

Twenty-second Edition – January 2010

“Forget about what’s happened; don’t keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I’m about to do something brand-new. It’s bursting out! Don’t you see it?” Isaiah 43:18 – 19 (The Message)

How did it get here so quickly? A new year! For some, perhaps a year filled with fear—fear of dying, fear of disappointments, fear of failure, fear of the unknown. But those who put their hope and trust in Jesus enter a new year with hope and anticipation of God’s blessings. Some enter a new year with joy in the opportunity to make a fresh and clean new start. Here in Zambia we rejoice that God has promised us so many new and wonderful things to look forward to as we work for His Kingdom. And maybe we will be blessed this year to see Christ’s return! Now won’t that be something to celebrate!

Lifesong School

Our third full year of ministry to orphans and vulnerable children will begin on January 11. In December we announced we would be taking registrations for 40 new places in our school; over 200 children applied. Mothers, fathers, aunts and grandparents were lined up at our front gate at 4:00 that morning, and when the gates were opened it was a mob scene unlike anything I’ve ever witnessed. John Mumba



had the overwhelming task of deciding who would be admitted to Lifesong School in 2010. Our new beginnings include the addition of a 4th grade class and a special education class. Additional children require more toilets, and a new ablution block has just been completed including showers for after-sports cleanup. We have also finalized our purchase of a new piece of property that includes not only a home for our school manager but also a nice bit of acreage to expand our vegetable gardens, which will provide income for several more of our children’s families. Our grove of guava trees has been cleared and a concrete foundation laid in preparation for the 40-foot container that will be shipped soon courtesy of Rotary International, loaded with all sorts of donated goods.



Everyone pitched in to help, even 2-year-old Dorcas, daughter of our maintenance supervisor Zimba.

Twikatani Women’s Project

Much appreciation and gratitude goes out to all of you saints who donated funds for this project to empower women living in poverty. They were able to purchase five more sewing machines, a locking machine, two irons and materials. The excitement at the unveiling of these items was contagious, as the women got down and rolled back and forth on the floor—their traditional way of showing their joyful thanksgiving.



“My Children”



Andella Chabaninge is a girl I have sponsored for school with donors’ help for 9 years, starting in preschool. She has just passed her grade 7 exams with a score of 668; the cutoff for girls was 576. She will attend Mama Monty Basic School this year. She spent a week with me during the holidays; I was too busy for company but had been promising her for a long time. She was very quiet but seemed to enjoy reading some of the books I bought her and watching videos. A typical teenager, she especially had fun shopping for some new clothes with the Christmas money I gave her. My neighbor Naomi Kilembo, stayed over a few nights, which helped—they entertained each other while I worked on budgets, registrations, payroll and all those other mundane things that had to be finished before the new year.

Kafuti got a passport, and the Monday after Christmas I took him to the Congolese Consulate in Ndola to get a visa to visit that country, which is just a few kilometers north of us. He left on the 29th with a friend of his deceased mother to go to Lubumbashi to try to locate his grandmother, sister and some other family members. I was a nervous wreck until he called me and told me he was successful. He had not had any contact with his family for over 10 years, so this was a wonderful reunion.

Daudi left last week to return to Lusaka to begin the 11th grade; Benson starts law school at Cavendish University on January 14. Joseph will be taking special classes to prepare to repeat writing his grade 12 exams. The others are still waiting for exam results that will come out in February.

Christmas and New Years in Zambia

On Christmas morning, I was sitting on my front porch and saw two women and some children walking to fetch water; they changed direction and came my way. I thought they were coming to ask me for “Christmas.” It seems everyone here expects a Christmas gift from me, and they ask for it whether I know them or not! As they walked on by and only greeted me, I felt terribly guilty. I filled a bag with apples, candies, cookies and popcorn to give them as they passed by on their way



home. Later, I was greeted by some neighbor children who come at least once a day looking for candy. I was taken aback when one of them reached out and handed me the Christmas gift he brought me—a big mushroom. It was the nicest gift I’ve ever received. Later, my Australian friend, Mike Carew, came for dinner and brought Kafuti and Benson. We had a feast and then enjoyed some movies and exchanged cards and gifts.



On January 1, I attended worship at my church, Enright Memorial United Methodist. We sat in a circle, sang songs, read scripture, and shared testimonies of what God has done during the past year. I heard about a little girl who was near death but miraculously recovered, a doctor who couldn’t pay his rent but was offered a part-time job which paid exactly what he needed, and a man who narrowly avoided an encounter with a herd of dangerous elephants. After the service, we shared an agape meal (potluck), which is something they have never done before. Everyone enjoyed my “American” food, especially the chocolate cake! I especially appreciated the introductions we all made and now feel like I know my church family better—a good way to start a new year.

Sneak Peaks

- Our Sunday school children portrayed the Christmas story for us; baby Jesus was a stuffed snowman with a red knit stocking cap and a carrot nose! I remember a few years ago a similar program in which the baby Jesus was a pink stuffed toy rabbit!
- When driving after a rain shower, Kafuti noticed the vapor rising from the hot highway; he told me that when he was young, he was told it came from “dead people cooking underground.”
- On a trip into town, John and I encountered Richard Banda coming to school 1 hour late; he had hurt his leg and was limping. John told him to go have teacher Lucy put some heat rub on it. Richard’s only concern was, “Did they eat the buns yet?”
- Walking through the center I saw a small spitting cobra. I threw a rock at it but missed, and the rock broke. While looking for another rock, the snake disappeared. I think it went up the tree, because the dogs were all looking up. Hope I don’t run into him the next time I pass that way.

Prayer Requests

- For Lifesong School staff and children as we adjust to a new year; that we will all learn to work together for the benefit of the children and their families. Pray for all of the Zambian children who want to go to school but cannot.
- That our women will continue to be empowered to support their families.
- For my children who are in school, that they will remain committed. And for those who are waiting for exam results.
- For David Thames and team arriving January 23 for one week and Tyler Stieglitz will be with us until April 2.
- For me, that I will be able to manage the ever increasing work load and still find time to spend in prayer and studying God’s word—essential for me to maintain an attitude of servanthood with joy.

I got a CD when I was home, Andrea Bocelli’s “My Christmas” (I highly recommend it!). On it is a song called “I Believe,” written by E. Levi. The words go like this:

One day I’ll hear the laugh of children in a world where war has been banned.
One day I’ll see men of all colors sharing words of love and devotion.
Stand up and feel the Holy Spirit. Find the power of your faith.
Open your heart to those who need you in the name of love and devotion. Yes, I believe.
I believe in the people of all nations to join and to care for love.
I believe in a world where light will guide us, and giving our love we’ll make heaven on earth.

Do you believe?

In His service,

Dru Smith

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