

## DRU'S VIEWS

### *Twelfth Edition - December 2008*

*“Cheer up, Zion! Don’t be afraid. For **the Lord your God has arrived to live among you.** He is a mighty savior. He will rejoice over you with great gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will exult over you by singing a happy song.” “I will gather you who mourn for the appointed festivals; you will be disgraced no more. And I will deal severely with all who have oppressed you. I will save the weak and helpless ones; I will bring together those who were chased away...” Zephaniah 3:16 - 19*

Over 2000 years ago, God came to live among us as a tiny baby, Jesus—fully human, fully divine. This Christmas, my prayer is that the whole world will come to know the Good News of salvation brought by that helpless baby. I pray that everyone will feel God’s gladness and his love and hear his happy song, that their fears will be calmed. I pray that the lost will be found and gathered together as one body in Christ. I pray that parents will no longer mourn over their dead children; and small children will not have to mourn their dead parents. And mostly, I pray that the weak and helpless will be saved. It is our mission, as Lifesong for Orphans, not only to save the physical lives and dignity of these helpless children placed under our care, but to offer them eternal life in Christ. What an awesome responsibility!

#### *Lifesong School*

We officially closed for the year on December 5 with a Christmas party. The children sang Christmas songs and performed their annual drama of the Nativity story. This year instead of a blond-haired doll in a shoe box, the baby Jesus was portrayed by a girl, Martha. (Little David, who was to have this part, didn’t come that day!) Then they were treated to a special lunch of chicken, rice, carrots with green peppers and “Jolly Juice.” They were so full that their bananas and cream donuts went home with most of them along with gift bags filled with sweets, cookies, chips and a balloon. I didn’t realize that something as simple as a balloon could cause so much excitement! About half of our children still come for a short day so that we can continue feeding them nutritious food. Many of the others have been sent to the villages to visit relatives or are helping their parents work in the fields. We will begin the new school year on January 3, adding about 40 additional children and a third grade.

#### *Let the Children Come*

I left at home at 7:30 a.m. to renew my car registration; it took three hours. I went to the bank to check on a funds transfer (another hour) and shopped for the Christmas party. It was after 2:00 when I got back to Lifesong School, and the staff had left for the day. That left me alone with 150 gift bags to stuff (another 2½ hours). I then did the computer work and emails that had to be completed that day; however, over the next 3 hours we had intermittent thunderstorms and then power went off and on about 6 times, so it was 9:00 before I finished and was able to dodge the raindrops to take my laptop to the computer room!

The next morning I greeted the children as they started to arrive at 7:00. The teachers didn’t come until 8:00, so I tried to entertain them as best I could on my own. We sang as many Sunday school songs as I could remember in English and Bemba, and I even resorted to the hokey pokey! I then spent about 3 hours peeling potatoes and carrots and chopping onions and tomatoes. By the time I finished, my back didn’t work anymore. I went home to lie on my bed for a few minutes but was interrupted by one of the teachers with a question. So I got up and went to watch the children as they played outside. As usual, I was immediately surrounded, and they were arguing over who would sit on my lap! One of the older boys, Ezron, tried to chase them away saying, “Don’t bother Auntie Dru; she’s tired!” I thought of the story of the disciples trying to chase the children from Jesus, and He told them, “Let the little children come unto me...” I understand only too well why, even though he was tired, he wanted the children near him. They exude joy and love, and you can’t help but be energized by their touch and smiles.

#### *Eleanor*

Our precious little girl continues to waste away. Last week she was admitted to the malnutrition unit of the hospital and put on a special diet regimen. Two days later I got a call that her aunt had taken her home. When she is at the hospital taking care of Eleanor, she is not earning the money she makes at the market, and the children at home go hungry. She had to make a choice between one child (an unwanted niece) and several others, some of which are her own. We will have to wait and see if the family allows Eleanor to come to school for feeding. This situation can only be resolved with prayer.

### ***Rainy Season***

As I write this it is pouring outside; it is raining and lightning so hard that the power has gone out, so I'm working by battery. Our Kafakumba workers are at lunch; they cannot return to their jobs yet, so I hear them beating the drums and singing as they wait for the rain to let up. I relate only too well with a line in a book I just read, "It always rained; *the rain had become a part of our bodies.*" The rain is greatly needed now, as we are at the height of our growing season for maize, peanuts and other basic crops. However, too much rain means flooding and famine. We pray for God to bring us "moderate" rainfall.

### ***Bible Study in Fisenge***

Since it is Advent, I decided it would be appropriate to study the life and character of Mary, the mother of Jesus, with the Fisenge Village women's group. I asked them, "What would happen to a girl today in Fisenge if she became pregnant and was not married?" They told me that her parents would take her to the father and force him to marry her. So I asked, "Then why do I see so many young *single* girls with babies?" The women told me that the girls have been with many boys and do not know who the father is! This is a result of poverty. Young girls sell themselves in order to get the things they want and think they need. Even when they are aware of the risks of pregnancy and HIV/AIDS, the girls put themselves in jeopardy. We have a lot of work to do!

### ***Going Crazy***

I have developed a reputation here for being a bit "out of my mind." This is because I returned from the U.S. with some jigsaw puzzles that are not for the cowardly. My table is currently covered with 550 puzzle pieces that all look alike. The result, if we ever finish it, will be a picture of a herd of zebras, zebras and more zebras! Recently, I was at lunch with one of the boys, Benson, who aspires to be a doctor someday and devotes much of his time to reading science articles and books. Out of the blue he asked me if I eat a lot of eggs. I replied, "Only one or two a week. Why do you ask?" He told me he read a report that people who eat too many eggs have problems with their minds! Now, what do you suppose he was trying to tell me?

### ***Prayer Requests***

- Continued prayers for Eleanor and her family and our staff as we struggle to restore her health.
- Prayers for Lifesong School Manager, John Mumba, as he interviews for a new 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher and additional staff we will need for 2009. And also as he makes the difficult decision as to which 40 additional children will be accepted for our school this year.
- Prayers for all who will go through the holiday season hungry—physically and spiritually.

Christmas will start with worship and then dinner at my old house with Kafuti and Benson, and my Australian friend, Mike Carew. I found a turkey and some cranberry relish, a fruit cake and traditional Christmas pudding! Now if the power will only stay on. I wish all of you, my dear friends and family, a blessed Christmas filled with love, joy and peace. I miss you all.

Love in Christ,

***Dru***



Our 2<sup>nd</sup> graders preparing the field to plant maize for our school. The plants were up and about 6 inches high one week after planting!



The rather creative basketball hoop made by our children. They don't have a basketball yet, but they are dreaming. (Dear Santa...)