

Dear Church friends

First of all, let me wish you a happy New Year and Gods richest blessings for 2011. Many thanks to all of you who sent good wishes via cards and emails; I really appreciate your thoughts and prayers. I have heard of the wintry weather you have had this Christmas, and of some austere changes made by the new government and I know that will make life more demanding for a lot of you. Whilst we have not had

Informal traders in Chisikone market



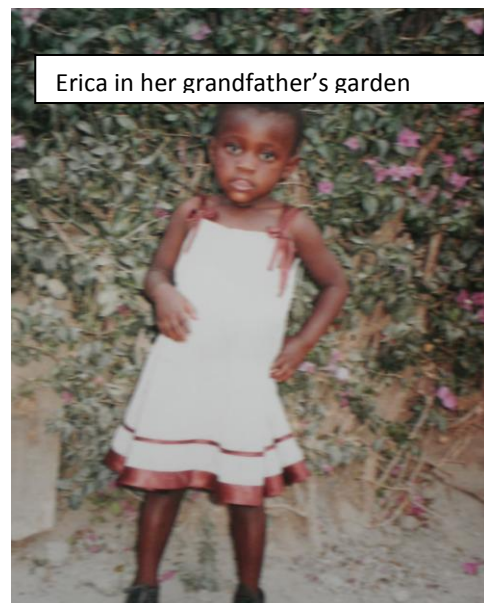
we still have inflation of around 15%, and unemployment (which I presume does not include informal employment) of 50%.

At the moment I am readjusting to being without transport for a few weeks. The shaft that holds the back wheels on broke just before Christmas when I was on my way to the airport, and a new part has to be ordered from South Africa, which is proving more complex than

I first thought!

A much more welcome development though is that Glen & Wendy Lund and their 4 children arrived as Mission Partners for the Church of Scotland. Glen is going to teach Old Testament studies and help out as temporary librarian at the theological college. The family is used to being in Africa as they have previously lived in Malawi and Uganda. I hope they will settle quickly and feel at home here, and that they will be captivated by the infectious warmth of the local people.

Another change this year will be that Samuel, who has been visiting me faithfully since the first week I arrived, will be going to Bible College in Mufulira for a year's diploma course. For those of you who do not recall him, Samuel (now 22) was an orphan at 7, and lived on the streets for a while until he was picked up by an orphanage that supported him until he reached 17, and then he was on his own. Fearing he would have to return to the streets again, someone sponsored him whilst he struggled to make a living. He has always thanked God for the help he received, knowing his fate could have been very different without that support. He now is hoping to fulfil his ambition to work full time in the ministry.



Erica in her grandfather's garden

Some of you may also remember Erica aged 6. Some time ago now, a local church group helped her to have unaffordable but critical heart treatment. Her grandfather

works at MEF and brought her to see me a few weeks ago. She is a picture of health, and he calls her his little miracle.

Not all children are in Erica's situation however, Charity, who helps me in the house, told me this week, her sister in law had died in Lilongwe, Malawi. The husband was already dead and they had left two children, who were staying with an uncle who Charity did not know. Naomi, the daughter, had called her to say they were unhappy and hungry and was asking to come to Kitwe as they had no support in Lilongwe. Fortunately Charity's husband, Harry was able to get the money for bus fare and collected Naomi (who is 6 months pregnant!) but her brother remained in Malawi as he had got sponsorship for a boarding school. I am constantly amazed at how quickly people over here can prioritize for family. Often Charity struggles to put food on the table, yet it is unthinkable not to accept Naomi with all that that entails. Sometimes, when I am daily confronted with need, I sometimes find myself wondering why Jesus said "the poor you will always have with you". My neighbour's daughter, who had lived in Israel for some time, preached in Chapel recently on the Sermon on the Mount. She said that the word blessed can also be translated as stand up for; which when you read it in that light adds a totally different flavour to the passage. There are many people here in Zambia and all around us that we can stand up for, and those who are already standing up for others. Maybe that was one of the reasons Jesus said those mysterious words "you will always have the poor with you" not as an indictment on them, but as a way of honing our attitudes towards them.

Items for praise

- For the continued support in prayer and practical ways of friends in the UK
- For the gift of football kit for the under 12's due to arrive today!
- For the safe return of Adrian Hendy, this will be his 4th year as Chaplain at Mindolo.
- For the completion of the hen house for the farm orphans.

Items for Prayer

- For Dr William Temu, the new interim Director at MEF, that he will have wisdom and insight into our financial and resource problems.
- That the final piece of paperwork for the playground – which is still not forthcoming! - will be sanctioned soon
- For the recruitment and training of volunteers for the play 4 all playground project in Kamatipa
- For my little truck – that it will soon be back on the road

with every good wish to you all,

Jenny

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