

Dear church friends,

I think this has been the longest time between newsletters, but I hope you will forgive the delay as I have been quite busy recently. In Feb/ March I temporarily took over the College administrators job whilst she was away, and then in April was given extra work as one of our lecturers had a stroke (he is recovering well). Thankfully by mid March my little truck (Kumbi) was back on the road again, and I have been able to get to my groups in Ipusukilo and Kamatipa. It was too late though to use it for the training days we put together for the Play4All playground volunteers. They met during February in the local UCZ church and were given basic training in play; children's rights; nutrition and first aid as well as some practicals.



volunteers learning a parachute game

Our main frustration with this project has been the council. We have written 3 letters all with the same request and all have been lost. Eventually we took a council officer out to the proposed site and he intimated the delays were due to lack of *appreciation*. Over the four years I have been here, I have noticed corruption has spreading into every area. Annoyed at the suggestion to pay someone extra for doing

the job he should be doing in the first place, I told this young man, with his two flash mobile phones, that every pound given in illegal payments is worth four times more when spent on the actual projects. (scn.org) In other words, £100 in bribes means £400 lost to the project. This week I received a letter from the council saying that the proposed land was no longer available. Praise God anyway – when one door closes another one opens. Ernest, who is my main helper with the project, knows people in the YMCA and we are now looking at a partnership with them to develop



Ball games at the activity day

the play scheme in Kamatipa. We will not give up!

Just to put the whole money thing into perspective, when we trained the volunteers, we gave the church that lent us their building in Kamatipa ZK 100,000 (currently £12.88p) for the use of the building; an elder announced the gift on Sunday and I was expecting the usual ululating and whooping – not a bit of it – the church fell into a hushed silence as everyone whispered about such a huge donation. How can we possibly take from such a poor community to pay for someone's unnecessary perks?

Colouring in was a big hit



Due to the council delays we decided to have a fun day on the 7th May to keep up momentum for the volunteers and gauge the interest of the children. Activities included skipping, parachute, ball & bean bag games; colouring, board games, puzzles and play dough and of course drumming and dancing. After a hard mornings play about 250 children had a drink and a bun before we all went home. All in all a good day.

Do you remember Charity who helps me at home? In my last letter I told you of her niece, Naomi, who had just arrived

from Malawi. She has now had a 3 month old baby boy called Deliso which is Nyanja for blessings. Naomi's brother arrives next month, making 10 in total in their 3 roomed house

On a different theme, I was chatting with a friend the other day and she told me about her 15 year old nephew who was with some friends in Chapata, the compound next to Ipusukilo. He was hot and stooped to dip his hankie in the river and was attacked by a crocodile which pulled him in and dragged him under. In the middle of Kitwe! Thankfully he was wearing strong boots and managed to kick it in the eye and thus escape, but not without severe wounds – a salutatory reminder that we indeed live in Africa!

Items for praise

- For the continued support in prayer and practical ways of friends in the UK
- For the safe delivery of a healthy boy to Naomi
- For a successful Activity day in Kamatipa.
- For my little truck which is now able to do its job of fetching and carrying again.

Items for Prayer

- For the Smith family as they return to California next month after 4 years at MEF, that Peter will find a job and the boys will adjust quickly.
- For the theological students as they return home for a well earned break and to find next terms fees
- For a fruitful relationship with the YMCA at Kamatipa.
- For Sidney and all the other young people who wish to continue in further education but are so often prevented by financial problems.

with every good wish to you all,

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