



Africa Update
May 23, 2007

Hi All,

I'm finally back in South Africa, followed closely by the cold weather of May. I'm missing the warm weather of Kitwe where people are still sleeping on top of the bed covers. Not so here where I'm wearing all of my clothes to try and stay warm.

When I last wrote, I was getting ready to receive the team of four ladies from Australia to assist them with their busy African ministry program. Well now they have gone again after a very successful tour. The Kitwe "Women's Arise Conference" attracted over 1,500 delegates over three days with 1,500 present for the meal on the last day. Given that we originally had a goal for an attendance of 500, this conference far exceeded our expectations. The attending women represented over 75 churches of all denominations across the Kitwe area. The local pastors here are saying that this is possibly the largest women's conference ever held in Kitwe. The Kitwe conference was then followed by the Lusaka conference with approximately 500 delegates in attendance over the three days. Again this was another successful conference.



*Pastor Dianne Kerridge speaking at the Kitwe Women's
Arise Conference*



Prayers for the women and Children – Lusaka conference

After the two women's conferences in Zambia, we flew to Bulawayo in Zimbabwe to attend the opening of "The Ebenezer Children's Home". This home is the result of the hard work and perseverance of two Zimbabwean pastors and their wives. A group of Zimbabwean pastors were given the "Ebenezer" land by the government a couple of years ago in response to the number of neglected orphans in the area. At that time this large allotment of land was covered with thick, thorny vegetation of which a small part of the land had to be cleared manually by some of the pastors to enable any construction or further progress. Because of the current economic collapse in Zimbabwe, these pastors had no access to mechanical machinery such as bulldozers etc, and everything that we saw at the opening ceremony had been done laboriously by hand with the very few resources available. Now the orphanage has the three constructions shown in the photograph below alongside some cleared fields for crops, a vegetable garden and a chicken coup. Getting to this stage has been so difficult that some of the original team of pastors have withdrawn from the project through frustration and discouragement. So the official opening of the orphanage marked an incredible achievement by those who remained with the project. The challenge is not over yet, though, as the project will need other buildings and resources to meet the needs of the many orphans that could

potentially benefit from this orphanage. At present there is only a small group of orphans that can be accommodated and maintained there due to the limited ongoing resources.



*Opening Ceremony for Ebenezer Children's Home,
Zimbabwe*

After our Bulawayo visit, we headed down to Victoria Falls for some touristy things. More about this in my next update.

I am back here in South Africa so that I can apply for a different visa for Zambia. I went into Zambia originally with a three month visitor's visa but now Bishop Medson is applying to sponsor me with a 2 - 5 year work permit. As with many other countries, Zambian law dictates that I must leave Zambia in order to come back in on a different visa. This application process will take at least two weeks and probably longer but I am hoping to be back in Zambia in mid-June to take up residence in my own house in Kitwe.

Whilst in South Africa, I am going to do some more planning and stock up on necessary goods to take back with me into Zambia. Many products are cheaper in South Africa and some products here are completely unavailable in Zambia.

Please note that my mobile phone number in Zambia has changed. There is an extra 6 in the number now, so to ring from Australia you would ring:

+260 966 391622

However my Zambian phone number will not be usable until I am back in Zambia so in the meantime, I can be contacted in South Africa on:

Home: +27 12 6546691

Mobile: +27 76 9831856

That's it for now.
All my love,

Mike



*The result of a collapsing economy – Diesel at Zim
\$24,000.00 per litre!
Zimbabwe*