

DRU'S VIEWS
Twenty-first Edition – December 2009

Christmas

“And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the village inn.” Luke 2:6 - 7

It is hard to imagine how the Almighty King could be born in such humble and dire surroundings. And yet, that is where God placed him, in utter poverty. The inn keeper did not have room for him then; do we have room for him today? Do we have room in our busy lives to spend a few minutes each day reading his Word? Speaking with him and listening for his voice? Do we have room in our pockets to share our wealth with him as he is found in the poor and needy? Do we have room in our hearts to love him in the “unlovable”? Often in the midst of my busy-ness, frustrations and disappointments, I forget about the Christ child who came to give me not only his love and mercy, but his very life. Is it too much for him to ask me to do the same?



Lifesong School

The children have completed their end-of-year testing. Closing day was December 4 and was celebrated with a Christmas party including a special lunch, songs and stories, and gift packets of sweets, balloons and small toys (parents will love the noisemakers I found!). The children will continue to come to school for half days so we can give them their two meals. The new school year begins on January 11. John and I will be busy over the break trying to determine and finalize our tax obligations, studying the myriad of applications and conducting interviews for new staff, registering children for 2010 and making those difficult decisions of which new children we will accept, and working up a proposed budget for next year.

Administrative duties often get behind as they take a sideline to emergencies. We have been kept busy with runs to the clinic with illnesses and injuries. Kim broke his arm while fighting with his brother, although we were told he'd fallen from a guava tree. Martin's fingers were smashed in a door; I left my Thanksgiving pumpkin pie to rush him to the clinic for five stitches, with him crying and wailing all the way. I decided my “ambulance” didn't need a siren; Martin made enough noise. Mwape fell out of a tree and hurt his neck; he slept on it wrong that night and the next day could not move his head. Fortunately, some pain medicine and heat rub solved the problem. He came to see me early the next morning and said with a big smile on his face, “Auntie Dru, look!” as he turned his little head from side to side.

Kafakumba Women's Projects

I haven't had time to visit the Twikatani Project since returning, because all of my days have been spent catching up at Lifesong School, but I was able to give Mama Patricia and Mama Terese \$250 for this project from the sale of the women's needle work. More money will be coming that was sent through Enright Flight Ministry. They will be able to buy several more sewing machines and much-needed materials. They were also thrilled with the new, brightly colored embroidery floss I brought them along with knitting needles, crochet hooks and pattern books that I picked up at some second-hand stores while I was home.

“My Children”

As we await the coming of Christ during Advent, we are also waiting for the results of exams written in October and November. The results will not be available until February or March, and it is a tense time. Five of the kids are in this situation; the most desperate is Kafuti who has just finished high school. He wants to study engineering, so we visited Copperbelt University in Kitwe last week. We were told he could not be admitted until 2011, since they start classes before exam results are published. We are now looking for constructive ways for him to spend this next year. He will take computer lessons at the United Methodist Church New Life Center and can help at Lifesong School if he wishes. I would prefer that he continue in some academic venture so that he does not lose his good study habits. So we are checking on some other schools in the area that offer one-year certificate programs in various subjects such as accounting and business. At least he would be working on his math skills. Benson has applied to schools in the United States and Malawi but has heard nothing from them. He is still talking about going to Cavendish University in Lusaka as an alternative, but I'm not sure he is ready to do so in January. He still has some emotional issues to work out. He needs a lot of prayers.



Kafuti Kilombe

My Time at Home

Thank you to everyone who listened to my stories and responded with prayers and gifts. Special thanks to the Ioders for providing me hospitality, housing and their car to drive. You're the greatest! I was much busier than I had intended, so I didn't get to visit everyone I wanted to; I hope you will forgive me. I did manage to get to Springfield with a dear friend to attend a Beth Moore conference; there were 8,800 women and "a few brave men" in attendance. It was the first sellout in the conference center since 1998 when Elton John performed. Quite a testimony to the power of the Christian word. Some of the things I noticed when returning to my own culture were:

- The large number of road kill (possums, coons and deer) that were left lying on the roadside. I thought about how many families they would feed in Zambia. I also saw a large fish on the highway. It looked pretty fresh. I wondered if some poor fisherman had accidentally left it on the top of his car as he drove home to show his family.
- The roads in Illinois are in worse condition than I remembered but are still far better than in Zambia!
- We eat too much; it always takes me a month or two to get rid of the pounds I gain while at home! I already miss my Bunny Tracks ice cream (not to mention Bible Study, my church family and my friends and family).
- We accumulate too much and throw away even more; I couldn't help but notice the number of trash cans out every week for garbage day.
- In Illinois, cold is COLD – in Zambia, hot is HOT.
- Most of all, I appreciated the generosity of American people. Many people, some of whom I had not even met, who heard the stories eagerly gave gifts of clothing, books and games, sewing materials and cash for the work here in Zambia.

Prayer Requests

- Prayers for Lifesong School as we make important decisions regarding students, staff and budget going into 2010. We also ask for prayers for the possible purchase of a new piece of property near our school to be used for agriculture and housing.
- Prayers for David Thames and his mission team who are coming to Lifesong the end of January to be with our children.
- Prayers for children who are anxiously waiting for their exam results; that they will find constructive ways to use their time.
- Prayers for Zambia during this rainy season; the rains are critical during this major growing season for maize, peanuts and vegetables. Not enough rain means poor yields; too much rain means flooding.
- Prayers for the ongoing development work at Kafakumba, especially the Twikatani Women's Project.
- Personal prayers for patience in dealing with government agencies and frustrations over systems that, in my mind, make no sense. Also prayers for discernment and judgment for decisions to be made.
- Prayers for our world, that people will put Christ first this holy-day season in a way that others will come to know that the tiny baby born in a manger is indeed the Savior of us all.



"All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth!"

May God richly bless you this Christmas, not with what you want but with what you need!

In His service,

Dru Smith

c/o United Methodist Church – Kafakumba

PO Box 70839

Ndola Zambia

Phone (from US) 011 260 978 410 111

Email: kafutismom@zamnet.zm or kafutismom@yahoo.com