

The United Church of Zambia  
Synod Headquarters  
Nationalist Road  
Box 50122  
Lusaka  
Zambia

2 October 2016

Dear Family and Friends

**I will open my mouth in parables, and utter things hidden since the creation of the world. Matthew 13:35**

As planned we left Lusaka in mid- July for the International Aids Conference in Durban. En route we had planned a number of stop-offs, the first being in Mwandia where both of us got caught up on outstanding Mission, Health and Education matters that required attention. We travelled through Botswana as the route through Zimbabwe was not advised due to cash and fuel shortages and political disturbances in the urban areas.

From Botswana we crossed South Africa to Lesotho. We stopped off in Bethlehem in the Free State where William Waddell helped with the carpentry work in the building of the Dutch Reformed Church in the early 1880s. While there, he went to Leribe to hear Coillard preach and was invited to join the Mission to Barotseland as an artisan missionary with the Paris Evangelical Mission Society. It was good to follow his footsteps and visit Leribe too. We overnighed in Maseru and then set out for Morija, the main Mission Station of Lesotho Evangelical Church and saw the museum and other income-generating projects and ministries undertaken by this Church. It is a sister-church to the UCZ and regular exchanges and visits take place. Our youth undertook a very successful exchange visit to Lesotho last month.

The first weekend in Durban was taken up with the Faith-based Conference themes were reducing stigma and discrimination, increasing access and defending human rights. A major concern to emerge was the failure to treat children living with HIV. There are reckoned to be over a million children globally who are untreated. It is sobering to reflect that 75% of all new infections are in adolescent girls. Ensuring testing and treatment for children was an important target to set as adolescents, women and girls are the most vulnerable groups at present. It was also good to meet up there with Church of Scotland colleagues and partners; Rev Aftab Gohar from Grangemouth and Rev Daniel Ganizane from Mozambique. These themes were echoed in the main conference as well. Another memorable occasion was the Inter-Faith AIDS Service on the Wednesday evening.

In August the General Elections took place where the incumbent President Edgar Lungu of the Patriotic Front was narrowly returned to office with a majority of around 100 000 votes. With such a close result, the opposition are still contesting the tallying of the



votes in the courts. During the Zambian Elections we took a break for almost a week with the family in Malawi. It was good just to be grandparents. We helped to build houses from cardboard boxes and Ida opened a shop, so we spent two days playing. We also had a few days away with the family in a self-catering house on a tea-estate. Like many of the Malawian tea estates this was founded by Scots too. It makes good tea and coffee. The landscape with the hills and valleys was very reminiscent of home. We even had mist and a wee smirr of rain and fairly cool temperatures. We then went down into the Shire Valley to look at an irrigation project Fiona is involved with.

These past two months we have been kept busy here with meetings in Lusaka, office-work and road travel for board meetings at our respective institutions. Each School and Health Institution has a board meeting twice a year. Keith has 15 mission schools and Ida 2 Hospitals and 5 Clinics to visit. Many of the institutions have aging infrastructure and are in need of rehabilitation, together with a perennial need for supplementary teaching and learning materials and medical supplies. One of our schools suffered extensive damage after being hit by a whirlwind.

We had this month a visit from Bob and Lynne Connelly from Kincardine. They came through the Church of Scotland World Mission Council. Bob is a Chartered Health and Safety Consultant and Lynne a Dermatology Nurse. They travelled with Ida to the UCZ Clinics where Lynne was able to help staff with a skin clinic while Bob helped Tommy the Synod site manager with maintenance. At Mbereshi Ida was able to assist at 3 C-Sections by doing the Anaesthesia which was quite daunting as all she had was a digital BP and Pulse machine. No monitoring of the heart or measuring of the O2 levels! After the Board Meetings in Western and Southern Provinces. Keith organised a two day Conference for UCZ Headteachers, where Bob presented at a session on Safety Leadership.



We are delighted with our new kitchen supplied by the UCZ Chodart Carpentry Workshop and funded by World Mission. It has made such a difference regarding both storage and cooking. We converted our garage to guest quarters just after our arrival. It has been well-used by visitors. At the moment we have Lontia's daughter-in-law, Titamenji, staying with us as she cares for Lontia who is admitted into the UTH Cancer Ward with cervical cancer. It is just across the road.



As regards Kandiana and the Mwandu Formula Programme we are helped by Alicia Evans. Alicia and husband, Paul, are from Indiana and have 3 children. Paul is a missionary vet helping looking after the local cattle. They took over our house when we left and agreed to pay Catherine and help supplement the food bill as needed. It is a blessing that Alicia continues with these ministries

We are fortunate that we see Ruairidh, Fiona, Lucy and Cora are from time time to time here in Lusaka or there in Lilongwe. Ruairidh also works in Lusaka fairly regularly so we see him now and then. Kirsten & Stuart with Iona and Euan are in Glasgow they are doing fine we keep in touch with Whatsapp and Skype. Euan has just learned to crawl so is keeping everyone on their toes. As regards Gregor, Sarah and little Maia. Maia has just turned one year old, Gregor is still working with recycling for the council and studying for the Welsh Anglican Ministry. Catriona is managing a health food store/delicatessen to keep the wolf from the door before she begins her Masters in Development by distance learning in the new year.

We are grateful for your prayers  
With our love

Keith Ida & Mubita

