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UPDATES

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6041 River Road Point, Norfolk, VA 23505 • 622-1088 • Email: creativeglobalrelief@gmail.com

Jimmy and Gale Strickland, Founders

Malawi trip, June 20 – August 11, 2014

4th edition



This edition of Creative Global Relief's *Updates* newsletter will give you the highlights of our recent trip. This trip was different from previous trips, because Jimmy and Gale Strickland traveled to Malawi before the other volunteers. They left Norfolk on June 19 to do preliminary work in preparation for those who would join them later. Pastor Willie Boyd, Tamara Netzel, Wanda Bishop and Anne Ouellette joined them on July 24.

Mbwatalika Mission School is the primary focus of CGR's efforts this year. This school, located in the capital city of Lilongwe, has fallen into disrepair and needs a great deal of attention to achieve its full potential. Jimmy and Gale spent the first 5 weeks of their trip meeting with the Development Committee which will oversee the renovation of the student hostels and classroom buildings.

*Top photo:
Jimmy and Gale
Strickland at
the Mbwalika
Mission School.
Bottom photo:
Maize mill
dedication to
Mbwalika
Mission School.
The funds for this
were raised in
2013 by Tamara
Netzel's 6th grade
students at Plaza
Middle School in
Virginia Beach,
Virginia.*



WHAT WE DID IN BRIEF

- Attended planning meetings with Mbwalika Mission School Development Committee
- Toured the Adventist Health Hospital in Lilongwe and donated crutches and walkers
- Donated a sewing machine to HIV/AIDS group at Mbwalika clinic
- Conducted evangelistic meetings, health messages and children's stories at Mtsiliza and Chigoneka villages for two weeks resulting in over 100 baptisms
- Presented Chichewan Bibles to over 100 newly baptized members
- Conducted Bible School for over 600 children and seminars for women, men and youth for 5 days in Lilongwe
- Conducted Bible school for over 100 children and sessions for women in the north region of Malawi. Also conducted evangelistic meetings and health messages for a week
- Visited and donated a sewing machine, clothes, shoes and tools to the female inmates in the Maula prison
- Met with the children in our Child Sponsorship program and shared gift bags from their American sponsors
- Presented morning devotions at the Central Malawi Conference and Union offices
- Attended two Malawian weddings and a funeral service
- Hosted and supported Pastor Tim Roosenberg and his wife Karen. He presented Daniel 11 seminars at Kawale SDA church and spoke to over 85 pastors at Lakeview University
- Attended a youth rally of over 4,000
- Visited Dzando Orphan Care where preschool children receive a hot meal of porridge and instruction to prepare them for school
- CGR is partnering with the Lions Club in Lilongwe to build a wall around the Dzando orphanage

Once again our itinerary was extremely full, yet we are grateful that God allowed us to do everything we planned to do and more. Your prayers and support is essential for the success of our efforts and we appreciate and thank each and every one of you.

PARTICULARS AND HIGHLIGHTS

We were extremely blessed to be able to stay at the home of Pastor and Mrs. Fraxon Kuyama during the entire 8 weeks of this trip. Pastor Kuyama is the President of the Malawi Union and a member of CGR's Board of Directors. We were also blessed with the use of his van during the entire time. This was a tremendous savings for CGR and made it easier to visit remote locations. Our humble thanks cannot express how grateful we are for these blessings.

Learning about Malawian culture is one of the many highlights that comes from our travels and living among the Malawian people. On this trip, we were blessed with the opportunity to share in the celebration of two weddings—one of the daughter of Pastor Kuyama and one of the brother of Prince Mhone, a CGR Malawian volunteer. We also had the sad occasion to attend the funeral of the sister of Rachel Thawani, another Malawian volunteer.

During the children's Bible school, Wanda Bishop noticed a small boy who had a damaged eye. She asked Jimmy if there was anything that CGR could do to help this boy. It was determined that the boy's eye had been injured in an accident two years before, but his family could not afford to get treatment for him. CGR volunteers took up a collection so the boy could go to the hospital for treatment. He received surgery on the injured eye and corrective surgery on the other eye. We praise the Lord for Wanda's concern and compassion. Because of her desire to help this boy, his life is changed forever. What a blessing it was for everyone involved in this amazing experience.

SPECIFIC ANSWERS TO PRAYER

We, as Christians, believe that God hears and answers our prayers in His perfect way and time. But, there are



Jimmy and Gale at Dzando Orphan Care with the teacher who is holding soccer balls donated by CGR.

those special times when we are given the privilege to see God work is such a specific way that we know beyond a doubt that He is still in the business of answering prayers. That happened several times during this trip.

The first time was when the Stricklands and the Roosenbergs were introduced to a lady named Gertrude who has a prison ministry to the ladies in Maula prison. She brings words of encouragement and food to the ladies incarcerated there. CGR is always excited when we can partner with other ministries to assist in any way we can.

During their trip, the Roosenbergs felt led to make a donation to CGR. It was decided that CGR would use these funds to assist the ladies at Maula prison.



The ladies at the Maula prison receive the sewing machine donated by CGR.

Gertrude suggested a sewing machine would be a blessing to the women. When a sewing machine was donated, it was learned that these ladies had been praying for months for a sewing machine. This was an answer to specific prayer. Learning to sew would provide them with a skill once released

from prison. Also, they would be able to make and sell clothing and mend their own clothing. The ladies were happy to receive the machine and praised the Lord in songs and prayers.

Another occasion where it was obvious God had answered a specific prayer was when Jimmy and Gale met with the Development Committee at the Mbwatalika Mission School. The leadership at the school had been

praying for funds to complete and renovate several buildings. When they heard that CGR was committing \$60,000 to this building project, they were overwhelmed with gratitude and praised the Lord for answering their prayers.

ABOUT WOMEN'S MEETINGS

As part of our mission trip this year, we were able to complete a five-day Women's Ministry series. The first day's attendance was about 30 women and it continued to rise throughout the week finishing with approximately 100 attending. The topics discussed included how women are unique and different from men, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, natural family planning, medical issues and the importance of supporting and giving words of encouragement to each other. Each day the ladies were given a gift of appreciation for attending the meetings. We loved when they sang songs in their native language to show their appreciation.



Assana Magombo, a CGR Malawian volunteer, conducts women's ministry in Lilongwe where approximately 100 women were in attendance.

ABOUT CHILDREN'S MEETINGS

The children of Mstiliza village church met each morning for one week for Bible school. The theme was Bible Superheroes and the stories presented were Noah, Joseph and his coat of colors, David and Goliath, Jesus feeding the multitude and the Prodigal Son. About 150 children attended on the first day. However, the number doubled each day ending with approximately 600 children the last three days.

After the children listened to a Powerpoint Bible story given by Jimmy Strickland, the children were divided into 3 groups. One group reviewed the Bible lesson, another played games outside and the third group worked on a craft activity related to the Bible

story. Each day the children also learned a memory verse relating to that day's lesson. They played relay games involving hoola hoops and soccer balls, and learned how to do the Hokey Pokey.



Play time during Childrens' Bible school with Tamara Netzel and Pastor Boyd.

At the end of the week, our Malawian volunteers expressed a desire to continue having Bible school lessons like this in the future. A suitcase full of Bible school materials, including a set of felts, was presented to the church on our last day in Malawi.

A smaller group of children met at the Nkhata Bay church for Bible school. The week began with about 48 children and grew to over 100 children. Anne Ouellette and Bright Msiska, a CGR Malawian volunteer, showed the animated *Superbook* Bible stories of David and Goliath, the story of creation, the first Christmas, the Miracles of Jesus and the Ten Commandments. The children loved travelling back into Bible times and cheered enthusiastically when David slew Goliath.

Also, in the Nkhata Bay area, Anne Ouellette met with approximately 25 ladies each afternoon for ministry. It was a wonderful time of teaching and sharing. Every woman received a gift each day to show how much we appreciated their participation. On the last day we



Bright Msiska, a CGR Malawian volunteer, with the children watching Superbook animated Bible stories in Nkhata Bay.

enjoyed refreshments, sang songs and shared wonderful fellowship.

The evening messages included health and evangelistic Powerpoint presentations. At the end of the week, 7 people were baptized as a result of this effort with several more indicating an interest to be baptized at a later date. Each newly baptized person was given a Chichewan Bible.

GET TOGETHER WITH CHILDREN

We spent a day with the children in our Child Sponsorship Program. Each child received the gift bag that was prepared specifically for them by their sponsor. They received funds to pay their school fees. Also,



each child received a large bag containing necessities such as cooking oil, salt, sugar, rice, flour, laundry soap, bath soap, a toothbrush and toothpaste. We shared a delicious lunch together and encouraged all the children to continue to study hard and excel in their school.



CGR GROWING PAINS

CGR has been praying for God to send us more Malawian volunteers because the opportunities for service are always increasing. Our prayers were answered on this trip. During our visit, we met many young people who expressed an interest in becoming CGR volunteers. Fifteen young adults attended a recruiting meeting and filled out applications.

We praise the Lord for impressing these young people who are answering God's call to volunteer with CGR to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit those in prison and assist the needy.

IN CONCLUSION

We are grateful to God for the opportunity to minister to the people of Malawi. We encourage you to consider going with us to experience the blessings we receive when we go. If you are interested in knowing about our future trips, please give us a call at 757-622-1088 or visit our website at creativeglobalrelief.org.

Please continue to pray for us, our Malawian volunteers and the newly baptized souls. Let us pray that the Lord will guide and direct our paths, and we will continue to grow in the knowledge and love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May God bless you and your loved ones!

Top photo: Children and their parents or guardians who attended our child sponsorship get together. Bottom photo: Gale Strickland, Tamara Netzel and Pastor Willie Boyd presenting bags containing basic food and personal care items to each child.



The large crowd that attended the baptism of over 100 people as a result of the evangelistic campaign conducted in Lilongwe by CGR volunteers.