

June 2011

Dear Family and Friends

Isaiah 32:18 My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

We had a special celebration on Trinity Sunday, the induction of Deaconess Given Nanyangwe at Mwandu. It was a joyful time with the presence of the Western Presbytery Bishop, Secretary and Ministers from neighbouring Consistories of Livingstone and Sesheke and their wives. There were three combined choirs from Mwandu and the outlying congregations who provided a wonderful musical accompaniment to the proceedings. After the service and charge by the Bishop, Deaconess Nanyangwe was presented with gifts from various bodies in the consistory to welcome her, these included an electric stove, a mattress, cooking pots, mealie meal, chickens (live) and blankets. Deaconess Nanyangwe served at Senanga prior to coming to Mwandu. Deaconesses in the United Church of Zambia often take on the role as Social Workers. A celebration lunch of fried fish, chicken, stewed beef, cabbage, buhobe and rice was then served to over 100 invited guests.

This year's Mission Centre Programme continues at Sooka Church. This is the church that was roofed by Houston and Killellan. 14 young people are living there by faith for 4 months of hard work and study, a balanced combination of the practical and theoretical. It is a call to service, equipping them for incarnational work that is a reflection of the work of God in Christ in the Church and in the world. They are called to be expressions of his transforming love and to be his Body, a Church in Mission, through engagement and involvement in their local communities.

We are grateful for the progress being made with the Community School at Sikuzu. When completed this will be a great blessing for the local children and community. No longer will it be necessary to walk the 5 miles to school in Mwandu. We had a recent visit from Greg Jeane, a member of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Alabama. This Church is a regular visitor and came over with Phil & Robin Collins and a youth group in early June for a short-term Mission trip. Greg is the agent for the Trust who donated towards the building. He was pleased with the progress and is working hard in the States fundraising for solar panels for lighting and for a borehole to improve the water supply. Like many of the wells in the Mwandu area, the water from present well at Sikuzu is salty and brackish.

The foundation and slab are now complete and work is now proceeding with the moulding of bricks for the superstructure. The door and window frames have been ordered and will be made in Mwandu by a local welder. An order for the classroom furniture too has been placed with a local furniture maker whom did a good job on the High School desks and chairs. It is important that the local economy and people benefit directly from the development work that is going on, so we have tried over the years to ensure that the necessary skills and services are available in Mwandu. The steel trusses for the roof is another case in point. Traditionally wooden rafters were

used in the rural areas on public buildings but we are plagued by termites, so we have moved over to spider trusses which are now made locally instead of being bought in from Livingstone.

Other building work making progress are the rural clinics at Kangugu and Simungoma. The last two roofing sheets were sent out to Kangugu with the Aids Relief vehicle and we saw the pole and dagga (daub and wattle) walls being built at Simungoma when we visited 2 weeks ago last Sunday with the Reverend Manda. With the new Church of Scotland vehicle have been helping the Minister and other elders to visit rural congregations to celebrate the Sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism, since there has been no ordained Minister permanently living in the Consistory since Rev Silishebo moved to Lusaka almost a year ago. This has been a great joy and blessing for all concerned.

Two weekends ago the Anamoyo met at Sikuzu for a weekend of prayer and fellowship. Ida and the Deaconess and other ladies from congregations through out the Consistory walked there. Keith was drafted in to transport all the supplies and baggage that was needed there and back. It was a memorable occasion holding devotions in the dark round the campfire and sleeping in the church. There was nowhere to hang a mosquito-net so it was a new experience learning to sleep under a blanket with it covering your head. This is what is done in many rural households where there are no mosquito nets. Fortunately at this time of year, the cold season, the mosquitoes are fewer than at other times of the year.

We have staying with us at present, Florian, the grand-son of Jean Fischer, a former French Church Missionary to Barotseland in the 50s and 60s. Jean as Head of the Trades School at Senanga then brought his students to build the Basic School at Mwandu. Florian has spent a week at Sikuzu working with the Church pre-School. He also is helping with Maths at the Basic and helping Ida collate some extra data that has been asked for.

We are expecting a visit from Jennie and Elijah from World Mission in late July who will come to Mwandu after the Partners Meeting at Synod Headquarters in Lusaka. Jean will also come later to see Florian as he is the CEVAA representative.

Catriona will be arriving next week for her summer holidays. She will look after Mubita as we make a flying visit home for Gregor's graduation at Auchencruive on 7 July. She will begin her last year of Sixth Form and sit her A Levels next year. Gregor has just got engaged to Sarah, a lovely Welsh girl he first met at Mwandu where she was a volunteer.

Mwandu is gaining a growing reputation as a place where matches are made. To our knowledge there are at least 5 couples who met each other and married after meeting each other at Mwandu during our time here. We will stay with Kirsten and Stuart during our short visit home. Mum and Dad will be back from visiting Kenneth in Perpignan so it will be good to see them as well. We are blessed having Ruairidh Fiona and Lucy so close at hand and are enjoying being grandparents, we often have her with us on a Saturday afternoon. Saturday is still only a half-day in many occupations in Zambia.

This week, the volunteer builder Nick Peters who had previously undertaken building work at Mbereshi and Mwandu and was now building the Church of Scotland Mission House resigned, being unable to continue with the construction of the house. We will now try to complete this building using local tradesmen.

Finally, following the death of the Second President of the Republic of Zambia Frederick Chiluba on Saturday 18 June there are 7 days of national mourning. The former President was a strong Pentecostal Christian and came from a background in the Trade Union Movement. He stood against President Kenneth Kaunda in 1991 in the first multi-party election held as the period of the one party African Socialist State, called Humanism in Zambia, was coming to a close. Under his presidency, freedom of expression was guaranteed for the first time, and more controversially the structural adjustment plan to liberalise the economy was implemented and Zambia was declared a Christian nation. On leaving office he was troubled for a long time by allegations of corruption.

We leave you with a number of prayer points:

We give thanks for Deaconess Given Nayangwe and pray that she and her dependants will settle in well and she will be blessed in her role as Deaconess ministering to those in need.

We give thanks for the young people at the Mission Centre at Sooka and ask God's blessing on them and on Pastor Percy Muleba as he runs the programme.

We give thanks for provision of funds to build the Community School at Sikuzu and ask God to bless its construction and keep the workers and members of the community working there safe from any injury. We pray that the Lord will continue to meet the other needs to complete the project.

We pray for continued peace in Zambia as we head towards the election campaign

We thank you for your help and support of the work here

With love and every blessing

Keith Ida & Mubita