

PARTNERPLAN

Keith & Ida Waddell - Zambia December 2023

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Dear Family and Friends

Nations will come to your light, and rulers to the brightness of your dawn. Isaiah 60:3

At Advent we remember the all-pervading darkness of the time, with no apparent way forward, before the light came into the world. Christ came into a world at war, with endemic injustice, to a people living under military occupation. Immediately after his birth he became a refugee. This still is the reality for so many of the world's people today, in Gaza, the West Bank, in Sudan, in the DRC, in the Sahel in Ukraine and Myanmar to name the more prominent. The Incarnation, however, means that God comes into the middle of all this, and says - I am Immanuel, I am with you in all of this: the death, the chaos, the brutality, the hate, the suffering and all your own personal tragedies your bereavements and demolished houses, through my own death and resurrection.

Since our last letter we too have had our dark patches as well as times of great joy and peace. We recently lost Fiona's father, Rob, our in-law, in South Australia and the mother of Florence our housekeeper, as well as Per, husband to Ida's cousin, Brigitte.



In October Western Presbytery held a Centenary Celebration of the Butoya Conference a regular camp retreat that was held amongst the mutoya trees on the banks of the Little River on the Zambezi flood plain. We camped with Florence and Bridget and our Jerusalem choir for 4 days enjoying the fellowship, music, praise and worship and the teaching. The Synod Bishop preached at its close in the presence of His Majesty the Litunga, King Lubosi Imwiko II of Barotseland. It was during this service that Ida and I were presented by the Western Presbytery Bishop to the King.

The sheltered workshop has continued to supply blocks for new x-ray department which is now complete. The first fish we raised from fingerling have been harvested and are being sold now. The first cohort of layers from last year have finished producing eggs. They have been sold to help with feeding the new 120 layer chicks. They should begin to lay in early March. We have a good local market for our free-range eggs. We kept

one hen, Ms Walker is her name, who always flew the coop and laid her eggs behind the hut in the brick yard. She has retired to our back garden and enjoys an uneasy truce with Torie, our little Jack

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Russell cross-Dachsie. The Sheltered Workshop is now producing sustainable charcoal from biomass that is lying around, and packing them for sale locally in small affordable packages.



With support from partner congregations a terrazzo machine has been purchased to redo the floors in the hospital. This is required to bring the wards up to level 2 standard. The children's ward was successfully refloored and our attention is now turning to the maternity unit. It was floored with tiles as was the required material at the time of building; it will be refloored in terrazzo next. A team from the sheltered workshop have been trained to use the machine. Unfortunately, the stone at both Livingstone and Sesheke is mainly basalt so that makes the surface very dark. We will have to bring in some quartz to add to the mixture to lighten it.

Bridget, Mubita's carer, has a young granddaughter, also Bridget, who has been in hospital with a sickle cell crisis. Sickle cell disease is unfortunately all too common in Africa and takes its toll. Hydroxyurea the necessary medicine is available in Zambia but there is no paediatric syrup to be had. Our pharmacists have to make it up themselves. 500mg adult capsules are bought and the

powder from 20 of them is put into a beaker, boiled water is added and stirred until the powder is dissolved and then it is poured into a medicine bottle. A simple syrup, 2 parts sugar to one of water is added to make 100ml of paediatric syrup which fortunately is more than a month's supply. This again shows how children's medicinal needs are ignored in the less developed world. A child needs 20mg/kg. This is similar to the problem with ARVs for children where adults' tablets were halved before that need was addressed.

As we think of Christmas and our Lord being born in the stable we give thanks for the Jerusalem Choir who built the house in the village for a mother and her children. She lived in a tiny rondavel

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with a partial roof and was struggling. Now with the help of the choir she has friends as she came and helped build the house with them. It has been a lovely experience to help with this. Our thanks to St Marks St Andrews for the funds for the Materials.



We have heard the vacuum/suction machine and bedheads from Czechia have reached Durban and should arrive within the next two weeks. We had a visit from Vaclav Rohlena, the export director for MZ Liberec, the company which supplied our oxygen manifold and who are supplying the bedheads and suction. Vaclav is a very a useful contact for advice and spare parts.

In the run up to Christmas Ida has been attending a workshop run by the MOH on oxygen plants their management and maintenance. The two medical technicians Mary and Suzyo have another week of more intensive training while Ida is attending a series of CHAZ board meetings.

We are looking forward to the Christmas break where we will celebrate our usual Danish Christmas Eve with Catriona & Will and the Lusaka family. We will have Christmas Day with the in-laws and then later have a few days away over the New Year in Livingstone with the family.

We wish you all the blessings of Christmas as we celebrate and reflect on the coming of Christ into the world and all the best in the coming year

With our love

Keith, Ida & Mubita

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