use the front-end loader. In the end the driver came after a day to take the container off the semi. It was a bit of a challenge but we were all up for it and we now have the container.

My spare bedroom is now a storage room full of electronic equipment that was in the container. Because it gets so hot in the container we thought it would be a better idea to have those items out. I received some pretty awesome tools and they are under lock and key in the spare room as well. Over the past week, I have been going through the items so we can find a better home for them as the spare bedroom is going to be occupied for the next 6 months with Heather a volunteer from Australia.

We have already started to hand out **clothes to those children most in need in the village.** We shall do this the second weekend of each month and see how we go. The children were very happy to receive a nice top or pants. This week we are going to be giving the feeding children an outfit, as most of them wear rags. We gave out 300 pieces last weekend and **we are now reaching other villages outside of Mwandi** as they are in need of support for their orphans.

There have been many visitors from all over the world working at the mission over the past months and it's been wonderful the work they have done. It's been great for the children to see new faces to spend time with and meet. The love that has been shown to our feeding children has just been awesome. Thank you to all the visitors and volunteers who come to work here in Mwandu.

I am just so glad that visitors are able to come to the Mission and work on the different projects that the United Church of Zambia has in place. There is always work to be done at the Mission Hospital, Mwandu UCZ OVC Project, the Mwandu Mission School, and Mwandu Agriculture Project. **If anyone is interested in coming to serve for short / long term in any of our projects here in Mwandu Mission please let me know.**

I am not sure if I shared in the last newsletter, but we have lost our Doctors here in Mwandu. Dr Kaonga, Dr Nambao and their family have left Mwandu. They are sadly missed and we hope and pray that they will come and visit us from time to time. **We are now searching for doctors to come to Mwandu. We hope and pray that God sends a Doctor our way. I know the hospital is way understaffed and frustrated that we have no doctor.**

I have a wonderful man in my life. He is the son to Keith and Ida Waddell the Scottish missionaries here in Mwandu. Ruairidh (Rury) is a great friend, wonderful support, very caring to me. ☺ We get on real well. He manages a luxury house boat that is based here in Mwandu.

The **construction of the bakery** has slowed down a bit, due to the lack of wooden rafters in the area. By the end of the week, we should have enough and then we can start putting the roof on early next week. We are all getting impatient to get this job done so we can start baking bread for the community.

Our **Vegetable garden** is growing well and we have started to pick cabbages, rape, tomatoes and Chinese cabbage. Mubita is very proud of his garden and we seem to have overcome all the insect problems we had been facing. We have silver beet, onions, peppers and eggplant in the nursery. Mubita will be planting them out this week, into the main garden area.

The **fruit trees** are progressing and I would say that the paw paw will produce fruit in the next 6 months.

Last week I picked up a couple from Tasmania who will be here until the beginning of September. Max is going to be doing a lot of welding for the bakery and Margaret will be organizing the library books and arts and crafts which were in the container.

Our **Feeding Program is now feeding 121 children**, Monday to Saturday. Last weekend we started showering the children. What a treat for the children to be able to shower once per week with soap. Most of the children do not use soap as the guardians are not able to afford it. So each Saturday the children will come and shower at OVC and use soap. In the container we had many hygiene bags that many ladies from the Port Lincoln Area made for our children. Each child has his/her own bag that contains soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, nailbrush, face towel and towel. You should have seen their faces and heard the laughter it was a very special moment. As the towels were drying on the clothesline, the children would come outside from feeding and check if their towel was still there and drying. I was so happy for them.

Unfortunately the children had no where to change so most of them were standing on the sand trying to get dressed in front of everyone. Today we made a change area out of reed mats. **If anyone is able to help fundraise for a permanent change area to be constructed we need \$300.**

It would be awesome for the kids to be able to change in a private area.

The children on the Feeding Program are still going for **health checks at the hospital**, there are about 40 left to do. I have been praying that the guardians bring the children so that we all know their medical status and then know how we can help the children more.

The children on the Feeding Program are all putting on weight and have so much energy these days. We are hoping that this year we are able to build a counseling room so that we can start to deal with the children's behavioural problems. We need to spend time talking with the children about grieving for their parents and how they are feeling about being an Orphan. It will be tough for the children, but very important.

I was in the village last week visiting some children with our Social Support group. It was good to see the living conditions of the children and if they are improving at all. Some have, but mostly not. We visited a little boy, who due to the lack of food since birth has never been able to walk. He has no strength in his legs. We walked through the gate and one of the ladies walked over to Lifaleze picked him up and he started to walk. He needed support, but his little legs were so much stronger that he was able to walk. His twin sister, other sister and he are on the Feeding Program and the girls bring him food home each day. I went to check him the other day and he was still going well. You should see his twin sister, she is strong, and able to run but mentally isn't very quick. He is mentally quick but his body is so weak. Twins rarely survive in this country. The mothers are just not able to care for them both as well as the other siblings, so one always suffers. **We hope and pray that Lifaleza continues to grow stronger each day and one day is able to walk by himself.** We have a young volunteer coming for a few weeks in September and I am hoping that she is able to spend some time with him in the village.

The World cup was a huge big event here in Zambia and the local bars (that have power) had TV reception (through Namibia) going all the time. I must say that the locals were very impressed how well the Australian team played and they all were barracking for the Aussies. I got very excited and watched all the matches.

The River has dropped considerably over the past months, I'd say about 5 metres. It only seems like yesterday that the men in their canoes were basically on my front lawn, now you cannot even see them float past on the river. The past few nights the water has just been beautiful. The men have been fishing out the front of the yard and the sky is pinks and blues and it's just so still and the water is like a mirror. I just love this time of year, when the weather is coming out of the cold and into the warm season. Max and I saw a hippo on Saturday, it was swimming out the front of my house and we only saw it pop its head up the once.

Tonight we are taking some teddies down to the children's ward at the hospital. We received so many in the container that I can start giving the sick children teddies (cuddlies) each week. I think it's a very important gift to give to a sick child. **I thank all those ladies who made the Cuddlies** over the past year. I think there have been about 2000 teddies made all up. Something so simple puts a smile on a sick child's face and that's what it's all about.

School holiday's starts next week so there are going to be many children around the Drop in Centre. We shall hold some holiday activities for the children as usual. We now have quite a few children's Christian DVDs so we will be able to show them to the children.

I was down at Sesheke last week and visited the children who we support at school. They were so happy to see me when we met together and talked about how their schooling was going. They seem to be doing well although a few have been sick. We are very concerned about their English marks and over the holidays we are going to hold extra English tuition for the grade 10, 11 and 12's. We feel that this is important for the children to receive as this is what lets them down in their exams.

It's hard to believe that it's the end of July already, how the year flies. I just hope and pray we can continue to love and support these children throughout this year and the years to come.

I thank God each day for the small things in life that sometimes we overlook. I thank God for showers and soap and they joy it gives to children.

**Please take time to remember the small things that we so much take for granted.
Take time to LOVE and be LOVED.**

I thank you all for the love, trust and support you give to me and the Orphans Project.

Sometimes when the days get rough I look at the kids and see how rough their lives are and kick myself for even thinking negative.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR

On going support for the Project

That our children remain healthy and strong even when they are HIV positive (sick)

For other missionaries working in Zambia

For all the visitors and volunteers who come to Mwandu.

The people who have HIV/AIDS here in Mwandu and through out Zambia.

Please all take care
Much Love

Fred (Fiona)



UNLOADING THE CONTAINER FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Tuesday 4th July 2006



CHILDREN ENJOYED THEIR SHOWERS (WITH SOAP)
Saturday 22nd July 2006