

the church of Christ in MALAWI

the warm heart of Africa!

Vol. 2 Num. 3

MARCH 2006



Positive...

I would like to share with our readers some of the recent positive developments in our work. 2005 was a prosperous year for the Lord's cause here in Malawi. Twenty-two new congregations were started during this past year. Many were baptized or restored to the faith, but unfortunately I do not have the numbers. The work is so large that it is difficult to keep up with the individual congregations. The Blantyre congregation seems to have baptisms on a weekly basis.

I received a phone call from the Bible Society of Malawi about a week ago telling me their shipment of Bibles had arrived. That certainly was good news. We have been out of Chichewa Bibles since early in November. The Society only receives limited shipments and when they run out there is often a long wait for a new shipment. I have ordered 50 cases this time. Lester and I took two vehicles down and loaded up the Bibles and then we put them in our library/work room. This spare room is rapidly filling up with tracts, books, Bibles, and a computer station where Brother Muthowa keys our Chichewa materials into the computer. I am very glad that we can start making Bibles available again to the brethren. Unfortunately, many Christians do not have Bibles. We hope we can change that in the next few years.

Brother Stephen Kasenda had some good news for the work this past month. A preacher from an indigenous African denomination called him about coming to Phalombe and talking to him about the Lord's church. So one Saturday morning Stephen



Bangwe Church meets on a hill side



rode his motorcycle down to Phalombe and met with this man. As a result the preacher was converted to the truth and his entire congregation came to the truth as well. All were baptized into Christ.

This year's round of Preachers' studies starts during the third week of this month. I am anxious to start. I will talk more about this year's studies in the April newsletter.

Meet W. D. KANDEYA

Brother W. D. Kandeya was baptized in 1959 into the body of Christ. He lives in the Lilongwe area and is married to Feresta. They have nine children, seven still living, and nine grandchildren. He has been preaching the gospel since 1975.

Bro. Kandeya works with twenty-two churches in the Nkoma East and Dedza districts in the Lilongwe area. Bro. Kandeya goes to many villages within a district and visits each village headman or chief to get approval to go there and preach. In a thirty day period he will set up appointments to preach at a different village each day. During this time he and those working with him may establish a new congregation as he has done just recently in the past month converting many.



REPORT FROM THE MALAWI BRETHREN

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

Lester Kasambwe is a young preacher living in Blantyre

My name is Lester Davidson Kasambwe and I am the sixth child born to

Brother D. C. Kasambwe. I was born on 1st of August, 1976. I am single but I have a steady

fiancee (Doreen) to whom I hope to get married to possibly this year.

I obeyed the gospel in the year 1993 under the preaching of Brother James C. Franklin and got baptized thereby becoming a member of the Blantyre congregation. Since then I developed a desire to work for the Lord through preaching and translating the word of God. At present, my work is to drive one of the vehicles and deliver grape juice to different congregations throughout Malawi, translate printed materials and Bible studies prepared by Brother Doug Edwards and other brothers from the U.S.A., and also I do translate during preaching sermons. I

have also presented my lessons at a number of congregations. I do get inspired when Brother S. D. Kasenda and Brother D. C. Kasambwe give me a chance to translate for the missionary and visiting preachers from the U.S.A. which will result in my gaining exposure, experience and more knowledge in the Lord's work.

It is my hope that the Lord's work will continue to grow wherever it is found. May God richly bless you.

Negative...

It would be wonderful if there were no problems in the work in Malawi. But we have an enemy who is constantly trying to impede the progress of the kingdom (1 Peter 5:8). I would like to mention a few of the problems we have here with the work.

The suffering of the people on a daily basis is a recurring problem. Sickness and death are common. The little boy in the picture is named Donald and he comes from Mozambique. He has suffered from tuberculosis and pneumonia for some time but was not able to get any help. So Bill Davis sent him to Blantyre for treatment here. He was one sick little boy when he arrived. Today he is on medication and is improving, but he still has a long way to get back to good health. His story is merely one out of unknown multitudes with similar types of diseases. Aids is widespread throughout southern Africa. Malaria kills large numbers as well. It is heartbreaking to see such massive suffering.

Poverty is another problem. Malawi is one of the poorest nations in the world. The average income for an individual is a little over \$100 a year (not day, week or even month). Jobs are scarce so unemployment is high. Poverty creates another problem: crime. Theft and break-ins are common problems. A young Christian man (Kennedy, one of the Chisomo singers) from the Blantyre congregation was attacked just the other evening as he walked home from church. A group of men jumped him and when they discovered all that he had was a



Bible and no money, they beat him and stabbed him in the forehead. Fortunately his injuries were not life threatening. Because of crime, we live in a house with barred windows and doors, night guards and guard dogs.

There are difficulties in the work as well. In January I had a study for church leaders from the Blantyre area. Over 100 men came and we planned for another study in February. This time only 11 came. I was so disappointed at first. The large group had wanted me to pay for their transportation costs in coming, but I told them that I could not and that Christians sometimes have to sacrifice to do the Lord's work. I guess the majority of them did not want to come back if I would not pay their transportation costs. I initially thought about cancelling this study when only the handful showed up. I certainly am glad that I didn't cancel it. Even though we only had 11 the brethren seemed thankful for the study and want to do it again in March. I was reminded again that God is more interested in faithfulness than in large numbers.

Not long ago we visited a congregation in the bush and then went to visit a brother after services. He was very friendly and hospitable to us. A week ago, I was told that this man had quit the church because he had two wives and when the church leaders approached him about the matter he decided that he had rather have two wives than the Lord. It is so sad to see people fall away from the truth.

The Real Thing

While on a recent Sunday outing to the bush we came across this deserted store on the side of the road. Though run down, it has a very prominent advertisement located in the center: Coca-Cola. We may not have all of the modern conveniences of a Westernized country, but we have one thing that is hard to find in the USA. Cold Coca-Cola in a glass bottle. I may be kidding myself but I honestly believe that Cokes taste better here in Africa than in the States. The Cokes here taste like they used to back in the good old days (I am showing my age here) before the new Coke came into being and the Coke Classic as well.



Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, "Who is the Lord?" Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.
- Proverbs 30:9-10

DEBBIE'S EXPERIENCE

Live and learn. Seems like I have done a little of that lately. I get in these humanitarian moods that get me into a pretty good fix sometimes. I made a trip just out of Blantyre to the town of Limbe (the thief's den of Malawi) with Suwed one Monday morning to get his bicycle fixed. A bicycle is as important as someone's child. At least that is what Suwed told me. I asked him where he kept it at night because of theft and he told me in the house with his family. Don't picture your house but one room in your house divided up into tiny little rooms. Comparable to parking a small car in your living room. It has a prominent spot.

We had to park a quarter of a mile away from the bicycle shop and wade through hundreds of people on the street and side walk to get it there. The shop hires a fellow off the street (there are thousands of guys on the street) to work on it. He seemed very good at his job. His tools were incredible though. They were wrenches, screw drivers and pliers that were pieced together and welded to do their little part. I don't know how they get anything done with them. While I am standing there on the sidewalk (his repair shop) observing his work, there is one peddler after the other coming to

me trying to sell me bicycle parts of all sorts. There is no such thing as shopping in peace here. When the "technician" was all finished, he asked Suwed where we were parked. Suwed told him and then the guy jumped on the bicycle and took off on it. Suwed and I were



stunned at first and just started walking. (Was he stealing the bicycle? In my mind I had it all played out. The guy was going to drop it off to a friend and say that someone knocked him off and stole it from him. I have a big imagination fed by a lot of real incidents.) Then fear kicked in and Suwed started running after him. He was out of my sight quickly. Here I am walking in this mass of humanity by myself thinking what in the world am I doing here! I had a straight skirt on so I couldn't run. I just walked firmly, looked as serious as I could, and held on tight to my purse. After I got around the corner, it was uphill so I could see Suwed way up ahead still running and the bicycle up ahead of him and lastly the truck parked on the side of the street. The guy stopped behind it, Suwed reached him and here I came plugging along in my straight skirt. I promptly unlocked the truck, got in, paid the parking attendant and three little needy boys begging and drove off and said to myself never again.

Doug Edwards:
chchristbtml@sdnp.org.mw
Green Oaks church of Christ:
crouchcpa@email.com