

# the church of Christ in MALAWI the warm heart of Africa!

Vol. 2 Num. 2

FEBRUARY 2006

## Doug's Report

The first week of January Debbie and me in Lusaka, Zambia visiting Duane and Laurie Permenter. It was like a homecoming for me. We previously lived in Zambia from 1987--1989. This was my first time to go back since then, although Debbie had made a trip over there in October to collect our two wonderful German Shepherd puppies. So many memories flooded my mind during our visit. Our boys, David and Jonathan were five and two when we first moved there and it was such a great time for our family. The work seems to have grown and matured since 1989. Of course that is the way it should be.

One of the highlights for this month was a study that I had for church leaders here at Blantyre on January 21st. Most of my studies this past year has been with preachers, but there is also a great need to study with church leaders. So I scheduled this study for a Saturday morning, inviting leaders from the Blantyre area to attend. I had no idea how many to expect. I have never been good at predicting in advance the size of crowds anyway. I had asked brother Muthowa, one of our workers, how many we might expect. He said maybe ten. I estimated that we might have forty. I can tell that my days as a prophet would have been numbered because I really missed the count (see Deuteronomy 18:22!). Debbie had decided that she would make some muffins and



Blantyre area leaders



Tea and Bread

banana bread for about forty, and we would serve this along with tea for a light breakfast before the study was to start at 8:00 am. I walked down to the church building a few minutes before 7:30 and there was already at least that amount present if not more. We started to serve the group that was there and I soon realized that we did not have

enough food or tea prepared. So Debbie pulled our frozen bread out of the freezer and started boiling large pans of water as fast as she could. At one point I counted close to one hundred being present and more still came in after that. That is one thing about Malawi--people will still turn out to hear the Bible taught.

I had scheduled the study to last from 8:00 am to 10:00 am, but at 8:30 we were still serving breakfast. Consequently the study did not start until 8:45 and came to end about 10:45. I prepared three different studies to present, all dealing with the nature of the church and our work. I planned on presenting one study and then giving some time

for questions and answers. After about an hour we would take a short break and then continue with more topics. But we never got past the first topic concerning words that describe the church (such as body, family, temple, kingdom, vineyard and bride). The brethren had so many questions over these and similar topics that I decided to just spend the rest of the time answering their questions. We have decided to continue this study on a Saturday morning in February. At the conclusion of the study we counted the number of churches that these men came from and discovered that thirty-three churches were represented. It was a wonderful study and would be very beneficial to all of the church leaders but it is just impossible for me to study with all of the preachers and church leaders as well. May God bless you.

## Meet Stephen Andrade

Brother Stephen Newton Andrade was baptized into Christ three years ago and has been an active member with the Mathiya church in the southern region of Malawi. He was born on January 5, 1948. He lives with his wife Flonny in Mphiphira Village in Nsanje District. He joined the Civil Service in 1968 working as a copy typist and secretary and retired in 1992. In 1993 he was urged to go back to work by Trinity Hospital close to his home where he has been a Hospital Secretary to this date. He is as dedicated in his work for the Lord as he is in the public sector. He serves as the church treasurer at Mathiya church and is very hospitable. After our worship on Sunday morning, Bro. Andrade and his wife welcomed us and our traveling companions into their home where we feasted on rice and goat relish. Afterwards he served us an ice cold Coke which was very refreshing. Even in the bush there is electricity in some places.



## REPORT FROM THE MALAWI BRETHREN

*"How beautiful are the feet of those that preach the gospel of peace . . ." Rom. 10:15*

*Harrison William Jampa is a preacher living and working in the Blantyre area.*

I am Harrison William Jampa. I was born in 1948 in the Village of Chipwaila, T/A

Chikumbu, Mulanje. I have a wife and seven children, two sons and five daughters, all living. I received the gospel of Christ in the year 1980 and was baptize on May 5 by the preacher B.

Isaiah at the Chipwaila church of Christ. Because of their wish, I was appointed a leader in 1981 but my idea was to be a preacher in future days. In the year 1982 the congregation appointed me to be a preacher and I worked with Bro. W. Machoka. I was seeking advice from him. Today I am working with twelve congregations: two in the Blantyre area, four in the Thyolo area and six in Mulanje. The problem I am having in the work I am doing is my movements because some of the congregations are far from where I live. Had it been my movements are easier the work could go farther and farther. Finally I am thanking you brethren from America who have the wish of helping this work in Malawi. Thank you.

# A Study in English



Even as I write this newsletter I am engaged in an English Bible study with seven English speaking brethren. I have invited brethren who speak English to come to Blantyre. I was hoping that a few more might come, but the number illustrates one of the obstacles we face in Malawi--the language barrier. There are not many who can speak, read, and write English. Of course good English speakers are in demand as translators in preaching and writing religious materials.

I have planned this English study for two days (January 31 and February 1). We decided to purchase a goat to have slaughtered for food for the meeting. Suwed and



Muthowa, our two yard workers, slaughtered it in our backyard. I suppose that goats know their ultimate destiny because they usually start bleating immediately upon arrival at our house. Eerily, their bleating sounds like they are saying, HHHHelp." Currently there is an "ufa" (corn meal) shortage which is the staple in the Malawians diet. For the time being rice is still available so we have substituted it for the ufa, consequently, the preachers will enjoy rice and goat this week.

Since the number is small I am conducting the studies in our living room instead of in the church building. We have moved the couch out of the way and have set up tables and chairs. I have also set up the projector screen and am using Powerpoint presentations during the morning sessions. In the mornings I am presenting topical studies



about the Bible. In the afternoons we are going through a Bible study course that Jim Crouch produced a few years ago. Even though these guys speak English, I think they have a little trouble understanding me because I speak "Okie" English, not the British English that they are used to. I have presented each one with an English Bible and some other study materials. My hope is that they will take these materials home and increase their Bible knowledge.

## A-maizing!

January has been a pleasant month here in Malawi. It has rained almost every day turning the countryside into a green wonderland with an abundance of corn (maize) growing. In the musical *Oklahoma* Curley sings about the corn in Oklahoma growing "as high as an elephant's eye." Well, I have news for Curley--he doesn't know what he is talking about. I am from Oklahoma and I have never seen corn nearly as tall as it is here. Our problem is that it only rains for about four or five months (November--March) and then is basically dry the rest of the season. If we only had rain all year Malawi would look like a paradise. Incidentally, the consistent rains have helped the corn to grow abundantly, so please continue with your prayers for rain. Every inch of soil has a stalk of corn growing on it seems like. A good crop will go a long way in helping the Malawians with their njala (hunger) problem. At the present a lot of Malawians are eating pumpkin leaves for their main food. When corn meal is found it is five times the price it was back in June.



The Kasambwe family with Davidson's pride and joy!

## DEBBIE'S EXPERIENCE

I am about to burst! MY KIDS ARE COMING!!! David and Amanda are coming to Malawi the end of June. A nice birthday present for Doug. When they called Monday morning our time to confirm the tickets, Amanda said that she needed lots of prayers to help her with her motion sickness. So brethren *please* start praying.

Sunday we worshiped in the southern region with the Mathiya church aka Mango church (we met outside under the Mango trees because we were too large for the little building). It was a three and a half hour trip there and seemed like twice as long coming back. We only used a quarter of a tank of petrol so that tells you how slow we had to go. It is an honor to get to set in the front seat. Bro. Suwed had not yet had that privilege so when I saw him all decked out in his nice suit that Jim Crouch had given him, I decided he needed to sit up front. So I sat in the back next to the window with two other preachers. We had one hour of paved road and two and a half of rough roads. I hit my head seven times on the door. I was never so glad to arrive to worship. (I don't know if Amanda would have survived).

It was a very pleasant worship service. The adults and children were very quiet. The only distraction was a couple of guinea hens that clucked for a lot of the sermon then started another weird

noise during communion. A brother finally got up and threw a rock at them during communion. Everyone else didn't seem to even notice them, but I unfortunately did.

Brother Andrade and his wife invited us to their home afterwards to eat lunch and drink a cold Coke. It was very nice. He has a gazebo out front where we enjoyed our drinks.

On the way back Bro. Suwed got demoted to the back seat. I braced myself for the bumpy ride home. We crossed over twenty or more bridges it seemed like. Most were washed out somewhat with a little trail or huge piles of rocks leading up to them. Many were little spillways crowded with children bathing and swimming and women doing their laundry. It was beautifully surrounded by mountains with corn and pumpkins growing everywhere. They even have corn fields going straight up the side of the mountains. I don't know how they manage to stand up and hoe the rows. The guys just *had* to stop and buy fish at a market not too far from where we worshiped. I



told them they would have to tie them to the top. Do you think they listened to me? We had the aroma of dried fish all the way home. (I don't know if Amanda would have survived).

Finally we arrived home around 5:30 to our sweet little welcoming committee of Bright Eyes (the dog the Franklin's left), Jessie and Rockie. It is so nice to be missed, but I think I was happier to see them. Sisters it is not easy traveling to church in the bush, but there are so many nice little surprises that go with it. I am glad I went.

Did I tell you *my kids are coming*? I am so excited I am about to burst.

Doug Edwards:

chchristbtml@sdp.org.mw  
Green Oaks church of Christ:  
crouchcpa@email.com