

Mwandi OVC Project Newsletter



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Dear Friends,

I hope that this last newsletter for 2007 finds you well. For those who are not doing so well, please take care and get better soon.

At the end of November Ruairidh and I arrived in Australia, we have been very busy catching up with family, friends, visiting Churches and Mission fellowship groups. It's just wonderful being able to come home and reflect on all the positive and negative things through the year. My family will meet for Christmas day together and I am really looking forward to having a great time celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus with them.

Before we left Mwandi we had received some nice rain and have heard since that the rains have continued, so the locals are able to start planting their maize crops. **We were very busy just before we left starting the construction of our new Sewing Centre,** this Training Centre is for the youth of our community. In June we will start to build a **Carpentry Centre.** Very exciting ☺

We have been incredibly blessed to be able to purchase a truck for the project. This will allow us to make fewer trips to Livingstone for shopping (yippee) and we will be able to properly supply the carpentry centre with materials. Thank you to all those that made it possible.

We have so many plans for the projects in 2008. **I hope that we have more volunteers** come to Mwandi to meet children, share skills, visit the sick in the village, pray with for others and show love to all that need our support. I wish to thank all those volunteers who came to Mwandi UCZ OVC Project 2007, to share part of their lives with our children and members of our community.

The feeding program is now feeding 190 children, 6 days a week. The social support committee has seen a need to add 6 month old babies to the feeding program, we are seeing a trend of young sick babies (who are positive) and the parents/guardians can see that their children need the extra food and they are unable to supply it. Some of these parents find it very hard to bring such young children to the feeding program as they feel they are not good parents/guardians, but really they are doing very well to see the need for their children. Our counsellor spends time with these parents to encourage them to continue to bring their children to the program each day.

We were able to send Giblet, the pre-school teacher to Lusaka to become our second child counsellor. We are very excited to have such a humble man become a counsellor, the children just love Giblet. In 2008 we will have two trained pre-school teachers so this will enable Giblet to spent time counselling children in the afternoons. In the beginning of 2008 we are going to start the older children with their **Memory Books.**

I can't wait to start this very important program as I know it's going to be hard for our kids, but a wonderful way to start them dealing with the death of parents, siblings and friends and to share their feelings in the form of poems, songs and drawings. For all those children who have started to be counselled it seems like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders. Children are not allowed to attend funerals or even talk about why people are dying in their families and around them. This is a break through in understanding the feelings the children are experiencing and the sadness.

For those who have seen the Seven Days DVD will remember Lifaliza, the little twin boy (10 yrs old) who was sitting in his own faeces day after day, fully relying on others to feed, water and clothe him as he didn't walk or talk. To look at Lifaliza he is the size of a 6 year old with 10 year old hands, head and feet. His twin sister is at least 2 ft taller than him.

He is now attending the feeding program each day. Charles goes and collects him from the village in the mini bus, he just gets so excited when he sees the mini bus coming towards his hut and starts smiling. He has the most beautiful smile, it's contagious.

Once Lifaliza arrives at the centre; he walks over to the water trough. **He has bright yellow crutches and has splints on his legs.** He drops the crutches once he reaches the trough, turns on one of the three taps and if it was up to him, he would stay there all day. Can you imagine never seeing running water until you were 10 years old?

Lifaliza always waves his hand and says "Hello" or "Good boy". We are trying to teach him thank you and other words. I bring him inside so I can put a nappy on him, then he sits and has his breakfast. This usually comprises of 2 -4 bread rolls and a big bowl of heps. (Porridge) Lifaliza eats so fast, that more of the porridge falls down his front than in his mouth, he sometimes dips his bread into his cup of water (not sure why) At least he is slowly learning that no one else at the centre is going to take his food away from him, so if he slows down eating he can enjoy the taste. The twins also eat breakfast with Lifaliza; they have become good buddies with him. He sometimes chases them with his crutches as they are so cheeky with him and tease him a bit. (In a very loving kids playing way)Lifaliza always has someone to play with at the centre. He has many toys to play with and most days the twins and other kids will play Lego, building blocks with him. The twins and other children now will involve him in their games.

Around 11 hrs the volunteers for the feeding program come and share in staff devotion before the feeding program. Most of the time, Lifaliza is sitting with all the staff joining in the devotion. We all say the day he starts talking, he is never going to stop, he meets volunteers from all over the world, listens to all the ministers in the village share during devotion and he even joins in with pre-school most days and watches the "wiggles " when the pre-school kids do.

He is an amazing boy and those who meet Lifaliza are blessed to see his strength and determination. "He has seen his mother, father, cousins and grandfather die." He has sat on his bottom for 10 years and seen family come and go, his sister being raped (and couldn't do a thing) seeing his twin sister and other sister go to school every day, he has experience the most lonely time, when, he should be out playing, he has experienced humiliation of smelling and being soiled because no one would take him to a pit latrines.. And yet he just gets so excited to see new faces each day and be a part of the biggest family in Mwandi. He sits with his twin sister and other sister most days for lunch and never stops smiling.

After lunch, devotions and afternoon feeding program activities he walks home with his youngest sister, Mwale a ten minute walk becomes a 2 hr walk for them both. As he gets down the road he turns around, takes his right side hand out of this crutch and waves to us. His smile can be seen a mile away.



Over the past few months we have sent quite a number of children to the Beit/Cure hospital in Lusaka. Two of the children had hair lips and two had major body burns. These children and their families have walked for days to get to Mwandu to see the hospital and the OVC project for referrals and transport money to get to Lusaka.

I visited the hospital for the first time when I was in Lusaka and it's an amazing set up. Very modern wards, laundry, kitchen are so clean and very efficiently run. The staff are so welcoming and all the work they do for children under 18 is for free. There were children with all different medical problems in the wards, many with burns and hair lips waiting for plastic surgery. The hospital has many visiting surgeons from USA and UK.

One of our little girls had just come out of surgery when I visited and was so excited to see me. Her Aunt couldn't believe that the hair lip was gone. **Our problem now is finding a dentist to work on these kids teeth. IF there are any retired dentists that wish to come and do some work in Africa, please notify me. There are so many children with problems.**

If you are looking for a Christmas gift for a family and friends, this year and you're stuck on what to get. Why don't you consider supporting a child on our Education support program? Knowledge is power and all these kids want is to learn more about what is happening around them and in the world. Please email my good mate Jane Carey and she can send you information on the different programs we have in place.

"I have a vision that we will support 6 students in collage in 2008." For example teachers college is \$1000 per year and it is a 2 year course. Maybe a group of your friends can get together and sponsor a child from Mwandu into college. If 20 people got together and put in \$50 each year, it isn't a lot of money and yet it can change a person's life once they complete that schooling. We bond the students to the Mission so once they complete their program they come back to Mwandu to share their new skills at the Mission pre-school, Hospital and OVC Project.

Please help us with this vision, to see smart students sit in a village catching fish for a living breaks my heart, when I know they have so much more potential than fishing.
Again if you feel that you want more information please contact Jane Carey or myself.

Due to the amazing work of people in Uniting Churches all over Australia and people who gave money and items and a committed group of people in Port Lincoln that pack and sort through donated items, we are going to receive a 40 ft Container from Port Lincoln Uniting Church and community very soon. We are so lucky to have that amazing support that we are able to receive such a wonderful gift.

Each week somewhere over the world many wonderful people are doing some of the jobs /fundraisers listed below, so our OVC in Mwandu can receive the support we are able to give them day after day, week after week and year after year.

Putting out chairs and tables for packing days, sewing, knitting, packing, lifting boxes, making coffee /tea, cakes biscuits, setting up stands, painting faces, working in hot containers, sharing to others, spending hours in front of a computer doing accounts, asking people for support, sticking hundreds of stamps on envelopes for newsletters, dancing in front of hundreds of people, jogging/walking Marathon's, entering data , painting buildings, organizing containers, giving up your weekends, calibrating letters for school support, putting on bear suits for spring fairs, making cookies and cakes, organizing quiz nights, having bike athons, and so many more jobs that people do for Mwandu.

Some times God calls us to GET OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE TO HELP OTHERS and many of you that receive this newsletter do it for Mwandu. Sometimes we do things that we never dreamed of doing, but God gives us the gifts to overcome fears to help others.

Please don't get tired of supporting our community of Mwandu, I know that God will continue to give you all the strength and will to keep supporting us with prayer, physical strength and financial support.

Our OVC project will never be able to be sustained by the Mwandu community, because majority of people live off fewer than 60 cents per day.

I hope that some of you remembered 1st December being world aids day. The kids took part in a march that was held in Mwandu. Heather took photos and we shall share about that very important day and Christmas day in Jan newsletter.

Prayer Points

- Please pray for all people who are suffering or being affected by HIV/AIDS.
- For all people over the world who are working for the Lord on the Mission fields
- For people who are suffering from pain- for their bodies to be healed
- Pray for continued support for all projects through out Africa which support children in need
- That rain continues in Mwandu
- Pray for Ruairidh and my safe travelling back to Mwandu
- Keith and Ida while they are in USA for Christmas
- Heather, Pastor Mudenda and all the staff and volunteers who are running the OVC project
- Pray for all the children around the world who get treated as slaves because they are orphans
- Pray that non - Christian's hearts are softened and they ask Jesus into their lives

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and please remember the reason for the season.

Thank you again for all your love and support. Please contact me if you feel that you are called to come to Mwandu in 2008. We would love to see you ☺

Lots of Love, Fred (Fiona)



2008 Wish List

Roof over containers \$6000 - construct a permanent roof and walls over containers to make more assessable to utilize the storage space

Building maintenance \$3000 - labour, materials, paints to repair buildings

Playground repairs \$500 - purchase steel poles to replace rotten wooden poles

T-shirts for feeding kids \$2000

Pre- school kids (45) to visit Park and falls \$1200 - hiring of buses and fees

House \$50,000 - Because we are receiving so many visitors to the Mission we wish to turn my current home just for volunteers and we build a house for me. ☺



OVC Feeding Kids



Beit Patient before Surgery.



Sewing Centre Slab